

THE VOTE

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

VOL. XXX. No. 1,014. (Registered at the G.P.O.) ONE PENNY. FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 1929

OBJECTS: To use the power of the Parliamentary vote, now won for Women upon equal terms with men, to elect women to Parliament, and upon other public bodies; to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes; and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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XXXV.—OUR WOMEN MAYORS.

Miss S. B. Pettit, Mayor of Aldeburgh.

The ancient town of Aldeburgh had the distinction in 1908 of electing the first woman Mayor in this country. The late Dr. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the pioneer woman physician and champion of women's freedom, during her term of office more than justified the expectations of those who had placed their trust in her. It was exceedingly fortunate that so remarkable a woman as Dr. Garrett Anderson should have been given the opportunity of proving the capability of her sex for holding the highest office a town can bestow on a citizen.

That twenty years should have elapsed between the appointment of the first woman Mayor and the second in the person of Miss S. B. Pettit, is an instance of the weight of prejudice which has yet to be removed before women can be regarded equally eligible for public office with men.

Miss Pettit has been a member of the Aldeburgh Council for nine years and an Alderman for the last three years. During this period she has gained the confidence of her colleagues by her regularity in attendance and attention to duty.

Social work in the town has long occupied much of her time and thought, and her wide experience of the needs of its citizens places her in a favourable position for dealing with those problems with which she is faced as Mayor.

Aldeburgh, with its historic traditions, attaches great importance to the Mayoral office. As the King's representative, the Mayor is regarded as responsible for the maintenance of law and order and the dispensation of

justice for both rich and poor, without personal bias. The Mayor of Aldeburgh is also looked upon as the champion of the rights and privileges given to the town by its charters.

Miss S. B. Pettit is on her metal to do credit to a historical record which dates from the Doomsday Book.



THE MAYOR OF ALDEBURGH.

The town enjoyed the grants of various charters down to forty years ago, when it came under the Municipal Corporations Act and was placed by a Royal Commission on the same footing as such boroughs as Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham and Manchester.

The Mayor must act in accordance with the commercial history of the borough. Of its two staple industries, shipping and fishing, the former has declined, but the town has progressed in other directions. Miss Pettit, who has lived in the district from childhood, is thoroughly conversant with every aspect of life in Aldeburgh.

Miss Pettit, who regards her office as one of great responsibility, would like to see the inhabitants of the borough of Aldeburgh more ready to participate in the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. She would like to see all townspeople who have the municipal vote come forward at election

times, and, to the best of their understanding, help to return those candidates they consider most likely to further the interests of the borough.

As the first woman Mayor to succeed Dr. Garrett Anderson—for whom the present Mayor has the greatest admiration—Miss Pettit feels that she has an exceptionally high ideal to follow.

NATIONALITY.

On March 21st, Mrs. Archdale gave a most interesting address on the problems of nationality, particularly in their bearing on the married woman. The question, which has recently been brought to the front in this country by the Bill introduced by Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., is an international one which it is essential to watch very closely.

In 1924 a Committee of Experts consisting of seventeen members, each representing a different nation, was appointed to study the matter. The three main points still to be thrashed out are the bearing of nationality laws on: (1) married women; (2) military service; (3) children.

A Preparatory Committee of five members was next appointed to prepare for an International Conference, which it was hoped would be held at The Hague in 1929. This is not likely to take place before 1930. A Committee of three are now sending out questionnaires to the various countries.

Loss of nationality through marriage is the point on which feminists and women's societies are concentrating. There are so many differences in status between the married and unmarried woman belonging to the same country that they fill a volume of considerable size. The various laws which exist in different countries form a little encyclopædia in themselves! No two nations have the same nationality laws in respect to women.

Women who have seriously taken up the nationality question are working for a complete cut with existing legislation. The only obstacle in the way is the old, old prejudice based on the fallacy that woman is the property of man. Even when a married woman is widowed or divorced, there are many difficulties to be overcome before her nationality can be restored.

Two conventions have been prepared on the subject, one by Miss Crystal Macmillan—who as a lawyer goes into great detail—and the other, on the American side, a much simpler document which resolves into the formula that marriage shall not change nationality. Between these two conventions some definite groundwork should be arrived at.

Mrs. Archdale stressed the point that women who are awake to the injustices of nationality laws should waste no time in urging countries to get women appointed as full delegates to the League of Nations. It is essential that when this matter is brought forward women should hold authoritative positions in an assembly which is to decide an issue so momentous where women are concerned. Public opinion must be aroused in order to convince the Conference that women are determined.

The nationality of children is a question bound to give rise to much controversy, but whatever the difficulties to be surmounted, the mother should have the same chance to give nationality as the father. The suggestion that the child should take the nationality of the land of its birth till the age of eighteen and then decide for itself, appears desirable, said Mrs. Archdale, although it has already been opposed by Canada.

