

THE VOTE.
APRIL 16, 1926.

THE HOPPERS' CHARTER.

By FRANK BRIANT, M.P.

THE VOTE

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

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16, 1926

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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A SCOTTISH WOMAN PIONEER.

DAME LOUISA LUMSDEN, D.B.E., LL.D.

Our Edinburgh Branch is to be congratulated on having secured such a notable woman as Dame Louisa Lumsden to speak at their public meeting on "Women in the Ministry" on April 22nd. It is nearly a year ago since Dame Louisa, then in her 85th year, travelled from Edinburgh to London to receive the rank of Dame Commander of the British Empire from the hands of the King at Buckingham Palace, as recognition of a long lifetime of educational activities. Nevertheless, it was by a mere accident that Dame Louisa turned to educational work more than 50 years ago. She read an article by Miss Emily Davies on the newly-founded Girton College, and hearing that Miss Davies was inquiring whether any women students in Edinburgh would attend her College, she at once decided to go. "My mother approved, but some of my friends said I should ruin all my chances if I did anything so extraordinary," said Dame Louisa many years later. Accordingly, she went up to Girton, not knowing, according to her own account, the difference between an angle and a triangle, and crammed into the next three years the back work the men had already done and all the work they were doing. She passed the Classical Tripos with Honours, was asked to stay on as classical tutor, and for two years was practically the second in command at Girton. Later, she was offered, and accepted, a post as classical tutor at Cheltenham College, under

Miss Beale, although Mr. John Addington Symonds, the poet and essayist, had advised her to take up literature. She had not been three months at Cheltenham, however, before she was asked to open a girls' school at St. Andrew's. Dame Louisa had been reading the life of Dr. Arnold, and longed to do

for girls what the great doctor had done for Rugby. So she started St. Leonard's School in the old Scottish University town of St. Andrews, and, during the five years she remained there, created a tradition which survives to this day. At a later period Miss Lumsden travelled widely on the Continent and in America, but in 1896 she returned to her educational work, when she took charge of the University Hall for Women opened by St. Andrew's University, where she contrived for the next five years to blend the freedom of Scotland with the community life of Girton, and did it with such signal success that a residential hall for men is now being built at St. Andrew's. The University recognised Miss Lumsden's great services by conferring on her the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

At the close of this period Miss Lumsden took

up suffrage work, becoming a leader of the Scottish movement, and lecturing all over the country, from Inverness to Newton Stewart. When the great war broke out she started a series of lectures to women on the war and its causes, and later helped in recruiting work, going first to the North to recruit



DAME LOUISA LUMSDEN, D.B.E., LL.D.

men for the Seaforths, and later returning to Edinburgh to address open-air recruitings for the Royal Scots.

To-day, Dame Louisa divides her interests evenly between lecturing at rural institutes, which in Scotland correspond to Women's Institutes in England and Wales, and work for the protection of animals. Two years ago she came to London, as director of the Scottish P.C.A. in Edinburgh, to speak at the R.S.P.C.A. centenary celebrations.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Mrs. Court Treatt Complimented.

Major Court Treatt paid his wife a high compliment recently when he said publicly that she was second-in-command of the famous expedition from the Cape to Cairo by motor-car, and proved her ability to cope with extraordinary conditions by travelling as the one woman with four men for 16 months, and none regretted her presence. "She pulled her weight with the rest of us," added the Major.

Degree for Duchess of Atholl.

McGill University has conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Law on the Duchess of Atholl (Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education), who is visiting Canada to attend the triennial conference of the Canadian National Council on Education. The ceremony took place in the Convocation Hall of the Royal Victoria College, Toronto, and was conducted with full academic pageantry.

Women and the Salvation Army.

Commissioner Adelaide Cox, who since 1912 has been responsible to General Booth for the Salvation Army's social work among women in the United Kingdom, is shortly to relinquish her command. For nearly 40 years she has devoted her life to helping friendless women. She has now been appointed to International Headquarters to assist in the oversight of the women's work. Her successor is Lt.-Col. Catherine Booth.

East End Women's Club.

A club for women, including reading, recreation, and refreshment rooms, and a garden, has been opened in Tait Street, East London. Children under school age will be admitted in the afternoons, and the subscription is only 1d. per week, with 6d. entrance fee. The club premises were until recently used as a public-house, but were purchased by Lord Winterton, and transformed into a centre for rest and recreation for working-class women in the district.

Australian Woman's Honour.

Dr. Roberta Jull, upon whom the University of Perth, Western Australia, recently conferred—for the first time upon a woman—the honorary dignity of Warden, is a daughter of the Rev. Robert Stewart, of Glasgow and Lisbon. She received her medical training in Glasgow, and after graduation went to Perth, W.A. Dr. Jull has been president of the National Council of Women of Australia.

Hull Woman Solicitor.

Miss Winifred Johns is the first Hull woman to pass her final examination as a solicitor. Miss Johns is a daughter of Mr. W. C. Johns, of Newland Park, and was articled to Mr. Hugh Farrell. By a curious coincidence one of the earliest women barristers was also a native of Hull, Miss Olive Clapham.

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EQUAL FRANCHISE DEMONSTRATION IN LONDON.

