

THE VOTE,
MARCH 23, 1923
ONE PENNY.

ABOVE (?) THE LAW.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 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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WOMEN AND THEIR FURNITURE.

By C. NEAL.

Through the terms of the Representation of the People Act of 1918, the possession or non-possession of furniture has come to be an important political factor for many women. Apart from the age question, this possession of furniture is practically the only thing which decides whether or not women shall have the Parliamentary vote—i.e., if one is neither a wife nor a householder. For, by the terms of the Act, women who are qualified as Local Government electors are also, provided they are at least 30 years of age, qualified as Parliamentary electors.

Local Government Qualifications.

But, to be qualified as a Local Government voter, one must be either an owner or tenant, and "the word 'tenant' shall include a person who occupies a room or rooms as a lodger only where such room or rooms are let (to him or) to her in an unfurnished state" (Clause 3, ii.). Presumably, then, if the room or rooms are furnished, that furniture is the property of the person who took the rooms in an unfurnished state, and so the general practice of a Registration Officer now is to decide eligibility for the Parliamentary vote, according to whether or not possession of the furniture can be proved. This provision of the Act cuts out from the Franchise the numerous women who are earning their living either in industry or in the professions, and who, by the circumstances of their lives, are obliged to live in furnished lodgings. And yet these are women eminently desirable as voters, who would use their votes intelligently, and who have a large stake in the welfare of the country. Many of them are capable business women and Civil Servants, and many more are teachers and doctors.

In the town specially known to the writer, few of the large shops have the "living-in" system; the assistants, heads of departments, buyers, etc., nearly all live in furnished rooms, and so are disfranchised. The Secondary School teachers are in the same position, except that some of them have the vote for their own University. None of the lecturers in the Training College for Women are eligible to be voters, though in a similar case for men it was decided in a Court of

Appeal that the lecturers' names should be placed on the register.

Again, unmarried women living at home are nearly all excluded from the register, though it may often happen that, by means of their earnings, they have at least helped to renew much of the furniture of the house, and often help to maintain the home.

Women's Appeals.

In all these cases, men would get the Parliamentary vote on the simple residence qualification. When the first register to include women's names was drawn up, in the summer of 1918, it was found, all over the country, that women legally qualified had had their names omitted from the list. Registration Officers were kept busy hearing appeals. In the town of Swansea, through the action of the Women Teachers' Union, the active members of which were also members of the Women's Freedom League, the Elementary Schools had to be shut for a half-day, while the women teachers, to the number of about 300, went to the Registration Office to support their claims. As a result of this, some 250 women's names were added to the register. It was a curious fact that, in these cases, the Registration Officer tried to make the women prove, not only the possession of furniture in rooms which had been taken in an unfurnished state, but also that the rooms were used as a "separate dwelling-place"—i.e., that meals were taken in them. It really seems that every possible difficulty is put in the way of women's enfranchisement. And even when once a name has been put on the register, it must not be taken for granted that it will appear on subsequent ones. In Swansea, many of the victories for the first register became losses for the second one; in one case, a woman owner of a considerable house and grounds had her name omitted.

It has been encouraging, during the last week, to see from the local papers that the Election Agents are dissatisfied with the present anomalies in women's qualification—the proof of 30 years of age, and the ownership of furniture, is giving them infinite trouble, and at the Swansea Revision Court, the Liberal and Conservative

agents both spoke in favour of giving women the vote at the same age as men, and on the residential qualification, as in the case of men. According to the Conservative agent, "the women were keener on getting on to the register than men," while the Liberal agent said that it was depressing to find how many fine, intelligent women of between 30 and 40 were "off" because of the horrible provision that the furniture must be theirs.

In connection with this, the local branch of the Women's Freedom League sent a letter to the Press, emphasising the anomalies of the women's qualification, and pointing out that, in spite of the general desire to make women's qualifications the same as men's, Mr. Bonar Law has twice refused to receive a deputation from the Women's Freedom League on the matter, and gives no hope that it will be dealt with in the House.

Women cannot afford to rest till this question is set right; it is almost as hard to obtain an extension of a right as to get the right established. Our Members of Parliament must be written to, and the Government must be reminded, both in and out of season, that women will not be content with the present law, but that they demand that full justice shall be given them.

EQUAL PAY FOR MEN & WOMEN TEACHERS?

The National Association of Schoolmasters has been very busy at Birmingham, and quite recently decided at a meeting, by 33 votes to 25 votes, to form a branch of the Association in that city, in opposition to the National Union of Teachers, because the latter, some years ago, agreed that there should be equal pay for men and women teachers. A Mr. Jackson, of London, said that in the teaching profession there was no such thing as equal work. He knew there were many women who were quite capable of giving lessons as well as a male teacher, and some were capable of making a much better show than men; but that was not education in the real sense of the word. The mere imparting of instruction was not education. The training of character, the turning out of manly boys and womanly women, was the task of the teacher, and the woman teacher was no more capable of training a manly man than a man was of training a womanly woman. Women had less responsibilities than men in regard to home life; equal pay in the teaching profession was impossible with the present social system, was a menace to the State, and it represented thoughtless selfishness on the part of women teachers who adopted such a thing!