The Bill introduced by Miss Ellen Wilkinson, which dealt with British Women's Nationality, brought to light that since the appointment of the Committee of Experts in 1926, nothing has been done. The burning nationality question has been shuttlecocked to and fro between the

Home Government and the Colonies, and the disagreement of one Dominion has been used as an excuse to let the matter drop. This is the first time on record that the British Empire has stood still because one of its members raised objections to the measure under discussion!

If a Codification Conference takes place, nothing will be done on the lines acceptable to British women. Equality in the matter of nationality will not be given unless a great effort is made. It is imperative that the opportunity of an International Conference should not be allowed to slip. Women must go to The Hague and make a great splash.

In the discussion that followed, the general feeling expressed was that the question of the nationality of married women should be settled before dealing with that of children.

A resolution was carried to the effect that certain societies shall be appointed as consultants when the International Conference takes place.

The initial step is to bring pressure to bear on the Government to appoint women delegates; the next, to approach the delegates.

MISS JENNY LEE, M.P.

The return of Miss Jenny Lee, with a majority of 6,578, as Socialist Member for North Lanark, is not only a triumph for her party in capturing a seat previously held by a Conservative, but a further proof—if any were necessary—that women under thirty are capable of taking the keenest interest in politics. Miss Lee, who is twenty-four years of age, is in the curious position of being a Member of Parliament at present without a Parliamentary vote!

A miner's daughter, Miss Lee began her education at the little elementary school at Cowdenbeath; she gained a scholarship to the higher grade school and went on to Edinburgh University, where she graduated M.A. and LL.B.

We offer Miss Jenny Lee our heartiest congratulations on her triumph.

"THE CIRCLE OF CHALK."

MODERN CHINESE WOMAN IN ANCIENT CHINESE PLAY.

Basil Dean's production at the New Theatre, "The Circle of Chalk"—a play adapted from the ancient Chinese—in which, as Chang Hi-Tang, Anna May Wong takes the leading part, in addition to its artistic interest, is significant in the vivid contrast between the sentiments of the play—which embody the age-long submission of the woman of the East to her lord and master—and a state of emancipation which makes it possible for a Chinese woman to appear on an English stage.

Anna May Wong, who has been educated in America and is a striking example of the new woman of China, cannot do otherwise than make her audience rejoice that women who possess such fine qualities as the unfortunate Chang Hi-Tang—sold to a tea-house by her needy mother and subsequently resold to a wealthy man—should at last be well on the way to freedom.

Special Issues of "Our Women Mayors"—XXXIV. Mrs. L. E. Bidwell, Mayor of Thetford, March 22nd, 1929; XXXIII. Dame Maud Burnett, J.P., Mayor of Tynemouth, Northumberland, March 15th, 1929; XXXII. The Marchioness Townshend of Raynham, Mayor of King's Lynn, February 15th, 1929; XXXI. Mrs. M. B. Andrewes. Uthwatt, O.B.E., Mayor of Sandwich, December 28th, 1928; XXX. Councillor Miss Justina, Mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon, Dec. 14th, 1928; XXIX. Councillor Miss Robinson, Mayor of Christchurch, Nov. 30th, 1928; XXVIII. Miss Violet Markham, J.P., Mayor of Chesterfield, Oct. 19th, 1928; XXVII. Alderman Mrs. B. M. Drapper, Mayor of Deptford, July 20th, 1928; XXVI. Councillor Elizabeth Lund, Mayor of Pudsey, March 23rd, 1928; XXV. Councillor Mrs. Jenkins, Mayor of Tenby, March 9th, 1928; XXIV. Mrs. Stuart Shaw, Mayor of Lichfield, February 24th, 1928; XXIII. Mrs. John W. Greene, Mayor of Bury St. Edmunds, January 13th, 1928; XXII. Margaret Beavan, Lord Mayor of Liverpool, November 25th, 1927; XXI. Councillor Miss Hudson, J.P., Mayor of E-stbourne, June 24th, 1927; XX. Councillor Mrs. Coxon, Mayor of King's Lynn, March 26th, 1926; XIX. Mrs. F. J. Simmons, Mayor of Higham Ferrers, Northampton, February 26th, 1926; XVIII. Councillor Miss Lucy Dales, Mayor of Dunstable, January 22nd, 1926; XVII. Councillor Miss Edith Neville, M.B.E., J.P., Mayor of Lincoln, December 11th, 1925; XVI. Alderman Miss S. nea, J.P., Mayor of Acton, October 30th, 1925; XV. Dame Catherine Hunt, D.B.E., J.P., Mayor of Colchester, March 6th, 1925; XIV. Miss Margaret Wix, Mayor of St. Albans, February 13th, 1925; XIII. Mrs. Eva Hartree, Mayor of Cambridge, January 30th, 1925; XII. Mrs. Ethel Leach, J.P., Mayor of Great Yarmouth, January 16th, 1925; XI. Mrs. M. A. Mercer, Mayor of Birkenhead, December 19th, 1924; X. Miss C. Maude Eve, Mayor of Stoke Newington, November 24th, 1924; IX. Miss Ethel Mary Colman, Lord Mayor of Norwich, January 11th, 1924; VIII. Dame Janet Stancomb-Wills, D.B.E., Mayor of Ramsgate, January 4th, 1924; VII. Councillor Mrs. Alderton, J.P., Mayor of Colchester, November 9th, 1923; VI. Miss Beatrice Cartwright, J.P., Mayor of Brackley, Northants, December 15th, 1922; V. Mrs. Ada Salter, Mayor of Bermuda, December 1st, 1922; IV. Councillor Miss Clara Winterbotham, M.B.E., Mayor of Cheltenham, September 15th, 1922; III. Councillor Miss Christina Hardley, Mayor of Southport, Lancs, August 11th, 1922; II. Mrs. J. M. Phillips, Mayor of Honiton, Devon, July 7th, 1922; I. Mrs. Ellen Chapman, Mayor of Worthing, June 2nd, 1922.

