

THE VOTE.
APRIL 8, 1927.

COMMON SENSE AT RICHMOND!

THE VOTE

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

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 1927

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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MARRIED WOMEN'S RIGHT TO WORK.

A Public Meeting was held at the Minerva Club last Tuesday evening, presided over by MRS. MUSTARD, in support of the Married Women (Employment) Bill, 1927, introduced into the House of Commons by Sir Robert Newman, which is to come up for its Second Reading on April 29th, when it will be seconded by Mr. Pethick-Lawrence. We were unusually fortunate to have both these gentlemen on our platform, as well as Miss Chrystal MacMillan, who was Chairman of the Committee which drafted the Bill.

From the Chair, Mrs. Mustard declared that the right of married women to choose their work is at the root of the women's movement. The denial of this right strikes at the training of all girls and at all women's efforts for freedom. The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, 1919, enacts that marriage shall not disqualify anyone from holding any post; yet 150 Local Authorities had with impunity infringed that law in regard to women's employment!

SIR ROBERT NEWMAN, who had a very cordial reception, said he had always held that in citizenship there should be no difference between men and women, and that no public authority had the right to differentiate in the conditions under which men and women should hold public appointments. Men and women contributed to the payment of public services, and they had a right to expect that posts should be given to those who could best fill them, irrespective of sex or marriage. Women were just as much citizens of this country as men, and they had an equal right with men to decide whether or not they should take employment outside the home. It was not the province of members of Education Committees, however virtuous they might be, to assume the rôle of father confessors in regard to women's actions.

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE, who was also very warmly received, said it was quite time that this subject was brought before the people of this country. Women might have quite a number of good reasons for wishing to continue work after marriage, and it was not the business of employers to inquire into them. What they had to see was that those employed by them did their work efficiently. The best person for a post should certainly not be driven from it, either because of sex or marriage. Mr. Lawrence also ridiculed the argu-

ment that a married woman worker kept another person out of a job. When anyone worked and got money for that work, he or she had that money to spend on employing someone else.

MISS CHRYSAL MACMILLAN said that the question of a married woman's right to work was in every way as important as her right to own property. The right to work was an inalienable human right. The Bill before Parliament was an extremely important one. If the Government and Local Governing Authorities were prevented from dismissing women or refusing to employ women simply because they were married, the banks and large firms, which now call upon their women employees to resign if they marry, would soon alter that rule. At present, the tendency to apply that rule is spreading, and she wished every success to Sir Robert Newman's Bill.

A very interesting discussion followed, in which Dr. Turnadge, who had been called upon to resign her post as headmistress of Twickenham County Girls' School because she married, took part. Other speakers were Mrs. Tidswell, Mrs. Dice, Miss A. K. Williams, and Miss F. A. Underwood, who expressed the hope that the passing of the Married Women (Employment) Bill would prevent the Government in future from advertising for women Deputy-Governors or women Governors of women's prisons, and insisting that all applicants for the post must be unmarried.

The following resolution, moved from the Chair, was passed, with one dissentient: "That this meeting wholeheartedly supports Sir Robert Newman's Married Women (Employment) Bill, the object of which is to prevent the dismissal or enforced resignation of women because of their marriage, by the Government or Local Governing Authorities, and calls upon the Government to adopt this Bill and pass it into law without delay." Copies of this resolution have been sent to the Prime Minister and to the Member for S.E. St. Pancras.

The meeting closed with a very hearty vote of thanks to Sir Robert Newman and Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, and the very best wishes of those present for the success of the Bill on April 29th. In the meantime, we urge all our Branches to hold similar meetings in the country, and to secure the widest publicity for the objects of this Bill before it comes up for its Second Reading.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Woman on Opticians' Committee.

The Committee appointed jointly by the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Scotland, "to inquire into the registration of opticians," includes one woman—Mrs. W. L. Courtney, O.B.E.—and 13 men.

Woman Doctor's Appointment.

Dr. Frances Margaret Harper is to be the second British member of the staff of Dr. Albert Schweitzer's hospital at Lambaréné, French Gabon (Equatorial Africa).

Woman Clerk to Council.

Miss K. E. Few, aged 24, has been appointed as Clerk to West Mersea, Essex, Urban District Council. She had previously been Assistant Clerk.

Miner's Brilliant Daughter.

Daughter of a working miner, Miss Jenny Lees, of Lochgelly, Fifeshire, has qualified as a lawyer in Scotland, the first girl from a working-class home to do so. She has received the degree of Bachelor of Law at Edinburgh University, where previously she had graduated in Arts.

Woman Alderman Resigns.

Lady St. Helier, Alderman of the L.C.C., has resigned that office.

A Bureau of Domestic Help.