A Government measure giving votes to women at 21, and equalising the franchise qualifications for all ages, will be the demand of a great demonstration of women's organisations to be held on July 3rd next.

The demonstration has the support of Lady Astor, M.P., Miss Bondfield, Miss Agnes Dawson, L.C.C., Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Drummond, Miss A. Honora Enfield, Miss Margery Fry, Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, Mrs. Pankhurst, Lady Rhondda, Miss Elizabeth Robins, Mrs. Swanwick, Dr. Jane Walker, and Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P.

A striking procession will march through London under the banners of well-known organisations such as the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, the Women's International League, the Six Point Group, the Women's National Liberal Federation, the Women's Freedom League, and St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, while a prominent part will be taken by Trade Unions, and professional organisations like those of the Women Teachers, the Women Engineers, the Women Sanitary Inspectors and Health Visitors, the Women Clerks, Civil Servants and Postal Workers. Gay colour schemes, original decorations and pageantry should make this part of the demonstration a very picturesque sight.

It will be followed by a mass meeting in Hyde Park, where there will be at least 12 platforms, including one reserved for women Members of Parliament and candidates, another for women in public positions—J.P.s, mayors, etc.—and another where a large number of leading actresses are expected to speak. Both men and women will address the meeting, and among the speakers will be Lord Astor, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Mrs. Corbett Ashby, Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, Mrs. Rackham, J.P., and Mrs. Wintringham.

WOMEN TORCHBEARERS.

At the Fifth Annual Rally of the Ulster Women's Christian Temperance Union, held on March 30th, in the Assembly Hall, Belfast, our member, Mrs. George M'Cracken, presented a most successful Pageant of Famous Women, of which the libretto was written entirely by herself, and read by Mrs. Jack Manning. A grand tableau was staged at the conclusion of the Pageant, the following characters being impersonated:—*Ruth* (Mrs. Gracey), *Boadicea* (Miss Lowry), *Jeanne D'Arc* (Miss Presse), *Queen Esther* (Miss Knox), *Queen Elizabeth* (Mrs. M'Cracken), *Queen Victoria* (Miss Nora Whitby), *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi* (Mme. Rene M'Murray), *the Gracchi* (Pat and Jean M'Murray), *Helen, Lady Dufferin* (Miss Swan), and her little son (Maureen M'Killop), *Grace Darling* (Miss E. Alexander), *Sappho* (Mrs. Goodall), *Frances Burney* (Miss M. S. Alexander), *Rosa Bonheur* (Miss D. Ward), *Novella Calderini, Lawyer* (Mrs. M'Killop), *Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell* (Miss O'Neill), *Mary Wollstonecraft* (Mrs. Patterson, B.A.), *Miss Clough* (Miss Emmeline Morton), *Florence Nightingale* (Miss Florence Martin), *Edith Cavell* (Mrs. Millen), *Elizabeth Fry* (Miss Stewart), *Harriet Beecher Stowe* (Miss Harvey), *Josephine Butler* (Miss Ell's), *Catherine Booth* (Mrs. Dickson), *Frances E. Willard* (Mrs. Cairns), *Lady Henry Somerset* (Miss Arlow).

The Pageant was witnessed by close upon 2,000 people. It was the first time a representative women's pageant had been given in Belfast, and Mrs. M'Cracken is to be much congratulated on this splendid bit of suffrage work for the Women's Cause, the arrangements of which must have taken a large slice out of the scanty leisure at her disposal. She not only wrote the wording of the Pageant, but chose the characters, and arranged all the costumes.

NOTES FROM THE FOREIGN PRESS.

A Women's Reading Association has been established in Copenhagen, and we learn from the new Report that it has now a membership of 3,121. The annual subscription is fifteen kroner, and this entitles the subscriber to the use of the reading and newspaper rooms, attendance at any lectures that may be arranged, and the right to borrow three books daily from the library. The reading rooms are open from nine in the morning until ten o'clock at night, and one hundred reviews and forty-two different papers can be seen there. The library contains 65,000 volumes, 1,745 books being added in 1925; the catalogue is in the form of a card index. The Association, of which Fräulein Sophie Alberti is the President, has a capital of 150,000 Kronen, and a pension scheme has been established for the members of the staff.

On the ground-floor of the building a restaurant has been opened, and this is not confined to members; the charges are low, but the food is of excellent quality. Over the reading rooms and library a women's hotel is to be found. The hotel is well appointed and comfortable, and the guests are not restricted to the members of the Association; anyone staying in the hotel has free access to the reading rooms.

We learn from the *Schweizer Frauenblatt* of April 2nd, that the German Women's Vocational Office has made a return of the women who are serving as town councillors in Germany. This return shows that 745 women have been elected, the number varying greatly in the different provinces. The largest number of women have been elected in Hesse, and the smallest in Bavaria. Although the figures show no increase on the elections of 1919, it is satisfactory to note that the number of women town councillors in Germany has not decreased.

Financial stringency renders retrenchment in the Geneva Canton imperative, and it is noteworthy that the proposals put forward in the Education Department are at the expense of the women teachers. It

is suggested that in the future all women teachers in kindergartens and elementary schools shall retire at the age of 55 years; and that women teachers in elementary and secondary schools, who were married before the 1st January, 1926, and who have not reached 55, shall be given a definite time limit for their services. The proposals have aroused bitter feeling among the teachers, especially among the married women, who mostly have dependents to support.