Tut! tut! This sounds very much like the resurrection of the sentiments with which we were all so familiar in the old anti-suffrage days. Is not the training of a womanly woman, or whatever the gentleman means, as important, and of equal value to the State, as the training of a manly man? And is it not a little dogmatic to assert that a woman cannot train a manly boy? But Mr. Johnson does not venture to define "manliness." If these disgruntled schoolmasters would only wake up, they would see that many women have equal responsibilities with men in the way of family dependants, and in any case it is not usual at the present time to pay any man or woman in accordance with their family responsibilities. If these men could wake up to their own interests, and to the interests of education, they would not waste their time fighting capable women teachers in regard to the matter of equal pay, but would join forces with them to secure adequate and equal pay for all the men and women members of their profession, and to fight against the so-called education economies of the Government, which spell disaster for the future citizens of our country in their competition against the better educated citizens of other nations.

WOMEN AT HOME & ABROAD.

Woman Conductor.

Madame Dorothy Kennard, who conducted Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius" at a concert in the Brighton Dome, last week, is the first woman to conduct the production in Brighton of a full performance of oratorio, with orchestra as well as choir, the latter of which she herself trained. She has already done a good deal in the way of conducting chorus and orchestra in the form of light opera, but Elgar's great work is a far more ambitious attempt. Further north we learn that the Sheffield Teachers' Operatic Society has appointed Miss Eva Rich, a Sheffield soprano vocalist, as its musical director.

Newnham's Principal-elect.

The governing body of Newnham College, Cambridge, have by unanimous vote elected as principal Miss J. P. Strachey, Fellow and tutor of the College, as from October next. Miss Strachey is a daughter of the late Sir Richard Strachey and of Lady Strachey. She is an old Newnham student, and has been a director and lecturer in modern languages since 1915.

Women Chairmen.

Mrs. Wilton Phipps, who has just been elected Chairman of the L.C.C. Education Committee, is the first woman to occupy this position. Mrs. Phipps, who is an American by birth, has been a member of the Committee for many years, and recently acted as Vice-Chairman. She has also been Vice-Chairman of the L.C.C., of which she is an Alderman. Lady Trustram Eve has been elected Chairman of the L.C.C. Parks Committee.

Italy and Woman Suffrage.

Signor Mussolini, having stated that he is in favour of the gradual introduction of woman suffrage, a new Electoral Reform Bill is to be introduced in the next Session of the Italian Parliament. Signor Mussolini, it will be remembered, has agreed to be Hon. President of the International Woman Suffrage Congress in Rome next May, and will be present to speak at the opening session.

Swiss Women's Progress.

On the appeal of a woman lawyer who had been refused admission to the Bar by the Fribourg Council of State, the Swiss Federal Tribunal has decided that duly qualified women are entitled to be called to the Bar. Mlle. Hélène Keruen has obtained a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering at the Swiss Federal Polytechnic.

Woman Solicitor Wins.

The honour of being the first woman solicitor to practise in Yorkshire police-courts rests with Miss Mary Sykes, who appeared at Huddersfield recently in an affiliation case, which she won. She is now a partner in one of the largest firms of solicitors in Huddersfield.

Woman Fashion Director.

Miss Elspeth Phelps, who in private life is Mrs. Lionel Fox-Pitt, has been appointed Director of Paquin's London establishment, which means that she will dictate the French fashions in London.

Women's Municipal Successes.

Our member, Miss Hare, of Burgess Hill, has been returned unopposed for the Urban District Council. Mrs. F. Pickup has been elected unopposed on the Pickering Board of Guardians, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mrs. Richard Ward.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LAST LECTURE

FOREIGN POLITICS

in the

MINERVA CAFÉ, 144 HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.

MONDAY, MARCH 26th—6 p.m.—"THE RELATIONS OF THIS COUNTRY WITH RUSSIA."

Speaker: MR. A. MACDONELL (League of Nations Union).
ADMISSION FREE. Reserved Seats 1/- from 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Women Franchise.

MR. BONAR LAW, replying to Mr. Foot (Bodmin), who asked if it was the Prime Minister's intention to introduce a Bill giving to women the franchise on the same conditions as it applied to men, both as to age and otherwise, said that the answer was in the negative.

Nationality of Married Women.

The House of Lords last week decided to appoint members on a Joint Select Committee of both Houses, to examine the law as to the nationality of married women.

Training Colleges.

Lady Astor asked the President of the Board of Education whether he was appointing a Departmental Committee to inquire into the question of training colleges; and, if so, in view of the preponderance of women in the teaching profession, whether he would give an undertaking that women should be adequately represented on the Committee? Mr. Wood replied that the answer to the first part of the question was in the affirmative, and that he would certainly bear in mind the suggestion made in the last part of the question. Mr. Lunn pressed for a more definite answer in regard to appointing women on the Departmental Committee, but the Minister of Education argued that he had to take time to consider who would be suitable members, and to invite them to serve, and he was doing that now!