IN PARLIAMENT.

School Reorganisation (Head Teachers).

MAJOR BRAITHWAITE (U., Buckrose) asked the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that, in consequence of schemes of reorganisation undertaken by local education authorities, with the approval of the Board, a number of headmistresses of public elementary schools have been dispossessed and compelled to accept posts of lower status, with the alternative of retirement before attaining the age at which a pension becomes payable; and does the Board propose to initiate any action for the compensation of such headmistresses for loss of status, as distinct from any arrangements which may be made to obviate loss of salary in cases where the headmistress consents to accept a post of lower status? LORD EUSTACE PERCY: I am aware that, as a result of reorganisation, teachers sometimes lose their posts as headmasters and headmistresses, but there is ample evidence that local authorities and managers, with whom appointments rest, are most anxious to find other suitable posts for their displaced teachers, and are generally successful in doing so.

London Lock Hospital.

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE (Lab., Leicester, W.) asked the Minister of Health: (1) Whether he is aware that there is dissatisfaction at his declared intention to refrain from the present from publishing the Report of the Committee which inquired into the London Lock Hospital; and whether he has set a time-limit to the Board within which the reforms promised by them must be carried out;

(2) Whether he will publish the correspondence between himself and the Board of the London Lock Hospital, including the letter or memorandum from the Board, on the strength of which he has decided to refrain from the present from publishing the Report of the Committee of Inquiry? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no evidence of dissatisfaction with the reply which I gave on this matter last week. I have, as I then stated, made myself responsible for ensuring that changes at the hospital are made with sufficient speed; but it is not practicable to impose a time-limit in affairs of this kind. I cannot undertake to publish the correspondence alluded to in the hon. Member's second question.

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us, at any rate, whether the secretary will be retained in his position, and whether the ex-matron and the assistant-matron will be reinstated or given compensation? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not in a position to answer these questions at the present moment. I may be able to do so later.

MR. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark): Will the right hon. Gentleman guarantee that, within the life of the present Government, he will see that these changes are put into operation? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I never give guarantees unless they are necessary.

Malaya (Social Hygiene).

VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Plymouth) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his Advisory Committee on Social Hygiene, which has recently been examining the new enactments in the Federated Malay States giving power for the compulsory examination of certain prostitutes, has presented its Report; and, if so, if it will be published? MR. AMERY: I have received the Report, which it is hoped to publish in about a month's time, the delay being due in part to the fact that it has been thought advisable to publish it simultaneously in Malaya and in this country.

Men and Women Employés (Pay).

MR. HARDIE (Lab., Springfield) asked the Postmaster-General whether any further progress has been made with the question of granting equal pay for equal work in the postal service? VISCOUNT WOLMER (Assistant Postmaster-General): The question of equal

pay for men and women is one which does not concern my Department alone; and I understand that representations on the general question are about to be made to the Prime Minister.

MR. HARDIE: Is there any difference between the work done by the one section and that done by the other as regards quality? VISCOUNT WOLMER: There may be in regard to some classes of work and not in regard to others.

MR. HARDIE: Since there seems to be no doubt that both sexes can do the work with the same efficiency, why should they not benefit to the same extent? (No reply was given.)

Hampstead Heath (Women Police).

SIR ROBERT THOMAS (Lib., Anglesey) asked the Home Secretary if he is aware that a deputation to the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police on March 16th, from the Hampstead Branch of the Women's Freedom League, asked for fifty women police to patrol the Heath to protect women and children from molestation; and, seeing that at present the Heath is so dangerous that many parents at Hampstead will not allow their children to play there, is action to be taken along the lines asked for? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: The Commissioner has informed me of the deputation. For the present, I can only say that the whole question is under my consideration.

SIR R. THOMAS: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when these considerations and deliberations will come to an end? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: Certainly not. The hon. Member has seen that the Royal Commission reported last week, dealing with this very question. It is quite impossible to arrive at a decision of this magnitude within a very few days. The matter is being very carefully considered.

SIR R. THOMAS: Is it not well to know that the facts as pointed out in the question are correct, and is it not a very simple matter either to verify or to deny them? If the facts are correct, is it not necessary to take prompt action, and not wait for a Royal Commission for weeks and months?

