

THE VOTE.
MAY 15, 1925.

TORTS AND INJUSTICES.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.
NON-PARTY.

VOL. XXVI. No. 812.

(Registered at
the G.P.O.)

ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 1925

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

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HANDS OFF THE FOOD!

INTERIM REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON FOOD.

BY EMILY JUSON KERR, J.P.

Women have waited (more or less patiently) for months, hoping against hope that when the Interim Report of the Royal Commission was issued, some relief from high-priced food necessities would result. They have waited in vain! After much labour and travail a mouse has been produced. A mouse of such infinitesimal size it can barely be discovered through a microscope! The ponderous "Report" of over 200 pages results in two "Recommendations" and one generalization—firstly it recommends a standing "Food Council" consisting of ten men and two women, with no statutory powers whatever, on the principle of a dog securely chained to a kennel in order to make a house burglar-proof! The dog can bark and do nothing else. This "Food Council" is to "watch and warn" and do nothing else. Secondly it is suggested that Butchers shall be registered. It does not specify what Butchers, therefore it probably means the unfortunate small Butcher who is struggling for individual existence *outside* the great Meat Combine. Once more the old story of Adam blaming Eve is revived. We are informed that "the average middle-class housewife orders her supplies on the telephone, taking whatever is sent to her by her regular supplier, and so encourages him to charge fancy prices." No doubt the twenty-two men on this Royal Commission are more cognisant about such matters than ordinary men, and have an intimate knowledge of *how* their middle-class women do the catering for their households, and *how* they manage to make two ends meet, or they would not have printed such a generalization. One would like to suggest that *they* themselves should housekeep for a month, and leave their wives free to generalize. One wonders how they would enjoy life under the circumstances. If the matter were not so serious it would be laughable. Every one with the slightest acquaintance with such Councils knows they are merely post-mortems for inconvenient questions, each question being provided with a neat little epitaph in the form of a "Recommendation." Abundant evidence of the growth of monopolies was produced, and their contracts with Chicago, yet *no* anti-combine legislation was ever suggested. The Government have the power to make laws of control over them; yet no attempt has been made. What then is to

be done? If women are not to be helped, there is nothing else but to help themselves by making a combine. They can bring down the price of food. They must touch the pockets of the profiteers by reducing their markets, thus diminishing their returns.

When we ask ourselves, "Why should I pay these high prices for food and other necessaries?" we must think that the answer can be given by the women of England, and that each one of us, whether we live in a large town or a tiny village, can, and should, do our share in bringing down those prices? No, not Mrs. Robinson in the next street, or Mrs. Brown at the cottage over the hill, but YOU & I!

"And how can this be done?" Look at the reason for high prices, and then consider the remedy.

"Combines" and "Trusts" are collections of people banded together in business—they buy up the sugar, tea, meat, flour, soap or whatever it may be, and agree among themselves that nothing shall be sold below a certain price. The small shopkeeper is helpless; he would like to sell cheaper, but can't.

We women are the housekeepers, we buy the weekly provisions, and in our hands lies the remedy. Sacrifice is required, but it is worth it, and each of us must "do her bit."

Let every woman in a town or district pledge herself to take less of what she considers necessities. Mothers of a family may squeeze things so that they take a little less sugar in the week, a little less tea; manage at least one meatless day, reduce the number of loaves bought—bread can be made at home without yeast on one day a week. Those who have no family, or who live alone, can make a sacrifice in proportion.

Let the pledge be taken for one month, and see what happens! Prices will be affected almost at once.

Think what such a "Combine" among women means! No tradesman wants to have quantities of flour, tea, sugar, soap, meat, etc., on his hands which he cannot get rid of. He is a sensible person, and when the housekeeper orders less of his commodities, because there is "less demand" he orders less from his wholesaler. This immediately reacts on the combines. When the wholesaler orders less from them their returns are lessened. Here is a practical example of what has

been done again. A few years ago the price of milk in a neighbourhood soared, and the local Housewives' Union took the matter up. One morning they told the milkman "No milk this week, thank you." A small shop was taken, and milk obtained from a local estate (in spite of the efforts of the milk combine to prevent it) and sold at 2d. cheaper. There was consternation in the local milk combine, and in less than a week the price was down! What has been done once can be done again. Let us bind ourselves together and do more than talk and grumble. The combines are afraid of us—show them that they have good reason to be. Statistics were issued by a London daily about three months after the local Housewives' Union (before referred to) had started a campaign supported by thousands of women in all parts of the country to take a "little less sugar" per week. This paper stated that 1lb. per head less sugar per month of the whole population of Great Britain was being consumed, "probably owing to a consumers' strike."

Women have the power in their hands to buy or not to buy. The buying less per week will so affect the profits of the combines that it will not take long to bring home to them that LOWER PRICES WILL PAY THEM BEST. Lower prices mean larger turnovers, but only through women, the richest as well as the poorest, banding themselves together and doing without, can this end be attained—we each and all must "do our bit" and save consumers being consumed.

All communications with regard to this matter should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Housewives' Union, c/o Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, London.