Maintenance Orders (Arrears).

MR. RHYS DAVIES asked the Home Secretary if he had received a resolution from the Petty Sessional Division of Bolton, stating that, at a meeting of the Justices acting in and for that division, held at the County Police Court, Bolton, a resolution had been passed requesting that magistrates be empowered to impose hard labour in cases where persons were committed to prison for arrears of maintenance under the Bastardy Acts and the Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act, 1895; and, if so, could he make a statement on the subject? Mr. BRIDGEMAN replied that he had received the resolution, but did not see his way to propose any legislation for giving effect to it.

Factories Inspectorate.

SIR HARRY BRITAIN (Acton) asked whether it was the policy of the Home Office for women inspectors in the Factory Department to inspect warehouses and factories where only men were employed; and, if so, whether such inspections could in future be carried out by men only? Mr. LOCKER-LAMPSON, replying for the Home Office, said that, under the scheme for re-organisation which was adopted in 1920, on the recommendation of a Departmental Committee, the men and women inspectors had been placed on the same footing, and it was the duty of women inspectors to inspect both men's and women's work. The Committee were strongly of opinion that the main work of factory inspection could (given the necessary training in the Department) be carried out as well by women as by men. Where any special reasons existed for inspection by a man rather than by a woman, arrangements were made accordingly. The scheme had now been in force for a considerable time, had in general been very favourably received, and was working well. The Home Secretary was afraid, therefore, that he could not accept the suggestions contained in the second part of the question, but he was always ready to inquire into any particular case where a grievance might be felt.

Prisons and Borstal Institutions.

CAPT. WEDGWOOD BENN (Leith) asked the Home Secretary if he was aware that an inquiry into prisons and Borstal institutions had been promised by his predecessor; and, in view of the general demand for the inquiry, would he say how soon it was intended to appoint the committee? Mr. BRIDGEMAN replied he

was not satisfied that there was at present any such general demand as would justify the setting up of a committee of inquiry.

Ex-Service Nurses.

MAJOR ASTOR (Dover) asked the Minister of Labour how many disabled ex-Service nurses had completed courses of training; and what percentage had obtained employment in the occupations in which they had been trained? SIR MONTAGUE BARLOW replied that between January 1st, 1920, and December 31st, 1922, 173 disabled nurses completed courses of training. In spite of the difficulty of providing employment even for women who had no war disability, 64 per cent. were employed in the occupations for which they had been trained. Of the rest, 11 per cent. were at present unemployed owing to ill-health, 4 per cent. had married since they completed their training, and 21 per cent. were unemployed or their position was unknown. The last figure included a number of women who completed their training at the end of December, and did not secure employment immediately.

Detention of Children.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Pontypool) asked the Home Secretary what Regulations were in force with respect to the detention of persons apparently under 16, when such detention was in a police station in the Metropolitan Police District? Mr. BRIDGEMAN replied that detention at a police station of children under 16 was infrequent, except in the case of straying children, who were brought there for a brief period until claimed by parents. If, under exceptional circumstances, such a case arose, the child or young person was placed, not in a cell, but in charge of the Matron, and, in the case of the larger stations, in the detention room, care being taken to prevent association with any adult charged with an offence. The police officer concerned must in any such case certify that it had been impracticable or undesirable for the young person to be removed to a place of detention. That certificate was produced at the Court before whom the juvenile was brought.

Hong Kong (Immoral Traffic).

LORD HENRY BENTINCK (S. Nottingham) asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if, in view of the fact that no record of the ages appeared in the census of the number of prostitutes in Hong Kong, and, in view of allegations made that many of them were of quite tender years, he would inquire whether the Government of Hong Kong had any available information upon that feature of prostitution in the Colony? Mr. ORMSBY-GORE replied that allegations of that kind were made a few years ago. The Governor reported that no girl was admitted to a brothel unless the Secretary for Chinese Affairs was satisfied that she was 19 or over. He further offered to have a full inquiry made, if any evidence was produced of specific cases in support of the allegations. So far as he was aware, none had been produced, but the Governor's offer still held good.

Hong Kong (Treatment of Children).

LADY ASTOR asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention had been called to the published statement of Dr. Yeung Shiu Chuen, made in Hong Kong on or about January 13th, that a *mui tsai* had been sold for 90 dollars, and that the sale had taken place at the office of the Secretary for Chinese Affairs; that, upon the mother wishing to regain control of her child, the purchaser demanded 180 dollars as the redemption price; whether the Secretary for Chinese Affairs referred the mother to the owner; and whether any further action had been taken by the Hong Kong Government to assist the mother in securing the liberation of her child? Mr. ORMSBY-GORE replied he had only seen the statement in a local newspaper, and he was asking the Governor for a report on the case.

F. A. U.

THE VOTE.

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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.

PROTECTION OR OBSTRUCTION?