VISCOUNTESS ASTOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind that the women have been pressing for this, not for the last year, but for five years, and does he realise that, although he is himself in favour, there are certain people in the Home Office who are not in favour, and will he watch them? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: The noble Lady must not say that. I have submitted to a good deal of pressure from her, rather willingly. I can assure her that when I arrive at a decision, I will communicate it.

MR. HORE-BELISHA (Lib., Devonport): In the meantime, is there any truth whatever in the allegation that it is not safe for women and children on Hampstead Heath? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: I do not think there is the slightest.

SIR R. THOMAS: Arising out of that answer, does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that the Women's Freedom League would go to the Chief Commissioner of Police and make statements of this kind? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: I told the hon. Member that the statements made by that deputation, which was not to myself, but to the Chief Commissioner of the Police, were being inquired into, and that a report will be made and considered by me. At the moment, I cannot go further than to say that my general knowledge is that it does not bear out the statements.

SIR R. THOMAS: Will the right hon. Gentleman give a promise to the House that he will make a statement before the adjournment for Easter? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: No, Sir; I cannot promise anything of the kind. It involves, first of all, a very serious statement with regard to the condition of Hampstead Heath, which must be fully inquired into, and, secondly, it involves the whole question of the substitution of men police by women police.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors: THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
 Offices: 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
 FRIDAY, MARCH 29th, 1929.

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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.

"THE TIME IS RIPE!"

We welcome the Report of the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure. The inquiry has provided much-needed ventilation for many Police matters which required to be brought out into the open and spring-cleaned.

The selection of members of the Commission was well balanced; while valuing the old and tried, they were not averse from examining the merits of the new and experimental.

Probably the most far-reaching result of the Commissioners' Report is the step in advance to which it helps Women Police. Officially instituted ten years ago, now "the time is ripe for a substantial increase." Especially we rejoice that the Report supports our firm conviction that to get the best results from Women Police, they must look to share in general Police work and in general detective duties.

We regret that the Commissioners do not see their way to asking for compulsion on local Police authorities to introduce Women Police into their forces, but they have gone perhaps as far in this direction as we could expect, and have immensely stimulated and reinforced local public opinion in demanding this reform.

BASTARDY (WITNESS PROCESS) BILL.

MISS SUSAN LAWRENCE (Lab., East Ham, N.), on March 12th, secured leave in the House of Commons to bring in a Bill "to declare the law with respect to the issue of process by Justices for compelling the attendance of witnesses in bastardy proceedings." Miss Lawrence explained that when the Poor Law Consolidation Act, 1927, was passed, magistrates were unintentionally deprived of their power to summon witnesses in affiliation cases, and her Bill would restore that power to them. This was very necessary because the parties concerned in these cases were often quite poor and ignorant people who could not get their own witnesses together, and before 1927 magistrates for many years had had the power to summon such witnesses. This matter had been brought to the notice of Miss Lawrence by women magistrates, and the Association of Magistrates had expressed regret that magistrates had been deprived of these very useful powers. She then consulted the Home Secretary, who said he would look upon a Bill to restore the magistrates' powers in this respect with favour, provided that it did no more than restore the old law. The Home Secretary did more than that; he instructed the officials of his Department to draft the measure, and Miss Lawrence assured the House that its form was absolutely impeccable. She expressed the hope that this small but quite useful Bill would meet with no opposition, and would pass through all its stages during the life of the present Parliament.

No opposition was offered to this Bill, and it received a First Reading.

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN.

THE FATHER'S CONSENT?

When the Committee Stage was taken in the House of Commons on the Industrial Assurance and Friendly Societies Bill, which deals with policies issued by industrial assurance companies and friendly societies, SIR BASIL PETO (U., Barnstaple) moved an amendment, that "No such policy shall be issued dependent on the life of any child born in wedlock, except with the consent of the father of the child, if surviving, unless he is divorced or separated from the mother, or insane." He contended that policies should not be taken out without the consent of the father, who was the breadwinner of the family, and who had to pay the premiums.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir Thomas Inskip) said that however admirable might be the purpose of the hon. Member to maintain the rights of the father to guide the destinies of his children and control the family purse, he was afraid that the amendment was really unworkable. He hoped that the amendment would not be pressed.

SIR ROBERT NEWMAN (Ind., Exeter) hoped the Committee would not accept the proposal. He asked what the hon. Member for Barnstaple meant by "separation"? Was it a legal separation? There were many cases in which people agreed to separate. Sir Robert continued: "The hon. Member is assuming that in all cases the husband maintains the family. There are many cases in which he is a most undesirable member of society, and the wife chiefly maintains the family. It is a dangerous policy to say that a woman shall not be able to insure her own child without the consent of the father. If the hon. Member had suggested that the consent of both parents should be required, there would be something in it. It seems to me that the principle of the amendment is wrong. What about the man who spends a good deal of his time in prison? He is separated from his wife. Would it be considered a voluntary separation? There are many reasons why it is almost impossible to accept such an amendment."