Since last year Italian women have had the right to vote, and serve on local bodies. The woman voter must have reached the age of 25 years, and she must give proof that she has had an elementary school education, after which she is placed in one of four groups. To the first group belong the mothers and widows of men who fell in the war; in the second are women who have received a war decoration, or who have been otherwise honoured; in the third women householders, and women who are guardians of children who are minors; the fourth class comprises women who pay taxes of 100 lire and upwards. Women belonging to the first two groups can vote whether they can still read or write, but for those belonging to the third and fourth it is necessary, when they cannot produce a school certificate, for them to have the assurance of a notary and three witnesses that they can read and write, or they must undergo a short educational course. As a result of these stipulations the number of women voters is much restricted. For example, in Milan, only 5,000 out of the 250,000 who are entitled, have been registered as voters, and in Florence 1,200 out of 25,000.

The question of the long hours worked by children engaged in agricultural work in Germany has long been a matter of concern to those engaged in social work. The Societies for Children's Protection and for the Care of the School Child have now drafted proposals to amend the law of 1903 so as to extend the operation of the law to the sphere of agriculture, and to provide for the inspection of children at work.

MARIAN BERRY.

WOMEN'S EXPOSITIONS IN AMERICA.

In a recent article in the *Bulletin and Scots Pictorial*, Miss Helen Fraser gives an interesting description of a big Women's Exposition she attended at St. Louis, U.S.A.

The opening address, after the Mayor's welcome, says Miss Fraser, was made by Major Julia Stimson, head of the Army Nurse Corps of the United States, and a St. Louis woman. Miss Mary Anderson, of the Department of Labour; Mrs. Van Winkle, head of policewomen, and Miss Lasker, of the Immigration Board, were among leading women in a list of events that came so thick and fast they seemed incredible.

Every booth in the Exhibition was taken by a woman or a woman's organisation, with the exception of newspapers represented by their women's departments, banks the same—women are very much in banking in the States—and the railroads showing women's work along their lines.

Every kind of business by and for women was shown—labour-saving household things, furniture, shades, cushions, dresses, hats, children's garments, photographs, jewellery, decorations, weaving, florists, beauty specialists, garden designers, a woman engineer, all the things and people one can readily think of, and every kind of women's organisation.

There was a very excellent art gallery of women's painting and sculpture. Mrs. Rockefeller M'Cormick, who has the reputation of being as clever in business as her father, had her real estate exhibit of the pleasure resort she is building up in Wisconsin.

Distinctive exhibits were the Indian ones, with their carpets and curtains, baskets, beadwork, featherwork, and jewellery. Another was held by two women,

dressed in real Wild West clothes and hats, with the loveliest hunting dogs with them. Their booth was filled with Western and Indian trappings, furs and saddles, and most alluring photographs of their Colorado lodge.

Another fascinating person was a quiet, pretty, gentle-looking woman with a charming smile, who has made good in Texas. She went some years ago, taking a delicate husband, and bought 123 acres of land on the Gulf of Mexico, and started to plant it with fruit trees from California. She now has 200 acres of orchard, and has done marvellous things in improving trees. She has more than doubled the production of the parent trees from California. Their best record was twelve boxes of grapefruit per tree a year at eight years. She grows on hers twelve boxes of grapefruit a year at four years, and she has planted 1,600 acres of fruit orchard for other people from her nurseries.

Another woman in Texas has 1,000 acres under figs, and uses for her preserving work ten twenty-gallon cauldrons at once.

Still another woman at the Exhibition was a big cotton-grower, and all along the route of the railroads women are making good on the land.

The Exhibition has been acclaimed as a very creditable achievement, as it is; but what seemed chiefly to impress the newspapers and men of St. Louis as most remarkable was the fact that the enterprise paid for itself before the doors were opened, and the women who had "underwritten" it were told on the opening day they would not be called upon for any money. They hope, indeed, to have a good sum over for things of interest to women, and scholarships.

THE VOTE.

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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.

OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Women's Freedom League will be held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, Saturday, April 24th, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. This Conference is open only to members of our League, but members not only have the right to attend, but every member who is in London that day is specially urged to come to Caxton Hall, if only for part of the time, to hear the discussion on the Resolutions and Amendments on the Conference Agenda, for upon the decisions arrived at will be based the policy of the Women's Freedom League for the following year. Miss Anna Munro, the retiring President of the Women's Freedom League, will take the Chair at this Conference, and will give her presidential address at the beginning of its proceedings. The Resolutions and Amendments appearing on the Conference Agenda this year are of special interest. In the first place the Conference is asked to reaffirm the position of the Women's Freedom League in regard to (1) equal suffrage; (2) eligibility of women for the House of Lords; (3) equal opportunities and equal pay for women and men throughout all branches of our national life; (4) women's unemployment; (5) women prison commissioners, women governors, women deputy-governors, and women medical officers in all women's prisons and women's sections of prisons; (6) the separate assessment of the incomes of married persons for the purpose of Income Tax. There is a Resolution expressing extreme indignation that the King's Speech contained no reference to the equal enfranchisement of women and men, and calling upon the Government to introduce and carry into law without delay a simple franchise measure conferring the franchise on women at the age of twenty-one on a short residential qualification. Other resolutions call upon the Government to prevent municipal authorities from imposing conditions of employment which are contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act; to carry through legislation which will make the mother an equal guardian with the father of her children; to make arrangements through the local authorities for the training of workless women in various trades; to make it illegal for a man to will away all his money from his wife; and to pass into law without delay a measure, on the lines of Miss Wilkinson's Bill, providing for Women Police. There is a Resolution demanding the recognition of an equal moral standard for men and women, and the raising of the Age of Consent for girls to 18, together with a similar protection for boys. Various Resolutions deal with the Contributory Pensions Act and with Health Insurance for women; and the raising of the school age for girls and boys. There are Resolutions dealing with the punishment of offenders for assaults on children; and demanding the appointment of women as park-keepers. Attention is called to the fact that women seldom serve on Watch Committees, and that it is desirable in the interests of public morality that there should be women in considerable numbers on Watch Committees. Another resolution calls for the appointment of an equal number of women members with men on the Board of Control, while others urge that women doctors should be in charge of all women patients in Public Mental

Hospitals; that women should be appointed on their visiting committees; that women inspectors should be appointed by the Board of Control; that more women should be appointed as members of the Advisory Committees of the Commission of the Peace; and that the number of women magistrates throughout the country be increased. There are other Resolutions, some of them more or less controversial, but perhaps the most interesting Resolution from many points of view is the following, which has been sent by one of our Northern Branches:—"This Conference is of opinion that the Women's Freedom League should confine its propaganda, both on the platform and in the Press, to problems involving the equality of the sexes and the special disabilities that affect women."

We look forward to this Conference with increasing hope, for we are convinced that the year awaiting us holds the possibility of greatly renewed effort. Throughout the past year we have been keeping our old friends and gaining new ones. Dr. Knight is again being unanimously re-elected for the Hon. Treasurership of our League; Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence is being returned unopposed for the Presidency, and members will have an opportunity of giving her a special welcome at Caxton Hall on April 24th, at 5 p.m., when she will announce an entirely new plan of work, an intensive campaign throughout the country on behalf of equal franchise, to be initiated by our League. The following are standing for election to the National Executive Committee, which consists of twelve members:—Mrs. Brading (member Portsmouth Branch), Miss Alix M. Clark, Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P., Mrs. Dexter, Mrs. Flowers (Hon. Secretary Mid-London Branch), Mrs. Harverson (member Hampstead Branch), Miss Haugh, B.Sc., Mrs. Jason Kerr, J.P., Miss Anna Munro, Miss C. Neal, L.L.A., Miss M. I. Neal, Mrs. Palmer (Hon. Secretary, Ashford Branch), Mrs. Pierotti (Hon. Head Literature Department, and formerly member of our Executive Committee), Mrs. Fiske, Miss Eunice Murray (President, Glasgow Branch, and formerly member of our Executive Committee), Miss Manclark (Hon. Secretary, Edinburgh Branch), Miss Spriggs, Miss Jessie Stephen (Parliamentary Labour candidate for Portsmouth), Miss Woodman, B.A. (member Mid-London Branch, and Secretary Women's International League). Those in italics are retiring members of our present Executive Committee who offer themselves for re-election.

EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS.

Last Tuesday Members returned to the House of Commons after the Easter Recess. It was regrettable that no time was found for Mr. Grundy's Resolution on the equal enfranchisement of women and men before the Recess, but we hope that Capt. Wedgwood Benn's Equal Franchise Bill, the Second Reading of which comes second on the Order Paper for April 30th, will be more fortunate. The Government remains curiously silent in regard to this question of equal franchise. Even the Home Secretary, usually the most talkative member of the Cabinet, has recently ceased to voice his hopes and fears on the subject. But, if the Government preserves silence on this matter of vital importance, the women of the country are determined to make their voices heard on it with increasing effect throughout the year. The Great London Procession on behalf of Equal Franchise on July 3rd will not be the end of their clamour, but rather the starting point for further and renewed effort to secure a victory. We are glad, too, to learn that the Peeresses Bill is again very shortly to be introduced into the House of Lords; and we very much hope that the Government will see its way to adopt this Bill and pass it into law without delay. It is absurd that the House of Lords should persist in remaining the only Governmental body in the land for which women are ineligible. May this be the last Government to be asked to concede equal political rights to women and men in this country!

THE HOPPERS' CHARTER.

By FRANK BRIANT, M.P.

I recently paid a personal visit to a Kentish district in order to see for myself what was the actual provision made for the small army which annually migrates to Kent and other areas of South England, and resides there for four to six weeks. I find that in West Kent alone this numbers something like 60,000 people, principally women and children, who have for the most part come from London. I was struck by the difference in the accommodation provided. In one case every dwelling was brick built. The latrines were ample, and also built of brick. There were covered places for cooking, and a cistern with hot water was available all the day. The people were quite content and obviously happy and well. There is a demand for employment in such conditions, and the employer probably reaps the reward of his care by ensuring steady and capable workers. In another hop farm which I visited the conditions were frankly disgusting. The report of the Medical Officer for South-West Kent in 1924 contained scathing criticisms of the conditions on many farms. He stated that the sanitation was in some cases deplorable, and in some positively indecent. In another case he says "the filth and ankle-deep mud were awful." I am informed that last year on one farm the only water available was from a ditch, and that this was not only used for drinking and washing purposes, but that babies were actually washed in the same supply. Voluntary agencies are doing splendid work with limited resources, and the provision of temporary hospitals and medical care for the people is the result of much fine effort.