The Industrial Conference arranged last week by the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations (to which the Women's Freedom League is affiliated) was of special interest to women. Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, D.Sc., presided. She pointed out that the Council must be clear about its international policy, especially in regard to the Washington Conventions, and for that purpose the following two resolutions would be discussed, the first proposed and seconded by Miss Cecile Matheson and Dame Adelaide Anderson, and the second by Mrs. Abbott and Miss Helen Ward:—

(1) "That under the present organisation of manufacture by power-driven machinery for mass production, some protective legislation for women is indispensable for the salvaging of civilisation."

(2) "That the establishment of a system of legislation for the protection of industrial and professional workers, based on sex rather than on the nature of the occupation, is reactionary in tendency."

Miss Matheson put the case for protective legislation for women, which, however, she said should be kept down to a minimum. The need for such legislation was not apparent until women went into the factories. It was a danger to the future of the race that women should be standing at the looms until within a few hours of the birth of their child. There was an awful story of women's overwork in the Midlands, and this had worked havoc on the child-bearing possibilities of women. Miss Matheson pointed out that, in many cases, working men had benefited by the rules and regulations made for the women, and she defended the prohibition of night-work for women, chiefly on moral grounds and because this prohibition would help to preserve the home life of the worker. She also agreed with the prevention of women working in lead industries, because of the disastrous effect of this lead work on their offspring. Dame Adelaide Anderson emphasised the fact that, during the war, women workers who took men's places were known as "substitutes," and that they had "substitute" conditions to enable them to work to their full capacity, which were not quite the same as men's. She argued that this protective legislation for women was due to the accident of sex, and was necessary in order to fit the work to the physiological capacity of the worker. She believed there should be the minimum of protective legislation for women, and that in time to come, when quality was the aim, instead of quantity, in industry, women's hours need not be regulated.

Mrs. Abbott, who was definitely opposed to any special protective legislation for women, said that what she wanted was a general re-organisation of industry. She was very suspicious of the heredity of the demand for special restrictions for women. Women workers had always been considered as a class apart; they had not the same right as men to choose their occupations. In the home they were the wageless producer; in the labour market they were supposed to be the "protected" weak creature. In 1886 the average earnings of a woman in industry were calculated to be half those of an average man; in 1906 they were less than this.

The ancient differentiation in the treatment of men and women workers kept women down all over the world. During the war, women proved their personal capacity. Then Equal Pay became a real possibility. It was absurd to suppose that their work could only be effective if supervised by the State. On mass production they came out first every time, when it was stated that men could not stand its monotony. After the war there was a general desire to oust women from industry. All the time women workers had only been looked upon as a means to an end. *Misdirected pity was quite as mischievous as misdirected power* in regard to women's work. In New York, women had been turned out of the printing trade, which was considered by men to be suitable only for men. The women who were turned out were subsequently taken on to do the scrubbing. Why should women's position always be considered from the point of view of her possibility as a wife and mother?

Miss Helen Ward objected to the old philanthropic idea that women workers must be specially protected. Were our economic, as well as our moral, standards always to be double standards for the sexes? Or should there be a single standard? There was always night-work for the mother in the home; there was night-work for women stock-keepers; and night-work for women astronomers. The point was that the work was worth it. There might be difficulties in the equal conditions for men and women workers, but they were as nothing in comparison with the evils of restrictions for one sex only. These special restrictions affected the position of every woman worker. Let the conditions of industry be improved for both men and women workers. The State could carry this through for both sexes as easily as for one. In a few years the whole of our industry might be changed. With increased electrical power, there may be no need for much of the present heavy work for men and women. In the meantime, the less legislation there is for women, the better. Miss Ward had always demanded that there should be as little night-work as possible for both men and women, and that there should be better amenities for all workers.

With the last two speakers the Women's Freedom League delegates were in entire agreement.

ABOVE (?) THE LAW.

The police, recently raiding a house, found the landlady, a girl of 27, and a married man. If any of these were culpable, all three were; but at Bath City Police Court, on February 26th, the landlady received two months' imprisonment for allowing her house to be used for immoral gain; the girl, for aiding and abetting, was bound over, after collapsing in the dock, in £10 for two years under the Probation of Offenders Act, to go to an institution approved of by the Probation Officer, stay there till allowed to leave, and then take an approved situation; whilst the married man was not arrested or charged, nor named in public. If he had not been present, the women could not have been arrested; therefore, he was equally guilty with the girl. Bath has only one woman magistrate, and she was not upon the bench that day. The Chairman mentioned the "unfortunate and disgraceful thing that there was a man in Bath who was largely responsible for the prisoner's downfall, and hoped it would weigh upon his conscience and be a lesson to him." Mrs. Smith, of Brighton, and a few other magistrates always require the men also to be brought before them.

At the Central Criminal Court, this week, a woman was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude for illegal operations on two girls, one of whom, an assistant L.C.C. mistress, died. A man named Gould admitted taking the latter, and two other girls for whose condition he was also responsible, to the prisoner. *As his evidence was essential to the prosecution, they greatly regretted that he could not be punished, as he so richly deserved;* and he goes on his way rejoicing, to spread corruption and to purchase crime.

THE LEGAL STATUS OF MARRIED WOMEN.