The *Birmingham Post* reports the formation in London of a Bureau of Domestic Help, designed to do for the professional woman some of the housekeeping jobs she has not time for. These include egg preserving, jam-making, putting away winter and taking out summer clothing, sorting, repairing, etc., etc.

36 Men—6 Women Justices of the Peace.

The Lord Chancellor has appointed 36 men and 6 women to be Justices of the Peace for the County of London. The women are: Mrs. A. T. Bottomley, B.Sc. (Econ.), Mrs. E. A. Cheeseman, Mrs. L. M. Lineham, Mrs. E. K. Macdonald, Lady Pentland, D.B.E., and Mrs. G. M. E. Beven.

EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN.

DEPUTATION TO HAMPSTEAD M.P.

Mr. George Balfour, M.P. for Hampstead, received a deputation from the Hampstead Branch of the Women's Freedom League, on the question of Equal Political Rights, at the House of Commons, on Wednesday, March 23rd. Dr. Knight introduced the deputation, which included Mrs. Sadd Brown, Miss Myra Sadd Brown, Councillor Mrs. Irene Fisher, Mrs. Garrod, Mrs. Hornibrook, Miss Sheila Hynes (representing St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance), Miss Vibert, and Miss Elizabeth Berry (Hon. Secretary of the branch).

After hearing the views of the deputation, Mr. Balfour said that, though before the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 he had always been a convinced anti-suffragist, after that event he never saw any logical reason why the same qualifications should not apply equally to men and women, and he would heartily support the extension of the franchise to all women at 30, on the same terms as men. As regards women younger than 30, he considered, looking at the question in regard, not to present conditions, but to the best interests of our country in the future—say, in 20 to 100 years—that it was very inadvisable for persons at 21, either men or women, to have the Parliamentary vote. He would make no distinction of sex, but would suggest that both men and women at 21 should qualify for the Local Government Register, and that, at a later age—say, about 30—both should be placed upon the Parliamentary Register upon equal terms.

After discussing a number of points, the deputation thanked Mr. Balfour for receiving them and withdrew.

Fellowships for Women.

The American Association of University Women has awarded to Mlle. Jeanne Veilliard (France) an International Fellowship, open to 25 nations. Mlle. Veilliard will carry out investigations in archaeology. Other Fellowships awarded were as follows, all to American women: Greek, archaeology, physical mathematics, bio-chemistry, research work in England, study in Edinburgh and in Zurich, undesignated research, literary research, and a Phi Mu Fellowship.

Women Cricketers.

A Women's Cricket Association is being formed. Matches will start in May, and tours will be arranged all over the country.

Woman Mayor in Minnesota.

Mrs. Lewis, manager and owner of the Wheaton Telephone Company, member of the Wheaton Commercial Club, active in civic and church affairs, has been elected Mayor of the city, Wheaton, in Minnesota.

American Republicans for Women's 48-hour Week.

The Republican Party has now pronounced in favour of a Bill to restrict the working hours of women to 48, and the Bill is marked for passage into law.

A Conversion?

Le Droit des Femmes, organ of the *Ligue Française pour le Droit des Femmes*, congratulates *Le Journal*, traditionally anti-feminist, on its conversion to feminism. *Le Journal* has recently printed an article, signed by Madame Huguette Garnier, very much on the *pro* side, wiping out all arguments against, and demanding "Why not?"

French Women Still Hopeful.

La Française declares itself by no means discouraged by the adverse vote given by the *Commission sénatoriale du Suffrage féminin* on votes for women. It explains some of the votes, and is of opinion that the matter will come up for discussion in the Senate during May, and that a favourable vote may still be expected there.

LABOUR WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

Mrs. Hood, J.P., will preside at the National Conference of Labour Women to be held at the Town Hall, Huddersfield, May 11th and 12th. The first seven resolutions deal with Women and the Miners' Lock-out. Then follow twenty-two resolutions on the Franchise. Twenty-eight resolutions deal with the question of Birth Control. Two resolutions call for an improvement in the status, pay and conditions of nurses. One resolution urges an increase in the number of women sanitary inspectors, health visitors, school nurses and other public health officers. Other resolutions deal with Factory Legislation, recommendations in connection with the Departmental Committee's Report on Sexual Offences against Young Persons, Family Endowment, the Blanesburgh Report, Unemployed Blind Persons, and the Administration of the Poor Law. Several resolutions discuss Labour's Agricultural Policy and its effect on housewives in town and country. There are many resolutions dealing with Peace and our international policy, many others with Education, one of them pledging the Conference to work for equal pay for men and women teachers and for the abolition of all regulations rendering women teachers liable to dismissal on their marriage. There are resolutions on Public Health, Milk and Mental Disease. We note that one under the latter heading protests against female-nursing in male wards in Mental Hospitals, an argument advanced in support of this resolution being that "it would make more employment for men." Pensions and Insurance Schemes, Housing and Electoral Reform are other subjects dealt with in the 228 resolutions appearing on this First Agenda.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Women Franchise.