When it is suggested, for the purpose of bringing down prices, that housewives should institute one or more meatless days, and reduce their purchases of other articles of food, the immediate question invariably is, "What can we have instead?" A leaflet entitled "Substitutes" gives various recipes for both meatless and bakerless days, and even for soap and other washing materials. Copies can be obtained from this Office, at 1d. each or 6d. per dozen.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Women and Commerce.

Three women members attended the annual banquet of the London Chamber of Commerce for the first time last week. They were Miss Marie Lawson, Managing Director of the T. W. & C. B. Sheridan Co., Ltd., Miss Mildred Ransom, Principal, Secretarial Training School, Edgeware Road, and Mrs. Hoster, Principal of the Typewriting, Shorthand, and Translation Offices, St. Stephen's Chambers, E.C. Mrs. Hoster has been a member of the Chamber of Commerce for well over twenty years.

Russian Women Workers.

In the Russian Civil Service, women form one quarter of the whole personnel, but in the co-operatives and the banks the proportion is only 16.8 per cent. The highest percentage, 83.9, is in the Statistical Bureaux. Women's work is much less valued in Russia than men's. While the average wage of the men is 34 roubles 77 kopecks, that of the women is only 22 roubles 72 kopecks.

Italian Woman Scientist.

Miss Mabie Bentivoglio, a young Italian lady, born in Sydney, Australia, is studying in Oxford. She has made Mineralogy and Geology her special study, having taken several scholarships and obtained Professor David's prize for Geology, as well as first class honours in Geology and Mineralogy. She is now occupied in investigating the growth and structure of crystals at the Oxford Laboratory—the only woman so occupied.

Hon. Degree for Duchess of Atholl.

Manchester University has decided to confer honorary degrees on the Duchess of Atholl, Lord Bradbury, Sir R. Falconer (president of Toronto University), Dr. J. B. Ludwig (political economy professor at Munich), and Mr. A. S. Eddington (professor of astronomy at Cambridge).

Australian Women's Leader.

The death has occurred of Rose Scott, the pioneer of women's movements in Australia. She was 78 years old. She successfully led the agitation for women's suffrage, and was largely responsible for legislation for improving conditions of women's labour, the early closing of shops, and prison reform. Miss Scott's father arrived in Australia in 1821.

Women of the Empire.

Special services throughout Canada are to be organised in memory of the women of the Empire who laid down their lives in the war. These services will be held at the same time as the unveiling ceremony of the restored Five Sisters' Window in York Minster.

Woman Candidate for U.S. Senate.

Miss Martha van Rensselaer, head of the New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell, has been endorsed as candidate for the United States Senate, in 1926, by women attending the annual meeting of the New York State Home Economics Association.

Women and Pacific Conference.

Women will be welcomed as delegates to the Pacific conference, to be held in Honolulu in July of this year, and Hawaii will appoint local women to the executive committee of the conference to assist and entertain them.

Edmonton Women Councillors.

To enable women members to put their babies to bed and the men time to change their linen, Edmonton Urban Council will begin its meetings at half-past seven instead of 7 p.m. Women form a third of the membership.

Woman L.C.C. Alderman.

Miss Wallas, who lost her seat on the London County Council last election, after fifteen years' service, was yesterday elected an alderman.

FRENCHWOMEN & MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

La Française, of May 9th, reports that women ran as candidates for various political parties in the recent Municipal Elections, but only the Communist Party took their candidature seriously, and assigned to them districts where they had a chance of being elected; and adds that whatever one's political opinions or sympathies, that fact has to be recognised. Two women were elected in the Communist interest, one for Bobigny, a suburb of Paris, and the other at Douarnenez, and the question is: "What is going to happen now?" It is well known that this particular Party will not easily yield any position gained, and both men and women may refuse to submit to a decree that the Election is null and void. What then? French suffragists are watching events with interest. The two women elected have made up their minds to take their seats, and they are expected to do so. But what will the Senators and the Minister of State say?

Public opinion was very favourable to the women "propaganda candidates" in these Municipal Elections, and *La Française* believes that the women's cause has achieved a decisive success by the election of these women.

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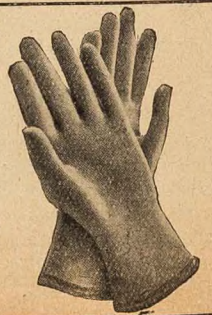
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IN PARLIAMENT.

Married Women (Nationality).

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE (Lab., Leicester, W.) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he had received information that the Swedish Government had placed the question of the nationality of married women before the legal Committee of the League of Nations, and if, in view of the recent decision of the House, he proposed to take any action in the matter? MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN replied that there was no legal Committee of the League of Nations. He presumed that the Hon. Member was referring to the Committee appointed by the last Assembly of the League of Nations to consider the Codification of International Law. He could make no statement on the proceedings of that Committee until he had received a report from the British member.

Unemployment (Women under 30 years).