The amendment was subsequently withdrawn. We thank Sir Robert Newman for expressing our view of it.

FRENCH SUFFRAGISTS' DEFEAT.

We sincerely regret that once again the cause of woman's suffrage has been defeated by the Senate. According to the *Manchester Guardian*, an attempt was made last Friday to force the Senate to debate the question of equal electoral rights for women.

M. Louis Martin proposed that a Bill passed many years ago by the Lower House for the granting of the vote to women, and for their eligibility to Parliament, should be placed on the Senate order paper of Monday. As M. Martin pointed out, the last time the Senate discussed the question of votes for women was some seven years ago. "You cannot accuse us of being impatient," M. Martin declared to his senatorial colleagues, "for it is not until the year 1929 that you have been asked to begin a debate on a question that has not been discussed since 1922."

But the senators were not going to allow themselves to be so easily trapped. Loud opposition to the precipitateness of M. Martin's resolution came from the benches of the Left.

"At once?" "What is the reason for this hurry?" "Why discuss this question now?" the senators protested, but M. Martin stood by his resolution, and the question was put to a division. It was defeated by 49 votes (126 senators for the resolution and 175 against it), and so ended M. Martin's attempt to get the Senate to pronounce on a question it had succeeded in avoiding for the better part of a decade.

REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON POLICE POWERS AND PROCEDURE.

MARCH 16TH, 1929.

This body has made rather a record among Royal Commissions, having come fresh to the subject, finished its labours, and published a unanimous report in less than seven months.

The Commissioners were eight in number—Viscount Lee of Fareham (chair), Lord Ebbisham, Sir Howard Frank, Dame Meriel Talbot, Sir Reginald Poole, Mr. Brownlie, Miss Margaret Beavan (the Lord Mayor of Liverpool), and Mr. Frank Pick.

Twenty-nine meetings were held, ninety-six witnesses examined, questionnaires were filled up by all Chief Officers of Police, by twelve stipendiary magistrates, sixty-six Chairmen of Sessions and Recorders, and by Associations; and police stations inspected.

The Commission agrees that the most important duty of the police is the prevention of crimes and offences; then come investigations and detection of offenders, and a quantity of other matters of varied nature. A policeman is still, in common law, "a person paid to perform, as a matter of duty, acts which, if he were so minded, he might have done voluntarily"; he has few special powers, and public opinion jealously scans any attempt to increase them, feeling instinctively that, as a citizen service, their authority must rest solely upon the consent and assistance of all law-abiding people and the goodwill of the general public.

The Report contains much interesting information on the history, development of duties, and organisation of the Police since its beginning 100 years ago, and its relation to the Home Secretary; and points out that it is essential that a proportion at least of police entrants shall be "men whose attainments qualify them for positions of considerable responsibility," and that therefore the system must provide "prospects of rapid advancement for outstanding young men."

Recommendations include closer touch between the Metropolitan Police Heads and the Provincial Chief Constables, one standard instruction book for all forces, and extension of training of recruits in the police schools of the larger forces.

Obtaining of Evidence.—In obtaining evidence the preliminary caution should be retained and made quite clear to the public and to the Police, time and place should suit the convenience of the witness, and all visits to Police stations at the invitation of the Police recorded. Statements that may later be used as evidence against a person should be taken as nearly as possible verbatim with questions and answers; no time-limit was practicable, but Police must watch against fatigue and give rests when needed, and give time for considering or amending the statement before signing it, and the hour of beginning and ending, with any breaks, and of signing, be recorded as part of the statement.

Registered Clubs.—Legislation should be introduced enabling selected police officers on written authorisation of the Chief Constables to enter and inspect any suspected registered clubs.

Arrest and Custody.—"Detention" of a suspected person without arrest is undesirable, unnecessary, and open to abuse; any deliberate arrest of a suspect on a minor charge in order to charge him with a major crime (which was said by the Director of Public Prosecutions to be "from the point of view of the public" a "first-rate procedure") the Commissioners think is in principle to be deprecated.

Voluntary Statements.—A rigid instruction should be issued to the police that no questioning of a person in custody, about any crime or offence with which he is or may be charged, is to be permitted.

There should be the most stringent safeguards for the really voluntary nature of any statements made by a prisoner, and that they exactly represent what he wishes to say. The right of prisoners as to friends, solicitor, etc., should be plainly told them on arriving at the police station.

Judges' Rules.—The Commissioners do not propose any alteration in the form or substance of the Judges' Rules, but recommend specific instructions to the Police from the Home Office and in the new instruction book as to the taking of statements.

Street Offences.—The Report agrees with the proposal of the Street Offences Committee that solicitation shall become a matter not of "annoyance," but of "molestation by offensive words or behaviour"; here prevention, rather than detection, should be the object, through an increase of *uniformed* and especially of *Women Police*. Though plain-clothes Police are necessary in parks, etc., they should be absolutely prohibited from arresting or taking names for a charge of indecent conduct.