MR. CLYNES (Lab., Plating) asked the Prime Minister for some indication of his intention concerning the claims of women to an extension of the franchise? THE PRIME MINISTER: I have repeatedly stated in this House that I shall make a statement before we rise for the Easter recess on that subject, and I have nothing to add to that.

Marriage (Legal Age).

MAJOR HILLS (U., Ripon) asked the Home Secretary whether, in view of the evils which the League of Nations Committee indicate as arising from a low age of marriage, he will introduce legislation to raise the legal age of marriage? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: In the Report on the Traffic in Women and Children, it is suggested that in some countries the low age of marriage may lead to abuses in connection with this traffic, but there are no grounds for thinking that such abuses occur in this country—where the investigators found no evidence of traffic on an organised scale. VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Plymouth): Is it not an anomaly that we should have the age of consent 16 in this country, and the age of marriage 12, and if I can bring some evidence of people who are interested in this before the right hon. Gentleman, will he favourably consider it? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: I almost brought in a Bill last year to deal with this subject, but I found that it was terribly difficult. I shall be quite willing to consider any representations made in reference to it by my noble friend.

Traffic in Women.

MISS WILKINSON (Lab., E. Middlesbrough) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any information regarding Part II of the League of Nations' Report on the International Traffic in Women and Children; and, in particular, as to whether it contains specific information regarding conditions in Great Britain? MR. LOCKER-LAMPSON (Under-Secretary, Foreign Office): Part II gives the result of investigations in 28 countries, including England. Other countries were visited, but, owing to material difficulties, it was not found possible to report on them. As regards England, the Report reveals a satisfactory condition of affairs, and states categorically that no evidence of traffic on an organised scale was found in this country.

Sexual Offences (Legislation).

MISS WILKINSON asked the Home Secretary whether, in view of the fact that last Session he proposed to delay the introduction of any legislation based on the Report of the Committee on Sexual Offences until the Committee on Young Offenders had reported, he will take advantage of the fact that this latter has now reported, and take steps to introduce such legislation at an early date? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: It will take me some time to complete my consideration of the very important recommendations of the Committee on Young Offenders, which has just reported, but I adhere to my intention to deal with the recommendations of the two Committees together, as far as they require legislation.

Women's Wages (Agriculture).

MR. WRIGHT (Lab., Rutherglen) asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he can report any improvement in the administration of the Agricultural Wages Act, 1924, in respect of the payment of women's wages? MR. GUINNESS: The wages and conditions applied by the Agricultural Wages Committee to women workers in the Orders made under the Agricultural (Regulation) Act remain generally unchanged, but I have no reason to suppose that the Orders generally are not sufficient to meet the circumstances of women's employment. In view, however, of representations which have been made to me, I am proposing to make inquiries as to the actual conditions under which the women are employed in each county.

Empire Settlement (Women).

SIR HARRY BRITAIN (U., Acton) asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs whether, in view of the many openings there are for women in the Dominions and Colonies, he can inform the House what efforts are being made to place before the women of this country the advantages to be obtained overseas; and whether he can give the number of those who migrated during the past 12 months? MR. AMERY: Special efforts are being made to place before women of this country full information as to the conditions and as to the opportunities for women overseas. This information is being disseminated through the Women's Branch of the Oversea Settlement Committee, who have already organised eight county centres for this purpose, and supply speakers, when requested, to women's organisations throughout the country. There are openings for women overseas in professional capacities, but, apart from wives and nominated women, assisted passages are as yet only given to women able and willing to take up household work, and who undertake to remain in such work for 12 months. The total number of women of 12 years of age and over, who proceeded to other parts of the Empire during 1926, was 48,608. The number over 17 years of age assisted under the Empire Settlement Act was 18,668.

Nursing Homes (Registration) Bill.

This Bill, introduced by Mrs. Hilton Philipson, was given a Second Reading last Friday, and committed to a Standing Committee.

Convicts (Cost per head).