Speaking at a meeting of the Six Point Group on Wednesday of last week, Mrs. Crofts, one of our first women solicitors, explained to an interested audience how, in spite of the legislation of the last fifty years, a great deal still remained to be done to ameliorate the position of the married woman in this country. Some good, however, had already been effected by the long series of Married Women's Property Acts, extending from 1870 to 1908, especially the Act of 1882, also by the Representation of the People Act, 1918, which enfranchised certain women over thirty, and lastly by the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, 1918, which affected both single and married women.

Marriage, said Mrs. Crofts, was not only a status and an institution, but also a contract. Unlike other contracts, however, where the contracting parties can determine for themselves what laws shall govern them, the State steps in, in the case of a marriage contract, and acts as the governing factor. The marriage laws were formerly governed by Canon law until 1836, when Lord John Russell introduced the first Matrimonial Causes Bill.

Conditions of Marriage.—Mrs. Crofts briefly reviewed the physical requirements for marriage, and pointed out how the Act of 1907, permitting a man to marry his deceased wife's sister, was not extended to give similar permission to women until 1922.

Nationality.—The present anomalous position was reviewed, and America's recent decision explained. All the Women's Societies were unanimous, said Mrs. Crofts, that we ought to go back again to the old position before 1870, when a woman invariably retained her nationality on marriage.

Guardianship of Children.—The present unjust inequalities were discussed, by means of which only the father is recognised as parent in the case of a legitimate child, and only the mother in the case of an illegitimate child. The efforts of the Women's Socie-

ties to obtain equal guardianship by both parents were stressed.

Intestacy.—On a married woman dying without making a will, her husband may take all her property, but on a husband dying intestate, with no children, the wife can only take the first £500, then half the property, and sometimes a third. If there are children, the wife is only entitled to a third of her husband's estate. A man may leave away all his money from his wife, if he so wishes.

Divorce.—There was no divorce in this country until 1857, except by special Act of Parliament. Mrs. Crofts briefly reviewed the present inequalities in the Divorce Laws, and was hopeful that the Bill now before Parliament, equalising conditions between the sexes, would become law. She also explained "Statutory desertion" as a humane equivalent to the legally allotted two years. Both alimony and maintenance, she said, were decided by the Courts. The benefit accruing to poor women by the institution of the Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act of 1895, was also explained.

Privileges.—These were briefly outlined as follows, many of them being survivals of ancient times:—
(a) "Presumption of coercion," a survival not of chivalry, but of serfdom, and had its origin in the old days in the "benefit of clergy." The abolition of coercion was recommended in 1879 by a Royal Commission, and a Government Bill had now been introduced for the same purpose. (b) A wife can assist a husband to escape without committing a felony. (c) Neither husband nor wife can be compelled to give evidence against each other. (d) A married woman cannot be made bankrupt unless she is carrying on a separate business apart from her husband, and she cannot be imprisoned for debt. (e) Married women cannot be taxed separately for income-tax. (f) A man must support any illegitimate children of his wife before marriage, but a woman has no such responsibility.

THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT IN ROUMANIA.

The National Council of Women of Roumania was founded by Princess Catacuzène in July, 1921. This does not mean, however, that the feminist movement in Roumania is young. It has a long history, in which the names of many brilliant women appear, but the war and its consequences brought the fight for women's emancipation to an issue. The war showed women their strength; the patriotism which brought them together in danger has kept them in touch since, and united them for their own protection in time of peace. Thus the opportunity arose for the formation of a National Council of Women. Also, after the war, Roumania went through a peaceful revolution, as a result of which manhood suffrage was introduced, and the nobles abdicated their privileges, all but about one-fifth of their domains being divided among the peasants. This was therefore an appropriate time for the women of Roumania to seek equal citizenship and to combine for this end.

The new National Council has branches in many districts of Roumania. Its members hope to make it a peaceful instrument for the attainment of national unity and the fullest civic education. It is also intended to be a means of uniting the women's societies which have been in existence for varying periods. These include the Society for the Protection of War Orphans, of which the Queen of Roumania is Hon. President, and Princess Michel Stourdza, President; the Obelon, a society for the assistance of women in the home; the Furnica, which, since 1878, has organised the industrial employment of women, especially in the Trade Schools, which are chiefly schools of weaving and silk manufacture; a society for the assistance of

women artists; another for the assistance of consumptives. The principal organ of the feminist and social propaganda is known as the Women's League, and is presided over by a pioneer of feminism in Roumania, Mme. Janculescu Reussi.

The programme of the National Council of Roumanian Women is the same as that of all other National Councils of Women, and of their Federation, the Women's International Council. Princess Catacuzène is now Vice-President, the President being Mme. Calypso Botez, a talented lawyer. Of eight sections which are contemplated, three have already been organised. Mme. Botez directs the Labour Section, which has started a secretarial and commercial school with over 100 pupils. The Section for an Equal Moral Standard, under the direction of Dr. Manicate de Vernet, Mme. Pascano, and Mme. Michel Popp, has started on social work, which is already having important results. The Legislative Section is under the direction of a lawyer, Mme. Ela Negrita, who is engaged on the preparatory work of drawing up the new Roumanian Constitution.