MR. ERSKINE (U., St. George's) asked the Minister of Labour the number of young women from the ages of 16 to 30 drawing unemployment benefit at the present time? MR. BETTERTON (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour), replied that statistics were not regularly compiled as to the ages of claimants to unemployment benefit, but the results of a special analysis made in November, 1924, in respect to 1 per cent. of the claimants to benefit at that date showed that 66.1 per cent. of the female claimants were in the age group 16 to 29 years inclusive. On that basis the number in that age group at the present time would be about 137,700.

Domestic Service.

MR. ERSKINE asked the Minister of Labour if, in view of scarcity of female domestic help, he could see his way so to tighten up the Regulations relating to unemployed benefit as to preclude any able-bodied young woman from drawing the same on the ground of unsuitability for indoor service? MR. BETTERTON replied that if domestic service appeared to be suitable employment for a female claimant, having regard to her previous industrial experience, such employment was already offered to her. If she refused it her claim was referred to the Insurance Officer, who was one of the Statutory Authorities for giving a decision. He took into account all the circumstances of the case. On the other hand, the hon. Member would, of course, recollect that nearly one-third of the women on the registers of the Employment Exchanges were unemployed operatives in the textile trades.

Criminal Assaults.

MR. BRIANT (Lib., Lambeth N.) asked the Home Secretary if his attention had been called to a case heard at Old Street Police Court, in November, 1924, when a man of 41 was convicted of indecent assault on two children of 11 and 12 years of age; if he was aware that one of those children was seriously injured physically, but that the person convicted was only sentenced to four months' imprisonment; and would he, in view of the increasing number of these assaults on little children, see that where there was a prosecuting solicitor for the police the magistrate was pressed to send the case for trial, in order that where conviction followed a heavier punishment might be inflicted? SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS replied that power was given by the Children Act to deal with those cases summarily for the special purpose of avoiding the necessity for committal for trial in the interests of the children. The offences in that case were of a serious character. The magistrate would have been fully justified in passing the maximum sentence allowed by the Act, namely, six months' imprisonment in respect of each case.

Smoke Abatement.

SIR HENRY SLESSER (Lab., Leeds, S.E.) asked the Prime Minister, in view of the Reports on the quality of the smokeless fuel produced by the low temperature

carbonisation process, and consequent elimination of the smoke nuisance if it was universally employed for household fuel, if the Government was prepared to give facilities for bringing in an Act of Parliament into force providing for the compulsory carbonisation of bituminous coal before use? THE PRIME MINISTER replied that as soon as the Government were satisfied that those processes could be operated successfully on a commercial scale they would consider the steps to be taken to achieve the object which they all desired.

SIR HENRY SLESSER asked the Minister of Health if, having regard to the evidence taken before the Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Health on smoke and noxious vapours abatement in 1920, any steps had been taken by that Ministry on the subject? MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN replied that steps had been taken towards improving the administration of the present law, and the Government hoped also to introduce legislation on the subject next year.

Factories Bill.

CAPT. MACMILLAN (U., Stockton-on-Tees) asked the Home Secretary if he could now state when he hoped to introduce the Factories Bill? SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS replied that he regretted he was not yet in a position to do so. The terms of the Bill were still under consideration on various points in the light of recent representations.

Horses (Export).

Replying to questions by MR. H. WILLIAMS (U., Reading), LT.-COL. ACLAND-TROYTE (U., Tiverton), and MR. ROBERT MORRISON (Co-op., Tottenham, N.), MR. EDWARD WOOD (Minister of Agriculture) said that the Committee on the Export of Horses for Butchery Purposes anticipated that their Report would be presented in about six weeks' time. The evidence would be published with the Committee's recommendations, but until he received the Report he was afraid he could make no announcement as to legislation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL.

The Home Secretary secured a Second Reading for the Criminal Justice Bill in the House of Commons last Monday. This Bill proposes to improve and develop the system of the probation of offenders established by the Probation of Offenders Act, 1907, by making it compulsory to have a probation officer appointed to every Court. Sir William Joynson-Hicks said that last year 12,000 people were placed on probation; nevertheless 1,700 lads and 150 girls between the ages of 16 and 21 who had never been convicted before were sent to prison. The Bill will also enable an accused person to be brought to trial more quickly by providing, that where there are no Assizes coming on rapidly, he or she may be sent for trial to the Central Criminal Court, and similarly not only with regard to the Central Criminal Court in London but to other places. It also provides that photographs should not be taken in Court, and that the penalty for persons convicted of being drunk in charge of a motor car should be increased.

LEAD PAINT BILL.

The text of Sir William Joynson-Hicks' Lead Paint (Protection Against Poisoning) Bill has been issued. It prohibits, after November 19th next, the employment of women and young persons in painting buildings with lead paint. We regret that the Home Secretary has placed women workers in the same category as young persons in the matter of restricting their choice of work. Both employers and employees, men and women, should be compelled to take proper safeguards in any kind of leadwork; but adult women are as capable as men of taking proper precautions in this work, and we see no reason for closing this avenue of employment against all women.

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

FRIDAY, MAY 15th, 1925.