I am told that there has been a great improvement, but, so far as my own observation is concerned, there is still, in some hop fields, ample room for drastic alteration, if the housing and sanitation is to be made fit for decent people. On one farm I saw old food and filth lying about all over the fields. The water supply was at a considerable distance, and the latrine accommodation obviously insufficient, with results which were repellent and, indeed, dangerous to health. In some cases the huts were placed at the bottom of a slope, so that after heavy rain the floors were soaking wet, especially as they were seldom raised from the ground. On one occasion a hut was so completely surrounded by water, that a man had to take off his shoes and stockings in order to carry a woman across. Just by the door of one, I saw a heap of filthy rubbish which, in hot weather, would breed a host of disease-spreading flies. It should be remembered that the large proportion of residents are children of all ages, and in wet weather they have only the tiny overcrowded huts in which to take shelter. One can imagine the air, with rain-soaked clothes in the one place in which the people have to eat and sleep, and with inadequate, if any, ventilation. Sometimes from five to six people are in a hut of eight to ten feet. The food has to be kept on the floor or bed. Some of the farmers are doing their best to make life healthy and enjoyable, but I am anxious that all should at least conform to a minimum of decency and sanitation. Given fine weather, hopping is by no means to be despised as a satisfactory holiday—the only one which many can afford—but in a wet season, with indifferent accommodation, it is almost intolerable. I am informed that even where prosecution has been advised by a Medical Officer, only a small number of the delinquents are actually taken to court. I do not wish to be unreasonable, but, after all, the hop farmers depend on imported labour for their business, and apart from humanitarian considerations, it is their obvious duty to see that the families which are essential to their business shall be treated with humanity. A great deal could be done, if only for the children, so that they may have a proper place for shelter and play in wet weather. It would also be a great convenience

if there was a canteen where cooked foods could be obtained at reasonable prices. The need for this is evident when one remembers that in most cases all the cooking has to be done in the open air with, at most, a top and sides for the kitchen. A particularly hard case has come to my notice on one farm in Kent. Whilst the pickers were in the fields ten huts were completely destroyed by fire. All the bedding, spare clothes, sheets, etc., were burnt, and the poor people had to return to London without the necessaries which had been brought down from their homes. The farmer disowns all responsibility.

If what is a monstrous scandal is to be removed, the following should be obtained as a kind of hoppers' charter:—

- (1) The Ministry of Health should be responsible for the inspection.
- (2) Every hop farm should be inspected and approved *before* the people are allowed to come down.
- (3) There should be at least two inspectors—preferably women—who should devote the whole of their time to supervision during the hop season.
- (4) Adequate provision of latrines estimated in proportion to the number of hoppers accommodated.
- (5) Sufficient and central water supply.
- (6) Conveyance to and from the railway to farm. (This is sometimes five miles away.)
- (7) Drying house for clothes.
- (8) Provision of kitchens not exposed to weather.

In addition voluntary effort should provide the following:—

- (1) Central huts for first-aid, with qualified nurses in attendance.
- (2) Hospitals where, as is generally the case, the local hospitals have not sufficient accommodation.
- (3) A supply of marquees, or adjacent halls, for play rooms for the children, to be used also for recreation for the adults. Concerts, cinemas, etc., could be arranged.
- (4) A canteen where cooked foods could be obtained at reasonable prices.
- (5) Crèches for the babies.

I am hoping that voluntary effort will be secured next season for the above purposes, and am endeavouring to procure the necessary organisation for this purpose. It is essential, however, that public opinion should be informed as to the existing degrading conditions on many farms. I am confident that if the general public realised the fact pressure would be sufficient to speedily bring about great reforms. The most encouraging sign is the intention of the local authorities to issue new by-laws which will aim at compelling the indifferent hop farms to bring their conditions up to the standard already attained by the more humane and intelligent among them.

MONTREAL ENFRANCHISES MARRIED WOMEN.

By an amendment to the Charter of the City of Montreal, agreed to by the Legislature of the Province of Quebec lately, married women owning property in the city will be enabled in future to vote at municipal elections. Hitherto, the situation has been somewhat anomalous, inasmuch as while women property holders might vote at city elections if they were unmarried or widowed, married ladies who own property in their own name and are separate in their property from their husbands might not vote. Owing to the fact that the electoral lists are already drawn up for the coming elections next month, the women will not be able to vote until the elections of 1928, except in by-elections. The amendment takes effect on 1st May, 1926.

WOMEN PRISONERS.

Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons for the year 1924-25. (H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.) Price 1s. 3d. net.