Roumanian women already possess municipal rights. Several women have been appointed by the Government as Municipal Councillors, Mme. Zoé Ramniceanu being the first to be elected by the people. The Government has already appointed one woman, Mlle. Hélène Vacaresco, as delegate to the Assembly of the League of Nations. It is to be hoped that when the new Constitution is complete, manhood suffrage will be extended to universal suffrage, and that women and men will be able to work together for the re-establishment of peace and prosperity in Roumania.

BASTARDY BILL.

This Bill, which was presented by Captain Bowyer, and supported by Mr. Betterton and Mr. Wignall, has passed its Second Reading in the House of Commons. Its aim is to make further and better provision with regard to children of unmarried parents. The first clause enacts that, if a collecting officer has not been appointed under the Affiliation Orders Act, 1914, the Clerk to the Justices, or, in London, the Chief Clerk of a Metropolitan Police Court, shall exercise the powers and duties imposed under the Affiliation Orders Act. The second clause provides that a summons may be issued to the mother by any Justice having jurisdiction within the district in which the mother resides. Clause 3 provides that payments shall be made by the putative father to an amount not exceeding 20s. a week, and any payment prescribed by the Order shall continue to be made until the child has attained the age of sixteen years, unless it dies before attaining that age. Clause 4 states that, where an illegitimate child has become chargeable to a Union or parish, and the Board of Guardians concerned has instituted proceedings under the Bastardy Laws Amendment Act, 1872, any Order made upon such proceedings shall continue in force, notwithstanding that the child may have ceased to be chargeable to the Union or parish in question, and notwithstanding that no proceedings have been instituted at any time by the mother of the child: provided that in such event the Collecting Officer shall apply to the Court for an Order for the payment of the money to him, instead of to the Guardians, and the Court may make such Order without re-hearing the case.

VENEREAL DISEASE.

The Women's After-Care Hostel, 22, Highbury Quadrant, founded in 1918 to enable girls and women attending the free Public Clinics to continue their treatment until cured, held its Annual Meeting last Thursday. Dr. Jané Walker spoke strongly in favour of voluntary methods, in spite of all difficulties and disadvantages. Remedies must be found, not in compulsion, but in an equal moral standard, housing improvement, and early marriage, even when it meant facing years of hard struggle. The patients pay what they can afford for their maintenance, may take a complete rest, or go out to their usual employment while receiving treatment daily, if necessary. The Hostel aims at the building up of character by encouraging independence of thought.

FOREIGN POLITICS.

"The Relations of Great Britain with Russia," the last of our series of Lectures on Foreign Politics, will be dealt with by Mr. A. Macdonell (of the League of Nations Union) on Monday, March 26th, 6 p.m., at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. We are very fortunate in securing Mr. Macdonell for this Lecture, more especially as he has quite recently returned from Russia. The relations of this country with Russia are of far-reaching importance, and we hope that as many readers of THE VOTE as possible will be present on Monday evening to listen to Mr. Macdonell, ask him questions, and discuss the subject in three-minute speeches. Admission is free, and there will be a collection for expenses.

BOOK REVIEW.

Notification and Compulsory Treatment of Venereal Diseases. By Douglas White, M.A., M.D. (Association for Social and Moral Hygiene.) Price 4d. (Can be obtained at this Office.)

This is a subject continually cropping up, upon which all responsible citizens should make up their minds. Legislation follows public opinion, and knowledge is needed if we are to form a reasoned judgment and discharge our responsibility to the State. This little pamphlet, reprinted from "The Shield," gives concisely the arguments for and against the introduction of compulsion into the national fight against these diseases. We all agree that a proportion of patients being treated at the public expense discontinue treatment whilst still uncured or infective, thus wasting the public money already spent upon them. But the remedy is to be sought in attracting and attaching the patient to the free clinic by social education and simple individual explanation of the dangers of neglect of treatment; by encouragement and a cheery, friendly, hopeful spirit pervading the treatment centres, rather than in trying to propel all diseased persons in the direction in which we would have them move.

It is very significant that the proportion of patients who cease attendance before they receive permission varies very much in different clinics. Women patients are much more amenable to women surgeons.

To apply compulsion to the individual is always difficult. Notification is seldom possible till the patient has sought medical aid, and the fear of compulsion and publicity will tend to frighten the patient into putting off the evil day as long as possible, or altogether, and so aggravate the disease and spread infection to others. An attempt at compulsion would require elaborate machinery, and it could not be effectively carried out in this country. Some patients might be followed up and caught; probably most would escape. The extra cost, therefore, would bring little result, and the decrease in patients applying for treatment would be detrimental to public health. In this disease even more than in any other we must recognise that the goodwill of the patient is a vital necessity for success.

We advise all our readers to send to us for the pamphlet. E. K.

HOUSING.