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To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote orders,
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Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

EDITORIAL.

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

TORTS AND INJUSTICES.

Last week, members of the House of Lords discussed the responsibility of a husband for the torts—slander, libel or other wrongdoings—of his wife. Lord Danesfort asked His Majesty's Government to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the matter, and to report what legislation was necessary or desirable to remove this anomaly. As the law now stands, if a wife, without the knowledge or consent of her husband, publishes a serious libel, or commits a gross fraud against a third person, the husband can be sued along with the wife, and damages can be recovered from the husband. Lord Danesfort explained that this survival of some of the old Common Law doctrines as to the *status* of a married woman was not in accordance with modern notions. He reminded their Lordships "of recent legislation with regard to the franchise, by which married, as well as single, women became entitled to exercise the Parliamentary vote, if they complied with certain conditions. Then there is a remarkable Act, passed in 1919, called the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, which, to put it shortly, provided that no person is to be disqualified by sex or marriage from exercising any public function whatsoever." He also pointed out that this defect in the English law does not exist in Scotland. Lord Haldane hoped the Lord Chancellor would assent to the appointment of a Select Committee. It seemed to him that, having in mind the long string of statutes which had been passed to give the wife a separate political *status*, a separate *status* in regard to property, and a separate *status* in the matter of protection, it was monstrous that the present principle should remain intact. Lord Darling referred to a recent case in the Courts in regard to which a Judge of the King's Bench said "It was hard on a husband nowadays that he should be considered as being able to keep his wife in order. Selden, an old Common Law lawyer, had written in one of his books that a man's wife was in a somewhat similar position to his pet monkey, and the husband must be responsible for the mischief she did." Lord Darling recalled the fact that in earlier days a husband had a legal right to give his wife domestic chastisement, "in the same moderation that a man is allowed to correct his apprentices or children"; but nowadays he does not retain this power of correction, and Lord Darling considered that "the simple ground of the equality of the sexes, which we have acknowledged, demands that this change in the law should be made." The Lord Chancellor, Viscount Cave, was also sympathetic. He said, "We had heard of the rights of wives for some years, but in this case we ought to consider the rights of husbands. The matter seems to me to lie in so small a compass that really no committee is needed to pronounce on the matter. The Government are considering the point, and they propose at a convenient time to introduce legislation for the purpose of dealing with this grievance."

It therefore appears that husbands may hope to get some redress from the present Government. Lord Danesfort said that all women are in favour of the removal of this grievance. The Women's Freedom League is in favour of the removal of *all* inequalities of the law as between men and women, and the only kind

of protection they ask for women is an equal right with men to protect themselves; but our firm view is that men's featherweight grievances as to inequalities under the present law are almost negligible as compared with the leaden-weight injustices suffered by women. Early in 1918, it is true, as Lord Danesfort stated, that many married as well as single women, if they were over thirty years of age, were given the Parliamentary vote; but married women only secured it on their husband's qualification, so that if a husband dies his qualification dies with him, and if a General Election takes place before his widow can obtain it on her own qualifications, she loses her vote. Why should not every woman, married or single, from the age of twenty-one, be able to exercise a vote on a short residential qualification, just as a man does? Towards the end of 1918, just before the General Election, a manifesto was jointly issued by Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Lloyd George, which said, "It will be the duty of the new Government to remove all inequalities of the Law as between men and women." In 1919, the "remarkable" Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act was passed, which stated that "A person shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from the exercise of any public function, or from being appointed to any civil office or post, or from entering or assuming or carrying on any civil profession or vocation." Although that Act is on the Statute Book, peeresses in their own right are debarred from membership of the House of Lords, simply because they are women; the Government compels all its *women* employees in the Civil Service to resign their posts on marriage, and the London County Council, as well as other local governing bodies, follow this bad example of the Government in respect of their women employees. Yet married women have no legal claim to any portion of their husband's income, salary, or wages. The husband is obliged, while he is alive, to keep his wife off the rates, but he need not give her any money to spend on herself, and in this country he can will all his money away from her and leave her penniless at his death. Moreover, only a few weeks ago, a London magistrate refused to convict a husband for stealing £2 10s. from his wife, a dressmaker, who had been his sole support for the last two years, on the ground that "it was inappropriate" to do so. Under the present law, a married woman's income is assessed jointly with that of her husband for Income Tax purposes, and whenever there is a rebate it is paid to her husband. Why should she not be held responsible only for the tax on her own income? A married woman has no legal rights in respect to the guardianship and custody of her children, these rights being vested in the father, who, without consulting his wife, may decide how their children shall be educated and where they shall live. Under the present law a British woman who marries a foreigner automatically loses her own nationality. As she does not always automatically acquire the nationality of her husband, it sometimes happens she finds herself without any nationality at all.

The above are some, not all, of the disabilities suffered by women because of the inequalities of the law as between men and women, and we ask that all inequalities of the law, not merely one or two which happen to press unfavourably on a few men, shall be removed forthwith, so that men and women shall be considered as independent human beings, entirely responsible for their own actions. We further demand that the State shall act impartially as between its men and women citizens.