This Report shows that during the past year the daily average population of women and girls in local prisons was 813; in the convict prison at Liverpool 54; in the Borstal Institution for Girls at Aylesbury 67; and in the Preventive Detention Prison at Liverpool 8. Leeds, Maidstone, Norwich, and Newcastle have now been closed to women prisoners, the local prisons in which women as well as men are imprisoned being Birmingham, Cardiff, Durham, Exeter, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Preston, and Winchester. Holloway is for women prisoners only, and there the daily average number of prisoners was 324. Of the 8,547 women received into prison on conviction during the year, 7,200, or 84 per cent., had been previously convicted. 4,957 of these women had incurred six or more previous convictions, whereas in 1913-14 there were 15,000 women who had done so. Last year, 1,474 women were convicted of Indictable Offences—1,048 for various forms of Larceny, 197 for False Pretences, 32 for Receiving, and 29 for Bigamy; 834 for Non-Indictable Offences akin to Indictable—301 for Assaults, 139 for Cruelty to Children, 159 for Indecent Exposure, 76 for Brothel Keeping, etc., and 113 for Malicious Damage; and 6,239 for other Non-Indictable Offences—3,989 for Drunkenness, 1,086 for Prostitution, 644 for Breach of Police Regulations, and 193 for Begging and Sleeping Out. 193 girls, compared with 260 the previous year, were sentenced to imprisonment, seven of these girls being 16 years of age; sixteen 17; thirty-six 18; fifty-nine 19; and seventy-five 20; their chief offences being Prostitution, Larcenies, Drunkenness, and Breach of Police Regulations, for which offences they received sentences varying from seven days or less to twelve months. Thirty-four girls were committed to Borstal Detention during the year 1924-25, and the same number during the previous year. Of the 8,269 women discharged from local prisons in 1924-25, 4,435 were assisted. Of these 1,179 were placed in work, while 3,234 were sent either to relations or to friends or Homes. Seventy-nine girls were discharged from Borstal, work being found by the Borstal Association for 40 of these girls; eight girls either found work for themselves, or had it found for them by their relations; and four girls were unemployable. Twenty-one women convicts were discharged, work being found for eight, other assistance given to twelve, and 1 required no help.

The Report is signed by the four men Prison Commissioners, and we again stress the fact that there is no woman among these Commissioners who, under the Home Secretary, are entirely responsible for our present prison system and the treatment of all men and women prisoners. Further, except for the Girls' Borstal Institution at Aylesbury, there is no woman Governor of any local or convict prison where women are imprisoned; and no woman Governor of the Women's Prison at Holloway. There is no medical woman inspector of prisons, indeed no woman inspector at all for any of our prisons. The fact that there are no women in any of the above positions, and no women as chief medical officers in our prisons, stands out with remarkable clearness in the brief reports by the governors and medical officers, which the Commissioners include in their Report. A comparison of the hopeful contribution of the Governor of Wakefield, a prison for men only, with the depressing and obviously inadequate report of the Governor of Holloway, a prison for women only, will convince the reader that while men prisoners can be safely left in the hands of enlightened men who understand members of their own sex, no headway at all can be made with women prisoners whose treatment and needs are left entirely in the hands of men who so evidently do not understand members of the opposite sex. It is refreshing to turn to the Report

of the Governor of Aylesbury Borstal Institution. Miss Barker does understand the girls under her charge; but her efforts are restricted by circumstances over which she has no control. In her Report Miss Barker says:—"The training is satisfactory in so far as domestic workers are concerned, but all other fields are barred by the lack of machinery, and as a result all inmates, whether suitable temperamentally or not, have to be prepared for domestic service on discharge. Early in the year the entire system of education was revised, and the results have been most satisfactory. Classes are held each evening from 5.30 to 8 p.m.; and each inmate is allowed to select two subjects of general education and two handicrafts. Special classes are also organised for those below a definite standard, and a selected number of the more intelligent girls are coached for commercial work. All school work is a privilege, to be withdrawn when behaviour is bad, and the classes are so enjoyed that this rule has had a salutary effect on the general behaviour. The appointment of a handwork instructor has resulted in a development of the work on the handicraft side, and the results have been surprisingly good. An exhibition of work was held in December last."

We learn from the reports of the Governors of Borstal Institutions for boys that fitting and smithing shops have been reorganised, that civilian instructors have been appointed to carpenters' and fitting shops, and that efforts are being made, as far as circumstances permit, to grade the work so that lads may be trained and secure a good grounding in the elementary principles of the particular trades. Music is another subject cultivated at Feltham Boys' Borstal Institution. We submit that machinery should be supplied at Aylesbury to enable the girls to be trained in spheres other than domestic service, and to allow a musical society to be started among the girls. We are glad to see that 19 girls from Aylesbury went into camp in the summer; and we hope that it will be possible for even more girls to go this year.

We cannot conclude this review without once again insisting that women as well as men should be among the Prison Commissioners; that there should be women governors, women deputy governors, and women medical officers in all women's prisons and women's sections of prisons, as well as a woman medical inspector and women inspectors of prisons. F. A. U.

THE PEACEMAKERS' PILGRIMAGE.

Further particulars are now to hand in connection with the forthcoming Peacemakers' Pilgrimage. Preparations are going on apace, and there is every sign that this is an enterprise that is capturing the public imagination.