Last week the Prime Minister stated that the Government's Housing Bill would be introduced immediately on the re-assembling of Parliament after Easter. In reply to a question by Mr. Trevelyan Thomson, the Minister of Health (Mr. Neville Chamberlain) said that reports received from Medical Officers of Health for 1,060 boroughs and urban districts for the year 1921 showed that 994,005 houses had been inspected under the Public Health Acts, and Housing (Inspection of Districts) Regulations, 13,279 houses had been reported as unfit for habitation, and 226,713 as not in all respects reasonably fit. Notices under Section 28 of the Housing Act, 1919, had been served in respect of 30,818 houses, and of those, 23,453 had been rendered fit by the owners, and 912 by the local authorities. Notices had been served under the Public Health Acts in respect of 226,549 houses; in 240,310 of the houses concerned, the defects had been remedied by the owners, and in 2,757 houses by the local authorities. Closing orders had been made in respect of 1,416 houses, while in the case of 287 houses closing orders were determined after the houses had been made fit.

In reply to a question by Capt. Benn, the Minister of Health said he did not think that the statistics of marriages in themselves gave a reliable basis for estimating the number of houses required. The number of marriages in England and Wales between 1901 and 1910 was 2,640,515, and the increase in the number of buildings between the censuses in 1901 and 1911 was 841,000. The number of marriages between 1911 and 1920 was 3,075,703, and the increase in the number of structurally separate dwellings between the censuses of 1911 and 1921 was 357,000.

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

Friday, March 23rd, at 3.30 p.m. Reception at Minerva Club, Brunswick Square (corner of Coram and Hunter Streets), in support of the Rome Congress. Speakers: Mrs. Fawcett, J.P., LL.A., Mrs. G. F. Abbott, Mrs. Herabai Tata and others. Tickets 1/-, including Tea, to be obtained at this office.

Monday, March 26th, at 6 p.m. Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Subject: "The Relations of this Country with Russia." Mr. A. Macdonell (of the League of Nations Union.)

Tuesday, March 27, at 3.15 p.m. Hampstead Branch Meeting, at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3. (by kind permission of Dr. Knight). Conference Business.

Monday, April 16th, at 6.30 p.m. Mid-London Branch Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. To Discuss Conference Agenda and instruct Delegate.

Friday, April 27th, at 2.30 p.m. National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Saturday, April 28th. Women's Freedom League Annual Conference, Caxton Hall.

Friday, July 6th, Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party, Caxton Hall, Westminster. Further particulars later.

PROVINCES.

Friday, March 23rd, at 3.30 p.m. Bexhill. Public Meeting at Glyne Hall, Sea Road. Speaker: Dr. Octavia Lewin. Subject: "How to Prevent Diseases in the Home."

Tuesday, March 27th, at 8 p.m. Southend-on-Sea and District. Public Meeting at St. John's Ambulance Hall, 76, Queen's Road. Speaker: Mrs. Stanley. Subject: "Hostels for Women Workers."

Monday, April 9th. Middlesbrough. Annual Meeting at 231A, The Arcade, Linthorpe Road.

BRANCH NOTES.**HAMPSTEAD.**

A crowded meeting was held at the Isis Club on Wednesday, March 14th, to hear Mrs. Nevinson's delightful address on "The Experiences of a Suffrage Speaker." Mrs. Nevinson gave a thrilling account of the street meetings and hazardous caravan campaigns of the Women's Freedom League in the quest of the vote, and of our famous eight months' picket of the House of Commons. Mrs. Cruickshank (New Zealand) ably filled the Chair. Great interest was aroused, as many present heard these details for the first time. Literature and THE VOTE sold freely, and several new members joined the Branch.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGH.

On March 7th a very successful Concert was held in the Victoria Theatre (kindly lent, free of cost, by Mr. Sidney Attwood). The Theatre was filled to overflowing, and Miss M. Clark was given a great ovation when she rose to speak. She was supported by Rev. J. T. Lewis, Vice-Chairman, and Councillor Perry. Great enthusiasm was shown, every item being endorsed.

On March 15th, the inmates of the Poor Law Institution were generously entertained by the Women's Freedom League (Newtown Branch), under the able direction and supervision of Miss Alix M. Clark. A sumptuous tea was followed by the distribution of sweets and oranges to the children, tea and sugar to the women, and tobacco to the men. The entertainment was made possible out of the proceeds from the Women's Freedom League concert held in Newtown the previous week, which totalled £48. Mrs. W. R. Williams presided over the enjoyable concert, and items were contributed by Mrs. Sylvester, Nurse Kate Morgan, and Miss Evans (Pool Road). Miss Rosa Thomas accompanied. Two divan chairs were presented for the men's and women's sick wards, and also a gramophone, with a large number of records. A box of games was received from Dr. Knight. In addition to these gifts, two rubber hot-water bottles, soap, feeding cups, and sponges have been given to the women's sick ward. Miss Clark privately entertained a number of Guardians and members of the Women's Freedom League. At the close, a hearty vote of thanks, on the motion of Rev. J. T. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Jones, Cwm, was accorded Miss Clark and the Newtown ladies.

DANCE AT BEDFORD COLLEGE.