PEERESSES BILL.

The Second Reading of a Bill to enable Peeresses in their own right to sit and vote in the House of Lords will be moved by Lord Astor in the Upper House next Wednesday. This Bill has the warm support of thirty-four women's organisations, representative of every political opinion, and at a recent meeting of the Consultative Committee of Women's Organisations a resolution was passed unanimously in favour of this Bill, and calling upon the Government to adopt it.

THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTES MOVEMENT.

The National Federation of Women's Institutes, which is holding its Ninth Annual General Meeting at the Queen's Hall, next week, has issued its Eighth Annual Report, in which we learn that since its inception in this country, now nearly ten years ago, over 3,000 women's institutes have been founded in England and Wales. The report comments on this growth and development as being as rapid as it was unforeseen. A greatly increased interest in music and the growth of general singing, and in dramatic competition is reported, whilst organised games are becoming a special feature of many of the Institutes. The provision of village libraries is attracting much interest, and various rural library schemes have been inaugurated in nearly a score of counties in England and Wales. The success of the W.I. movement may be gauged from the fact that the Treasury grant received for 1924-5 for general purposes was £1,195 as against £2,150 in the previous year. We regret to learn from the report that the negotiations for the establishment of an International Federation of Women's Institutes and kindred bodies have for the time being broken down. Mrs. Watt, founder of the movement first in Canada, and then in this country, has been working to obtain an International Federation for some time past; but although the Committee of the N.F.W.I., the Canadian Federation, and the Scottish Federation reached agreement on the principles contained in a draft constitution for an International Federation, the Cercles des Fermières in Belgium and France (which correspond to the W.I. movement on the Continent) did not feel that so formal a tie between the different countries was yet desirable. Until, therefore, the co-operation of the European countries can be secured, proceedings are temporarily at a standstill.

The resolutions on the agenda of next week's Annual Conference range over a wide surface. There are, however, fewer political resolutions than in former years, most of the subjects dealing with rural affairs. Attention is drawn to the danger of permitting trading activities to encroach upon the main purposes of an Institute, and Institutes are warned against allowing themselves to be used as advertising mediums. Hertfordshire women's institutes will ask that the Ministry of Agriculture be approached with regard to providing assistance for the transport of produce from Women's Institutes to local markets. The importance of the Young Farmers' Club Movement, as a valuable form of Agricultural Education and Social Training for Boys and Girls, and as a means of increasing food production, is urged. Attention is drawn to the fact that, since 1902, maternal mortality associated with child-bearing has remained almost stationary, and in view of its serious effect upon health and welfare, Institutes are urged to do all in their power to create an informed public opinion. Members are asked to study and interest themselves in Boards of Guardians, National Health and other Insurances, and local authorities in general, so as to intelligently understand public questions as they affect women and children. In view of the great increase of gambling among all classes of the community, Women's Institutes are asked to avoid Tombolas, Lotteries, Raffles or Draws at their various entertainments. The protection of the beauty of the countryside is urged by a vigorous anti-litter campaign, and also the revival and development of rural industries. The question of housing occupies two resolutions: one urging the erection of a certain number of small cottages, suitable to the needs of people who wish to avoid the work and expense of larger ones; and the other protesting against the taking of country cottages by visitors who use them only during the summer months. We are glad to note that one resolution urges legislation to ensure that prisoners who are expectant mothers are removed from prison before their child is born.

CHILD ADOPTION.

The first Report of the Child Adoption Committee appointed by Mr. Arthur Henderson in April, 1924, has just been issued, and copies can be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2, price 3d. net. This is the Third Committee which has been appointed to deal with Child Adoption within the last five years. In 1919, a Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, to examine the principle and practice of Child Adoption. The conclusion reached by this Committee was that in certain specified cases adoption was justifiable and even beneficial, but that any substitute for the natural tie of parent and child was undesirable if it could be rightly avoided. In August, 1920, the Home Secretary appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Alfred Hopkinson, K.C., to consider if it was desirable to legalise the adoption of children in this country, and, if so, what form it should take. That Committee issued its Report in 1921, and advocated the legal recognition by judicial sanction of the adoption of children, so that the adopter and the adopted child should have rights and duties similar to those between natural parents and their children. The Committee appointed by Mr. Henderson under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice Tomlin, which had two women members, The Duchess of Atholl and Miss Dorothy Jewson, the former being replaced by the Hon. Mrs. Wilson-Fox in November, 1924, does not go so far as the proposals of either of the two previous Committees. Mr. Justice Tomlin's Committee does not think that the traffic in children will be diminished by a form of legal adoption, but that the remedy for that class of evil lies rather in the strengthening and improvement of such statutes as the Children Act, 1908. This Committee does, however, consider that a case is made for the alteration of the law whereby it should be possible under proper safeguards for a parent to transfer to another his parental rights and duties, or some of them; but the proposal to alter the law is of a very cautious and limited character. The High Court must give judicial sanction to the transfer, and the adopter will in reality only be given the position of a special guardian. The proposed adopter must be at least twenty-five years of age, and at least twenty-one years older than the infant adopted. The Committee also recommends that unmarried men should not be entitled to adopt female children except in special circumstances approved by the Court. With regard to married couples, adoption should be permissible by one or other spouse or by both jointly, but not by one alone without the consent of the other. The Committee also considers that before a final order of adoption is made there should always be a probationary period, not exceeding in any case two years, during which the child will live with the adopting parent on such terms and conditions as the Court shall approve. The Committee propose to prepare a Draft Bill embodying the changes in the present law which the Report recommends.