Miscellaneous Duties.—If these continue to increase, the numbers of the police must be adequately increased.

WOMEN POLICE.

Women Police.—Both the general question of Policewomen and the preventive side of Police work were outside the scope of this inquiry, which only covered the employment of Women Police in "the investigation of crimes and offences." The policy of the Home Office, and views of all Chief Constables in England and Wales, societies, and policewomen have been explained. There are now about 150 policewomen serving in England, none in Wales.

Both the *Committee on the Employment of Women on Police Duties* (1920) and the *Departmental Committee on the Employment of Policewomen* (1924) recommended that it should be left to local police authorities to decide whether they had sufficient duties appropriate to Women Police to justify the appointment of whole-time Policewomen, and upon this the Home Secretary has acted; of this opportunity a few Chief Constables have made good use.

At present, the **Metropolitan Police** have fifty, chiefly on patrol work in uniform, in the West End and parks and spaces. The late Commissioner of Police did not think them suitable for ordinary detective work in the investigation of crime. Two ladies, one attested, take statements from girls under 21 and children in sexual cases.

Birmingham City Police have seven, generally plain clothes, one woman Inquiry Officer, C.I.D., helps the men. Six policewomen "have been an unqualified success," chiefly prevent crime and remove from the streets persons drifting into crime.

Lancashire County Constabulary have eighteen Policewomen, trained at detective headquarters, and each attached to one of the larger divisions; generally plain clothes and clerical work, but sometimes on active detective duties or patrolling, in uniform, parks, etc.

Gloucestershire County Constabulary.—Eight Policewomen, four with motor-cycles at headquarters of four outlying divisions, two in Cheltenham, two in Gloucester. Take statements from women and children in sexual cases, investigate other types of cases, attend Petty Sessional Courts and patrol. The Commissioners have been "much impressed by the evidence of their value and efficiency."

Testimony has also been received of the success of Women Police employed on a number of widely different duties—statements, inquiries and investigations, uniformed patrol work, preventive work, and regular detective duties. The Commissioners are therefore "satisfied that there is scope for the utilisation of Women Police in the investigation of crimes and offences, and that there are certain specialised lines for which they are more fitted than men."

Where Women Police had been tried and discontinued, it was usually as part of a general economy; in other forces their conditions were not the most likely to be successful, and no inference can be drawn.

The Committee of 1924 recommended that statements of women and children in sexual crime should be taken by Policewomen, and the Home Secretary, in drawing the attention of Police authorities to the Report, endorsed its recommendation, but left authorities free.

The *Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences against Young Persons* (1925) recommended that such statements should be taken by women, and the Home Secretary in 1926 circularised Police authorities to consider this, or that at least a woman should be present. The present practice is very varied, from a Policewoman or social worker taking statements to a female relative or police matron present, if the girl wishes it.

The Commissioners recommend that sufficient qualified and specially-trained women shall be available to take all such statements of girls and children. They do not consider it essential that they should be attested Policewomen, but they must be carefully selected, of high character, suitable temperament, good education, and adequate training. The provision in the Metropolitan Police Force—two women investigators for a population of seven millions—they consider not adequate. In towns it will not be difficult. In country districts, as in Gloucestershire, taking of statements and other duties in rural areas can be combined. In cases of general offences, whilst not reflecting on the work of Policemen, the Commissioners see no reason why Policewomen should not take statements from women prisoners, and this would be of advantage in preventing the dangers of over-specialisation.

Duties Suitable for Uniformed Women Police include patrol duty in parks and streets, their presence preventing annoyance to the public and grave difficulties to the police, solicitation and indecency, escort, supervision and searching of women prisoners, and searching of their premises and belongings.

Duties Suitable for Women Police in Plain Clothes.—As Private Inquiry Agents women have for years been successful, feminine quickness and intuition would seem valuable. Women Police have been given very little detective work so far, but the Commissioners think that women of the right calibre, given equal facilities for training as are provided for the men Police, would prove of great assistance. In shop-lifting, fortune-telling, etc., women are indispensable, but Women Police should have adequate opportunities of doing general as well as special detective work.

Extraneous Police Duties.—If the police are to continue to perform these duties, many of them could quite efficiently, and even more appropriately, be performed by women.

The Commissioners' Verdict.—"The time is ripe for a substantial increase in the numbers of Women Police," more particularly in cities for patrol work in uniform. The limited field covered by the Report is not suggested as the only suitable work for Women Police; further experience will no doubt amplify or amend it, but the practical experience of the last decade fully justifies

MRS. DALTON'S MAIDEN SPEECH.