The British Rome Congress Committee are arranging a Dance and Reception, to be held at Bedford College on Tuesday, April 10th, from 8-12.30. The following have kindly consented to act as hostesses: Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Fitzgerald, Dame May Whitty, Mrs. Herabai Tata, Miss Lena Ashwell, Dr. Letitia Fairfield, Miss Gertrude Kingston, Miss Beatrice Harraden. We now have tickets, price 5s., on sale at 144, High Holborn. Please apply as early as possible.

TO BRANCH SECRETARIES.

"Forthcoming Events" and "Branch Notes" for next week's issue of THE VOTE, should arrive at this Office not later than first post, March 26th.

EASTER HOLIDAYS.

The Women's Freedom League and VOTE Offices will be closed from Thursday, March 29th, 5.30 p.m., until Wednesday, April 4th, 9.30 a.m.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.**Labour Women's Conference.**

The First Agenda of the National Conference of Labour Women, to be held on May 8th and 9th, at York, is to hand. The first Resolution on this Agenda records its conviction that the decision of the L.C.C. to dismiss women teachers on marriage is inimical to the cause of education. There are three Resolutions emphasising the necessity of granting the vote to all women at the age of twenty-one, and on the same terms as men. There are also Resolutions advocating pensions for widows with children; an excellent Resolution urging a drastic reform of our whole penal system; Resolutions asking for the abolition of capital punishment; a Resolution demanding that an adequate force of Women Police be at once established in all towns; and yet another demanding that no person shall be convicted on a charge of solicitation by the unsupported evidence of a police officer. Several Resolutions deal specially with the unemployment of women, and condemn the administration of the Unemployment Insurance Act as applied to single women. Juvenile unemployment is also dealt with on this Agenda. Nine resolutions urge the necessity of dealing at once with the housing problem: others protest against the policy of education "economies." These Labour women demand a pure milk supply, and an extension of the Trade Boards. They urge the Chancellor of the Exchequer to abolish the duty on sugar, "which imposes a heavy tax on working-class families," and protest against the Government's recent refusal to remove restrictions on old-age pensions. The last Resolution on the Agenda (No. 60), dealing with the Position of Women, reads:

"This Conference views with apprehension the present position of women workers. The fact that many of them are unorganised and voteless leaves them at the mercy of unscrupulous employers. Moreover, the present trend, to refuse women a normal place in industry, and drive them into occupations that are cheap and parasitic, is contrary to our ideas of equality, and against the principles of the Labour Party. We demand that women shall be given equal opportunities with men to develop their abilities and give service to the community, and we call upon the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations to hold Conferences throughout England, with the object of impressing public opinion with the seriousness of the position."

Teachers and the L.C.C.

Last week twelve representatives of the National Union of Teachers, the London Teachers' Association, and the Head Teachers' Association met the Education Sub-Committee of the Council. As a result of this meeting, the Council's proposal to make head teachers responsible for a certain amount of class teaching was withdrawn for further consideration. With reference to the proposed employment of unqualified women as "infants' assistants," the teachers' representative were informed that their employment would be strictly limited, and that their employment would be confined to the teaching of infants under five years of age. It is understood that the teachers' organisations will still urge reconsideration of this question.

Woman Chairman of the I.L.P.?

A correspondent in the *Daily Herald* writes: "I notice that the nominations for the Chairmanship of the I.L.P. include the names of a few women, and I should like to appeal to all fellow-members to recollect that in the 30 years we have never yet had a woman Chairman."

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.

Mrs. M. W. Nevinson, J.P., LL.A., preached to a crowded audience of women on Monday, in St. John's Church, Broad Court, Drury Lane, her subject being "Post-War Problems." A woman read the lessons, and two women took the collection. The Rector is to be congratulated on his broadminded attitude towards women in the Church.

EASTER CAMPAIGN—BRIGHTON.**PLEASE HELP!**

This year's campaign at the National Union of Teachers' Annual Conference at Brighton will be of special importance, in view of various Resolutions to be proposed, to "suspend" and "rescind" the Union's policy of Equal Pay for men and women, and to prevent the employment of married women teachers.

The Public Meeting has been fixed for Wednesday, April 4th, at the Athenæum Hall, 148, North Street, Brighton, when Mrs. Leah Manning, J.P., will speak on the Married Woman's Right to Work, Commandant Allen, O.B.E., on the Work of the Women Police, and Miss Alix M. Clark on the Work of the Women's Freedom League. The Chair will be taken by Miss Mary Hare. Doors open 7.30, to commence at 8 p.m.

A special Educational Number of "The Vote" will be issued on March 30th, price 1d., and will be sold at the meeting.

Miss Alix Clark is devoting her time and energy to the Campaign, and urgently asks for the help of all our members for the heavy expenses of this invaluable work. Offers of help and donations should be addressed to Miss Clark, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

FRIDAY,
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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, March 25th. 12 noon. Little Rally for the Young. 3.15. Music, Poetry, Lecture. Dr. Dearmer. 6.30. Rev. Harold Anson. Music, Martin Shaw.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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