WOMAN CHAIRMAN OF DISTRICT COUNCIL.

We send most cordial congratulations to our member, Miss Helen Whitton, B.A., on her election as chairman of the Orrell District Council, the first woman in the Wigan district to occupy such a position. Miss Whitton first entered the Council in 1921; in 1924 she was appointed Chairman of the township Health and Housing Committee and piloted through the Council a new housing scheme for the building of thirty houses. This year she has been appointed Chairman of the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, in addition to being elected Chairman of the Council. By virtue of her office as head of the District Council, Miss Whitton will be a Justice of the Peace.

WOMEN AND PRICES.

The Scotsman reports that at a Conference held in Glasgow recently by the Women's Advisory Council of the Glasgow I.L.P., Mrs. Neil M'Lean, the Chairman, said that the purpose of the Conference was to consider the high cost of living. The Government were not only taxing the food of the people, but their clothing also, as could be seen from the Budget.

Miss Mary Shennan moved: "That this Conference of women is unanimously agreed that the present Government is not dealing with the high food prices and profiteering as conditions demand, and condemns the hopelessly inadequate manner in which the Foods Commission conducted the recent inquiry; also draws attention to the fact that the women of the working class will not rest content until the food prices come down to meet the purchasing power of the worker." Miss Mary B. Laird seconded, and the resolution was carried unanimously.

Mrs. Helen E. Gault moved as follows:—"That this Conference deems it advisable that all working-class women should rouse an intense agitation in all districts and adopt all means in their power to combat the high price of foodstuffs, and, if necessary, organise boycotts against the buying of such commodities that can be more easily dispensed with, and by this means start a movement which, if sufficiently supported, can be the direct means of reducing the high cost of living." Personally she did not believe in the boycott, regarding it as a wasteful and clumsy expedient; and she did not think that it was likely to prove successful, except in very limited spheres. What she suggested was that they should have an import board and a public utility service to look after the distribution of commodities once they were brought to our shores. Miss M'Lean seconded, and the resolution was carried unanimously after considerable discussion.

WOMAN CHAIRMAN OF SLATERS, LTD

We are delighted to see from the Daily Express that Mrs. Louisa Thomson-Price, an old member of The Women's Freedom League, who was also one of the earliest Directors of THE VOTE to which she contributed so many cartoons and articles of interest in its earlier days, has been elected Chairman of Slaters, Ltd., one of the largest catering firms in the world. She succeeds Mr. W. E. Catesby, who died last week, and has been Deputy-Chairman of the Company for the past nine years. As Vice-Chairman of Slaters, Mrs. Thomson-Price virtually revolutionised the restaurant service during the difficult days of the war. She supervised the buying, evolved fresh colour schemes for the dining rooms, and designed attractive uniforms for the waitresses. Mrs. Thomson-Price is also Vice-Chairman of S. Hildesheimer & Co., Ltd., the fine art publishers. Our warm congratulations to our old colleague! We are proud of her achievements as a woman in these big business concerns.

UNIONIST WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

The Sixth Annual Conference of the Women's Unionist Organisation is being held this week at Queen's Hall, Langham Place. Among the Resolutions coming before the Conference is one expressing the urgent need for a strong Second Chamber to protect our Constitution and to ensure the rights and liberties of the British People. We wish that this Resolution had called attention to the need for women as well as men in this Second Chamber. Another resolution recommends that every Constituency should study the best means of arousing interest in Empire Trade. In regard to Housing, Constituency Associations are urged to make every effort to strengthen public opinion on the Housing problem, particularly as regards alternative methods of construction, in order that the Government may be assisted to overcome the present difficulties. There is a Resolution supporting the Allotments Bill now before Parliament for facilitating the acquisition of allotments, and urging the Government to bring forward a scheme to provide cottage holdings for occupation and ownership. There is also a resolution on Licensing Reform and another urging members, by Social Service, to acquaint themselves with the practical needs of the people of this country. There is one interesting resolution, which somewhat reminds us of the once famous Fabian Society's doctrine of "permeation," urging the "necessity for all Conservatives to attend the meetings of any Association, Society or Institution, political or otherwise, to which they may belong, with a view to keeping in touch with the organisation of that Society and to safeguard it against the introduction of sinister influence which may be harmful to the Conservative Party and misleading to the general public."

WOMEN LAND WORKERS AND OTHERS.