The Pilgrimage colour is blue, and some of the Pilgrims on foot will wear blue tabards, and will carry banners and tall poles with the names of all the villages and towns which have carried the following very practical resolution:—"We members and supporters of the Peacemakers' Pilgrimage, believing that law should take the place of war in the settlement of international disputes, urge His Majesty's Government to agree to submit all disputes to conciliation or arbitration, and by taking the lead in the proposed Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations, to show that Great Britain does not intend to appeal to force."

Local committees representing the societies co-operating are already well ahead in many places with arrangements, and would-be Pilgrims anxious to get in touch with their local organisers should communicate with the Pilgrimage Secretary, 55, Gower Street, London, W.C.1.

WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Monday, April 19th, at 7.45 p.m.
Thames Valley Branch. Members' Meeting at 26, Cedar Road, Teddington.
Saturday, April 24th, at 10 a.m.
Women's Freedom League Annual Conference, Caxton Hall, Westminster.
Sunday, April 25th, at 3.30—5.30 p.m.
Reception at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C., to Conference Delegates, Members and Friends of the Women's Freedom League.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Friday, April 30th, at 2 p.m.
Jumble Sale at Nine Elms, for the Benefit of the Women's Freedom League.
May 30th—June 6th.
Tenth I.W.S.A. Congress at the Sorbonne, Paris.
Saturday, June 19th.
Peacemakers' Pilgrimage, Great Demonstration in Hyde Park.
June 22nd, 23rd, and 24th.
British Commonwealth League Conference.
Wednesday, June 30th, at 7 p.m.
Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party, Caxton Hall.
Saturday, July 3rd.
Great Combined Equal Political Rights Procession and Hyde Park Demonstration.

PROVINCES.

Wednesday, April 21st, at 5.30 p.m.
Hastings Branch. Annual Meeting at 1, St. Paul's Place, St. Leonards.
Friday, April 30th, at 3 p.m.
Ashford Branch. Members' Meeting at the Hempsted Street Hall.
Monday, May 3rd, at 7.30 p.m.
Middlesbrough Branch. Members' Meeting at Agecroft, Linthorpe.
Conference Report by Delegates.

SCOTLAND.

Thursday, April 22nd, at 8 p.m.
Edinburgh Branch. Public Meeting on Women in the Ministry, in the Y.M.C.A. Hall. Speakers: Miss Eunice G. Murray, Dame Louisa Innes Lumsden, D.B.E., LL.D., Miss Mildred E. Dobson, B.D., B.Sc. Chair: Rev. Dr. Hector MacPherson.
Monday, April 19th, at 5 p.m.
Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street, S.W. Equal Political Rights Campaign Meeting. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle.
Thursday, April 29th, at 8 p.m.
St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. Public Meeting at Caxton Hall, Westminster, to Demand Equal Franchise. Speakers: The Rt. Rev. William F. Brown, Bishop of Pella, Dame Millicent Fawcett, G.B.E., LL.D., Sir Robert Newman, Bart, M.P., Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., Miss Barclay Carter, Lic.-es-L. Chair: Councillor Mrs. V. M. Crawford.
Wednesday, May 5th, at 3 p.m.
Golders Green Study Circle, at 13, Temple Fortune Court, N.W.11. Speaker: Miss F. A. Underwood. Subject: "The Work of the Women's Freedom League."

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR MADAM,

I am a constant reader of your paper, and understand you believe in justice, therefore am wondering if you can do something to remedy the following:—Whenever a man or woman is taken up by the police, and a stretcher is used, a covering must be put over the occupant. A few weeks ago, as I was going through Soho Square, two policemen were wheeling along a woman—there was no covering; the woman appeared to be asleep. Even if the woman had done wrong, surely it was not right to expose her to others!

In a recent issue of THE VOTE there is a paragraph on "Refuse Removal." May I call your attention to some of the Tube Railways—tram and bus tickets thrown on the railway track, and when one is in the lift, going down to the trains, one can see a quantity of rubbish—cigarette cardboard boxes lodged on the ledges of the well. If the Managers of the railways knew of this untidy working, perhaps the cleaners would be asked to have the daily sweepings burnt.

Faithfully yours,
K. STONE.

BRANCH NOTES.

THAMES VALLEY

A meeting of members only will be held at 26, Cedar Road, Teddington, Monday, April 19th, to consider the future work of this Branch, and to discuss the Agenda for the Women's Freedom League's forthcoming Annual Conference. All members are urged to attend this meeting at which important business will be discussed. Annual subscriptions, which are due, can be paid at this Branch meeting.

HASTINGS.