We offer our congratulations to Mrs. Dalton, the new Member for Bishop Auckland, on her first speech in the House of Commons on March 13th, in the Debate on the Grant-in-Aid of the Lord Mayor's Fund. She urged that the President of the Board of Education should not only grant assistance to school children in certain cases, but should empower the local authorities in distressed areas to feed the school children, and that the Government should give 100 per cent. grant for that purpose. She paid a fine tribute to the mothers of those children—the thousands of half-starved women with white, haggard faces in her constituency, many of whom lived on bread and margarine in order to give their children a reasonable amount of food. Mrs. Dalton stressed the point that neither sympathy nor charity was enough. The miners wanted work, but they did not want to compete for existing jobs which the unemployed in other areas required. What they wanted was work on big national schemes of produc-

a further step forward. The senior policewoman of any large body of women, it is suggested, should have right of access to her Chief Constable in matters affecting them.

Finally, whilst agreeing still to leave the matter to local discretion, the Commissioners "trust," should their views commend themselves to the public, that the Home Secretary "will take steps to ensure that the attention of all Chief Constables and Police Authorities is drawn to the marked success with which Women Police have been employed in various parts of the country, and to the good results which, we are convinced, would follow from an increase in their present numbers."

Complaints against the Police.—During 1927 and till November, 1928, one hundred and thirty-four Chief Constables had no complaints, the remaining forty-six forces had one hundred and forty-nine, most of these were found to be unjustified; in thirty-one, Police were censured or punished, twenty-one for bribery or incivility, the rest for improper searching, manufacture of false evidence, improper extraction of information, failure in rights of prisoners, unfair identification parade, *agent provocateur*, or neglect of duty. These isolated cases of misconduct in a service of 56,000 men are strongly condemned by the general feeling of the men themselves. "Third Degree" methods, the forcible extraction of information or confessions from prisoners by violence, threats and improper inducements, the Commissioners do not believe to exist in the British Police Force, and it would not be tolerated by the force itself. But by improper pressure to obtain evidence, keeping a suspect in prolonged suspense, keeping him waiting outside the room for a long time, constant reiteration of a question, devious methods of winning a prisoner's confidence and holding out hopes to him, and the method of bluff, all highly objectionable practices, a number of "voluntary statements" are not strictly voluntary. Some C.I.D. (Scotland Yard) evidence disquieted the minds of the Commissioners, and they feared there was a tendency in the C.I.D. "to regard itself as a thing apart, to which the restraints and limitations placed on the ordinary Police do not, or should not, apply." An error bound, if not checked, "to lead to abuses which may grow until they bring discredit upon the whole Police Force."

The Commissioners had no evidence of faked charges or pressure by police for conviction of persons they believed innocent, but mention had been responsibly made of an occasional tendency, when believing a prisoner guilty, to strain the evidence against him so as to secure his conviction; corroboration of one constable by another is often connected with these cases.

The Report contains much more of interest to our readers, and we advise them to obtain and read it. (H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, W.C.2, or may be obtained from our Office, 144, High Holborn. Price 3s.)

tive development, which would make our country richer. She repeated that the working men and women in the distressed areas did not want sympathy; they did not want charity. They demanded work and independence.

WHY RAILWAY CARRIAGES SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR WOMEN.

The *Daily Express* reports that a domestic servant's struggle with a man in a train between Barnton and Craigleith stations was related in the police court at Edinburgh last week. The man, who is a married man, denied the allegations, but was found guilty of having assaulted her, and was sent to prison for thirty days. The girl, in evidence, stated that the accused said to her, "I have to get out at the next station, and you have to give me a kiss." He seized hold of her, and they struggled. She managed to pull the communication cord, and when the train stopped she was in a state of collapse.

Women's Freedom League.

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

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WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

DARE TO BE FREE. LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Monday, April 8th, at 3 p.m.
Hampstead Branch. Meeting at 53, Willow Road, N.W.3, by kind invitation of Miss Lyndon.
Friday, April 12th, at 2.30 p.m.
National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
Saturday, April 13th, at 10 a.m.
Women's Freedom League Twenty-Second Annual Conference, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W.1. At 4.45 p.m., Miss Nina Boyle will speak on the subject, "Slavery in Marriage." Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence in the Chair. Discussion invited.
Sunday, April 14th, 3 to 5.30 p.m.
Minerva Club. Branch Reception to Conference Delegates, members and friends of the Women's Freedom League. Tea, music, and short speeches.

PROVINCES.