One of the resolutions adopted at the Women's National Liberal Federation Conference, held at Southport last week, demanded the adequate consideration of women's interest in any future reforms of our land policy. This was moved by Mrs. Wintringham, who is reported by The Star to have said, "As an instance of the present inequality, while women form one-seventh of all land workers, they have only one representative in 21 on the wages boards. In Durham, the wages board offer women threepence an hour, while men received ninepence; and in the East Riding, in spite of the enormous difference in wages, the same deductions for lodgings are made for women as for men."

Another resolution at this Conference, which was adopted, urged the Government to take practical steps to deal with the obstruction in the production of material, and in regard to labour for building. Lady Haworth, in supporting it, offered two suggestions—first, let them return to payment by results; and secondly, if it took four years for men to learn to build houses, let them try women!

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.
MID-LONDON BRANCH.

A SOCIAL EVENING

is being arranged for
THURSDAY, MAY 21ST, 6.30 TO 9.30 P.M.,
at the
OAK ROOM, KINGSWAY HALL, W.C.

Speakers: Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, Miss Anna Munro, Miss Horniman, Miss Marjorie Gullan (Principal of the School of Speech Training, Glasgow).
Chair: Miss Sparkman.

Music, Singing, Competitions, Games, Recitations.

TICKETS, 2/- (including refreshments), to be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. FLOWERS, at the W.F.L. Offices, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Thursday, May 21st, at 6.30.

Mid-London Branch. "At Home" at the Kingsway Hall, W.C., to raise Funds for Mrs. Despard's Birthday Gift. Speakers: Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, Miss Horniman, Miss Marjorie Gullan, and Miss Anna Munro. (See special notice.)

Friday, May 29th, at 3.30.

Hampstead Branch. "At Home" at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3. (By kind invitation of Dr. Knight.) Mr. Montague Fordham will lecture on the Housing Problem.

PROVINCES.

Monday, May 18th, at 7.30.

Middlesbrough Branch. Meeting to discuss the Conference Report at "Agecroft," Linthorpe Road (by the kindness of Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P.).

Monday, May 25th, at 4.

Bexhill Branch. Whist Party at the Albany Hotel (by kind permission of Miss Skinner). Tickets 1/-. Tea 9d. Prizes.

Friday, May 29th, at 3.

Ashford Branch. Public Meeting at the Hempstead Street Hall. Speaker: Dr. Octavia Lewin. Subject: "Education from a medical woman's point of view." Chair: Mrs. Miles.

Friday, July 3rd, at 7.

Birthday Party at Caxton Hall.

Saturday, July 4th, at 10.

National Executive Committee Meeting at 144 High Holborn, W.C.

SCOTLAND.

Friday, May 15th, at 8.

Edinburgh Branch. Members' Meeting at 22, Dick Place. Report on Annual Conference by Miss Bruce.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Monday, May 18th, at 5.30.

Six Point Group. Speaker: Mrs. Wintringham. Subject: "Women in Agriculture." Chair: Lady Balfour of Burleigh.

Tuesday, May 26th. 8 p.m.—2 a.m.

Save the Children Fund. Sun-ray Carnival Ball, at the Palais de Danse, Hammersmith. Tickets 3/6, from Save the Children Fund, 26, Gordon Street, W.C.

Thursday, May 28th, at 3.

Society for the Overseas Settlement of British Women. Public Meeting in the Small Hall, Central Hall, Westminster.

BRANCH NOTES.

HAMPSTEAD.

There was a good attendance of members at the meeting held at 16, Denning Road on Monday, May 4th; Miss Lyndon presided. The subject of the local Baths was discussed, and a letter was sent from the meeting to the Borough Clerk asking for the Baths to be open for women on three days of the week, instead of one as at present. A further letter was sent to the Borough Council, firstly in respect of cottages that have been demolished in the Borough, asking that the Council should bring pressure on the owner of the land to erect new cottages on the site of the old ones; and secondly to urge the Council to apply at once for their percentage of the cottages that the London County Council are proposing to build at Edgware.

It was decided that the Branch should get up a petition to be signed by householders in the Borough, drawing the attention of the Council to the shortage of working-class dwellings in the Borough, and calling upon the Council to provide additional accommodation for working class families at a moderate rent. The Annual Meeting was fixed for June 17th at 3 p.m., at 16, Denning Road, N.W.3.

Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party was discussed, and it was decided to make a collection on behalf of the Fund. All contributions should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Miss Lyndon, 53, Willow Road, N.W.3—before the end of June.

THAMES VALLEY.

A members' meeting was held at Holmwood, Waldegrave Road, last Monday evening, when Mrs. Foster Lumb presented her report as Hon. Branch Treasurer, and also reported on the Women's Freedom League Annual Conference which she attended as our delegate. Correspondence was considered from Headquarters. It is hoped, in the near future, to arrange a meeting at which Dr. Octavia Lewin will speak on the Health of School-children or some kindred subject, and that a Public Meeting will be held later on, at which those present will be asked to contribute to Mrs. Despard's Birthday Fund.

HASTINGS.