A successful meeting was held at the Grand Hotel on Monday evening of last week, when Mrs. Muriel Matters Porter gave a wonderful speech on the subject of "Has Woman Creative and

Constructive Ability?" Mrs. Strickland presided, but had to apologise for vacating the chair almost immediately, owing to serious illness in her family. Her place was taken by Mrs. Darent Harrison. At the close of the meeting the following resolution was passed unanimously:—"That this meeting of the Hastings and St. Leonards Branch of the Women's Freedom League protests against the delay in dealing with the demand for equal franchise, and calls upon the Government to introduce a Bill to remove all electoral inequalities between men and women." Mrs. Darent Harrison made an appeal to those present to come forward and help to make the proposed Peace Pilgrimage a grand success. New members were made, and Miss Baenziger worked hard to make the audience buy THE VOTE. In her speech, "Has Woman Creative and Constructive Ability?" Mrs. Matters Porter said one needed to define what was meant by creative ability. The creative artist was one who definitely created a new form to express life, while other artists merely attempted to make something which was life-like. When women agitated for the vote they were always careful to state that women were different from men, but it was almost impossible to explain that difference. No civilisation had yet revealed the rhythm of woman, and a place was waiting for the nation that could reveal it. Woman had not yet found her own rhythm, though occasionally she had fleeting glimpses of it. Every time there was a world crisis, women fell into the masculine rhythm, and flocked to the banner of man. Women must recognise that they had to find the feminine rhythm, and that their first job was that of creating new forms to express life. This was the supreme business, and by the side of it all others faded into insignificance. Man had been chiefly concerned with the structure of life, but the structure was no good without the spirit within. It was quite impossible, however, for women to do their job properly under the conditions in which many lived. Right housing conditions and the endowment of motherhood were essential.

EDINBURGH.

On April 22nd a public meeting on "Women in the Ministry" will take place in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, at 8 p.m. The Chair will be taken by the Rev. Dr. Hector MacPherson, and the speakers will be Miss Eunice G. Murray, Dame Louisa Innes Lumsden, D.B.E., LL.D., Miss Mildred E. Dobson, B.D., B.Sc., and possibly others to be announced later. LILIAN LEXTON.

ROTHESAY.

On Wednesday, April 7th, we held a very successful meeting in "The Palace" (Lesser Hall), at which an instructive and amusing address on "Equal Opportunities Everywhere," given by Miss Eunice Murray, was greatly appreciated. Councillor Miss Arrol, the President of the local Branch, very ably presided, and thanked Miss Murray for her great kindness in coming, at considerable inconvenience, to address a Rothersey meeting. New members were enrolled, a good collection taken, and VOTES and literature sold. Our thanks are due to all who helped—to Miss Eunice Murray for speaking, to Miss Arrol for presiding, and to Miss Mole, Miss McCallum, and Miss Lindsay for assisting with the sale of THE VOTE and taking the collection. LILIAN LEXTON.

WALLASEY.

This Branch took the initiative locally and called a meeting to further the Peace Pilgrimage. A circular letter was sent to thirty ministers in the Borough asking them to announce from their pulpits the meeting to be presided over by the Vicar of Wallasey. Mrs. Shilston Watkins, who has had a great deal to do with the Liverpool organisation, consented to speak at this meeting. (Hon. Sec.) MRS. ANDAIN, 22, Cromer Drive.

Miss SUSAN LAWRENCE FOR EAST HAM!

The fight in East Ham is in full swing, and all members of the Women's Freedom League and readers of THE VOTE who can help Miss Lawrence win this seat are urged at once to go to her Committee Rooms at 532, High Street North, Manor Park, E.12 (opposite Coronation Picture House), where her Agent, Mr. Stewart Rainbird, will give all particulars. Canvassers and open-air speakers are most particularly wanted; and cars are specially needed on the day of the Poll, the date of which will be announced later.

All who recognise the great need for more women in Parliament should seize this opportunity to get Miss Lawrence sent back to Westminster. With energy on the part of her workers, Miss Susan Lawrence ought easily to regain this seat. A fifth woman Member of the House of Commons is very necessary at the present time.

The quickest routes to her Committee Rooms are via Aldgate, by buses 25a, 25b, 126, or Ilford trams; via G.E.R. (Liverpool or Fenchurch Street) to Manor Park Station; via District Railway to East Ham Station, and then by Wanstead tram, or 101 or 126 bus. North Woolwich trams and buses pass the doors. Motors from city via Mile End Road.

Be sure you do your share to get Miss Susan Lawrence returned top of the Poll!

HEADQUARTERS JUMBLE SALE.

Miss Cole is most kindly holding a Jumble Sale for the Women's Freedom League at the Nine Elms Settlement on Friday, April 30th, at 2 p.m. Goods of all descriptions are urgently wanted, and may be sent to 144, High Holborn. Delegates' parcels will be welcomed at the Conference. E. KNIGHT.

FRIDAY,
APRIL 16.
1926.

THE VOTE

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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, April 18th. 3.30. Music. Lecture. Sir William Beach Thomas, K.B.E. 6.30. Miss Maude Royden: "The First Great English Scientist."

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MINERVA CLUB, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Open to non-residents. Restaurant. Smoking Room. Papers. Library. Bedrooms available at holiday times. Membership, £1 1s. Entrance Fee suspended during present year. All particulars from the **SECRETARY**. Telephone: Museum 4791.

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MONTAGUE HOTEL, Montague Street, Russell Square, London, W.C. First-class accommodation; room, breakfast and attendance from 7s. 6d. Pension from 3 guineas.—Phone: Museum 4660. (Highly Recommended.)

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TRADE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

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

REST AND HOLIDAYS.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

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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.....

Address.....

I enclose £ : s. d. as my first Annual Subscription.

Minimum Annual Subscription, 1s.