Tuesday, April 9th, at 7 p.m.
Portsmouth Branch. Members' Meeting at 25, Shaftesbury Road, by kind invitation of Mrs. Brading. Business: Conference Agenda.
Wednesday, April 10th, at 7.30 p.m.
Gateshead. Meeting at Beaconsfield Hall, Coatsworth Road (Saltwell Park Car). Speaker: Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P., supported by Mrs. Stagg, Mrs. Edith Smith and Mrs. Annabel. Chair: Miss Tooke, J.P. Tea. Collection towards expenses.
Thursday, April 11th, at 8 p.m.
Bexhill Branch. Meeting at the Granville Hotel. Chair: W. E. Meads, Esq. Conservative, Labour and Liberal speakers.
Monday, April 22nd, at 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.
Middlesbrough Branch. Whist Drive at the Grey House, Linthorpe. Tickets, 2/- each, including refreshments.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Thursday, April 11th, at 3 p.m.
Open Door Council. Annual Meeting at Caxton Hall, Westminster.
Tuesday, April 16th, at 1 p.m.
The Electrical Association for Women. In connection with One-day Conference of Members. Luncheon at the Hotel Cecil. Speakers: Mrs. Wilfred Ashley (President, E.A.W.), Sir John Snell, G.B.E., M.I.C.E. M.I.E.E. (President, Institution of Electrical Engineers), The Lady Emmott, J.P. (President, National Council of Women of Great Britain). Tickets 6/-, to be obtained from Miss C. Haslett, E.A.W., 46, Kensington Court, London, W.8.
Tuesday, April 16th, at 7.30 p.m.
General Municipal Workers. Public Meeting at Town Hall, Middlesbrough. Speakers: Miss Wilkinson, M.P., and Miss Bondfield, M.P. Chair: Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P.
Thursday, April 25th, at 12 mid-day.
Studley College Appeal Fund. Great Show and Sale in the new Horticultural Hall, Westminster. Opened at 12 mid-day by H.R.H. Princess Mary. Chairman: The Lady Denman, C.B.E. Admission 1/-, 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 1/-, 1-6 p.m.

Membership Application Form.

To be returned to the Secretary, 144, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

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

Name

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I enclose £ s. d. as my first

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Minimum Annual Subscription 1/-

BRANCH NOTES.

ASHFORD.

A successful meeting was held at the Hempsted Street Hall on Friday. Mrs. Miles presided. Colonel Groves gave a convincing speech on the principles of the Conservative Party. He dealt at some length on reforms made during the time of Benjamin Disraeli, and also spoke of what has been done during the last four years in Parliament. During tea the Resolution and Amendments were read. It was decided that the next meeting should be a public one, with Conservative, Liberal and Labour speakers.

BEXHILL.

Our speakers for the public meeting at the Granville Hotel on Thursday, April 11th, are Mrs. Costello (Conservative), Mrs. Edwardes (Liberal), Alderman J. H. MacDonnell (Labour). Chair: W. E. Meads, Esq.

GATESHEAD.

We are forming a branch of the Women's Freedom League in Gateshead, and the organiser will be pleased if readers of THE VOTE, knowing of people in this neighbourhood likely to be interested, will be so kind as to send the names and addresses of any such people to her at 13, Brighton Gardens, Gateshead. The opening meeting will take place in the Beaconsfield Hall, Coatsworth Road (Saltwell Park Corner), Gateshead, on Wednesday, April 10th, at 7.30 p.m. Miss Tooke, J.P., will preside. Our speaker will be Mrs. Schofield-Coates, J.P., and she will be supported by Mrs. Stagg, Mrs. Edith Smith, and Mrs. Annabel. Light refreshments will be provided, and a collection taken towards expenses.

(Organiser) LILIAN LENTON.

MORLEY COLLEGE FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN.

Six University Extension Lectures will be given at Morley College, 61, Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.1, on "Some Aspects of Social Progress, 1926-1929," by Miss Macadam, M.A. (Hon. Sec., Joint University Council of Social Studies), on Wednesdays, at 6.15 p.m., beginning April 17th. The lectures will deal with recent legislative measures and Government Reports, and an estimate will be attempted of post-war tendencies in social reform and recent changes in social values. Tickets for the course, 5s. 6d.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS FOR OUR READERS.

"Women's Fight for the Vote," by Frederick W. Pethick-Lawrence ... 6d.
"Pages from the Diary of a Militant Suffragette," by Katherine Roberts ... 1s.
"The Sphere of Man," by Mrs. C. C. Stopes ... 6d.
"A Reply to the Bishop of Durham" (re Women's Place in the Church), by Eunice G. Murray ... 2d.
"Josephine Butler" (a cameo life-sketch), by Marion Holmes ... 4d.
"British Women M.P.s," by D. M. Northcroft ... 4d.

TO "THE VOTE" READERS.

Vols. No. 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14 of "The Vote," are urgently required by the Women's Freedom League. The gift of any or all of these volumes to Headquarters would be much appreciated. Many thanks for odd numbers already sent.

EASTER HOLIDAYS.

The offices of the Women's Freedom League and Minerva Publishing Company will be closed from 5.30 p.m., Thursday, March 28th, till 9.30 a.m. Tuesday, April 2nd.

OPEN DOOR COUNCIL.

PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday, April 11th, at 4.30 p.m., in the (Council Chamber), CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER.

MRS. PETHICK-LAWRENCE,
MRS. WILLIAMSON FORRESTER (Manchester),
and

MISS MONICA WHATELY,
will speak on

National and International Action for
The Economic Emancipation of Women.
Chair: MRS. ELIZABETH ABBOTT.

The Public Meeting will be preceded at 3 p.m. by the
THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
OPEN DOOR COUNCIL. Tea: 4-4.30, 6d.

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