Another Tea Whist Drive was held at the Glenroyde Hotel last Tuesday afternoon. Mr. Felton Smith again acted as M.C. Our warmest thanks are due to Mme. Osterveen, Mrs. Prelooker and Miss White, who provided the prizes, which were won by Miss Cooper, Miss Goodge and Mrs. Roberts.

ASHFORD.

Mrs. Palmer gave an interesting account of her visit to the Annual Conference, at the Member's Meeting last Friday. We shall be glad if all will help to make Dr. Lewin's meeting known, which is being held on the last Friday in this month.

PORTSMOUTH.

Eight women's organisations co-operated in the Public Meeting on "The Need for Women Police," held in the Grand Jury Room on Tuesday, May 5th. Miss Cossey, M.A., Chairman of the Portsmouth Women Citizens' Association, presided. There was a very good attendance, and Miss A. M. Mercer, Councillor of the City of Westminster and Poor Law Guardian, made an exhaustive speech, telling of the work of Women Police in Germany and America, which countries she has recently visited, and the great need of more policewomen in England. A resolution urging the Watch committee to reappoint women police in Portsmouth without delay was unanimously passed. A vote of thanks to Miss Mercer was proposed by Mrs. Whetton, who represented the Women's Freedom League, and seconded by Mrs. Purchase of the British Women's Temperance Association.

The Whist Drive on Saturday, May 9th, was very enjoyable, although there were not so many present as had been anticipated. Thanks are due to the members who gave the prizes and helped with the arrangements.

(Hon. Sec.) MRS. WHETTON, 89, Festing Grove, Southsea.

EDINBURGH.

An excellent open-air meeting was held on the 6th inst., at the Mound, when Miss Lilian Lenton, our Scottish Organiser, kept a large audience spell-bound for over two hours. She dealt mainly with the laws still on the Statute Book which are unfair to men as well as women, and emphasised the claims of women to justice and equality before the law and in common practice. Many questions were asked and copies of THE VOTE were sold. The next Branch Meeting will be held on the 15th inst., at 22, Dick Place, when we hope for a good rally of new and old members.

(Hon Sec) W. M. SPRIGGS, 22, Dick Place, Edinburgh.

WOMEN J.P.s UP TO DATE.

The following women J.P.s have recently been appointed:—Mrs. Noble, South Shields. Mrs. Alice Pickering and Mrs. Eliza Ranyard, Doncaster. Councillor Annie Lile (Member of the Women's Freedom League), and Mrs. Cook, Hastings.

WHITSUN HOLIDAYS.

The Offices of the Women's Freedom League will be closed from Friday May 29th, at 5.30 p.m., until Tuesday, June 2nd, 9.30 a.m.

OUR TREASURY.

Amount previously acknowledged October, 1907, to December, 1924, £42,034 13s. 7d. £ s. d. £ s. d.
Previously acknowledged 210 6 3
Special Emergency War Fund:—

A Friend	...	4	7	6
Mrs. Angold	...	4	0	
				4 11 6

Spring Sale:—

Mrs. Mustard	...	5	0
Mrs. Udney Atkinson	...	2	2
			2 7 0

Per Miss A. M. Clark	...	1	15	6
Mrs. E. Bennett	...	1	12	6
Mrs. Juson Kerr, J.P.	...	1	10	0
Mrs. McKeurton, M.B.E.	...	1	1	0
Miss L. A. Floyd	...	13	6	
Miss Hurry	...	5	0	
Miss N. E. McMunn	...	5	0	
Miss M. I. Saunders	...	5	0	
"Hampstead Green" (N.U.T. Oxford Campaign)	...	2	6	
Mrs. Clark	...	2	0	
Mrs. E. A. Wheat	...	2	0	
Edwy. G. Clayton, Esq.	...	1	6	
Mrs. Florence Allen	...	1	0	
Mrs. Cowdell	...	1	0	
Miss C. Eastman	...	1	0	
Mrs. Ebdell	...	1	0	
Mrs. Jessie N. Gerrie	...	1	0	
Miss McMath	...	1	0	
Sundries	...	3	8	
per Literature Department	...	2	0	
Refreshments	...	13	1	
Collections	...	1	14	
Interest	...	4	19	
Sale of Wembley Suffrage Pavilion	...	30	0	

Branches: Capitation Fees:—			
Ashford	...	16	0
Bexhill	...	10	0
Edinburgh	...	8	0
Glasgow	...	2	17
Hastings	...	1	4
Mid-London	...	17	0
Minerva Club (Additional)	...	2	0
Montgomery Boroughs	...	6	11
Portsmouth	...	1	0
Swansea (additional)	...	6	0
Thames Valley	...	6	6
Wallasey	...	1	5

Branches: Delegates' Expenses:—			
Minerva Club	...	13	11
Montgomery Boroughs	...	4	3

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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, May 17th. 3.30. Music. Lecture: H. W. Nevinson, Esq. 6.30. Miss Maude Royden: "Religion and the Stage—The Old Vic. and Sadler's Wells."

REST AND HOLIDAYS.

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

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Name

Address

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