MAJOR GLYN (U., Abingdon) asked the Home Secretary how many convicts are to-day confined, in how many prisons; what is the average annual cost of maintaining a convict, both man and woman; and how do these figures compare with 1913? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: The figures, including convicts serving sentences of preventive detention, but not convicts in local prisons awaiting removal to convict prisons, are as follows:—On March 29th, 1927: 1,560 men in four prisons, 61 women in two prisons. On March 31st, 1913: 2,808 men in five prisons, 89 women in one prison. The average net annual cost per head, including establishment charges, for convicts in convict prisons in 1925-26 was £77 11s. 3d.; in 1913-14, it was £27 11s. 6d. For prisoners in preventive detention, the equivalent figures are £113 19s. 9d. in 1925-26, and £60 10s. 3d. in 1913-14. It is not possible to give the cost of men and women convicts separately.

EQUAL FRANCHISE.

At a meeting of the National Joint Council, representing the Trade Union Council and the Labour Party, at the House of Commons, last Tuesday, the following resolution was passed: "In view of the long delay of the Government in submitting the question of Equal Franchise to a Speaker's Conference, and of the explicit pledge given by the Home Secretary on February 20th, 1925, on behalf of the Prime Minister, that, at the next General Election men and women should enjoy equal rights as regards the franchise, this National Council is strongly of opinion that no useful purpose would be served by the reference of the matter to a Conference at this late stage, having regard to the Prime Minister's definite undertaking to remedy the existing inequality. It calls upon the Government to introduce legislation forthwith to confer the franchise on women on the same terms as now applies to men."

We appreciate this timely resolution. We always maintained that a Conference on the subject of Equal Franchise was not only unnecessary but decidedly mischievous. Everything that can be said has been said *ad nauseam*. A simple Equal Franchise measure on the Statute Book is the demand of all women's organisations.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 8th, 1927.

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.

WOMEN AND THE PRISON COMMISSION.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS, 1925-6.

The Prison Commission is entirely the preserve of men. It consists of a Chairman, Mr. Maurice Lyndham, C.B., who has a salary of £1,500, and three Commissioners and Directors of Convict Prisons—Mr. Alexander Paterson, M.C., Lt.-Col. J. S. Knox, O.B.E., and Mr. G. B. Griffiths, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., who each receive from £1,000 to £1,200 a year. There is a Secretary-Inspector, Mr. L. W. Fox; there are two men Inspectors; a man Medical Inspector; two Surveyors, both men; a man Chief Clerk; a man Controller of Stores and Manufactures; a man Clerk in charge of the accounts; and a staff of Clerks, all men. On the little band of four Commissioners rests the whole responsibility for our prison system and its administration. These men have entire control over the daily average population of the prisons and Borstal Institutions, numbering 10,509. Last year, 7,923 women were sent to prison for the following offences:—Larceny, False Pretences, Receiving, Bigamy, Assaults, Cruelty to Children, Indecent Exposure, Brothel-keeping, Malicious Damage, Drunkenness, Prostitution, Breach of Police Regulations, Begging, and Sleeping-out. Of these women, 224 were under 21 years of age, and 1,862 under 30. 6,840 out of the 7,923 women, or 86 per cent., had been previously convicted, 2,257 one to five times, 882 six to ten times, 944 eleven to twenty times, and 2,757 over twenty times. This recidivism amongst women prisoners causes great concern to the Prison Commissioners, who refer to it year after year, and, in discussing the merits of the indeterminate sentence, they say: "Parliament in this country has hitherto declined to apply the principle of the indeterminate sentence to persons who continually commit petty offences; but there are some arguments in favour of such treatment, especially in the cases of certain recidivist women." In his annual statement, included in the Commissioners' Report, the Governor of Birmingham Prison says: "Amongst women prisoners recidivism is prevalent to a very considerable degree. They are a product of environment, and the social conditions of the lower quarters of the great industrial areas." Our view is that these unfortunate women recidivists are very much more the direct product of our prison system, imposed and administered by men only. We once again insist that there should be women on the Prison Commission, first and foremost because women understand the psychology of women and men do not, and, secondly, because our whole prison system, as it affects both men and women, needs reforming. We insist, too, that there should be a woman Medical Inspector and women Inspectors of Prisons, as well as women Governors of all women's prisons and women's sections of prisons. At the present time, there is only one woman Governor, Miss Lilian Barker, who is the Governor of the Girls' Borstal Institution at Aylesbury, where the daily average population is 65, and to which 25 girls were sent last year. Miss Barker is also the Governor of Aylesbury Convict Prison, which has no contact with the Borstal Institution, and the results obtained in both these prisons have more than justified the appointment of a woman Governor in every women's prison or women's section of a prison. Yet at Holloway, which is entirely a women's prison and where the daily average number

of women is 310, there is still a man Governor. The appointment used to be given to a retired Army surgeon; but it is now filled by a civilian medical man. Every year the Holloway Governor's report is the most depressing of all prison reports issued by the Prison Commissioners. This year he has "great doubts as to the advisability of giving bail to those who have many previous convictions." He is "afraid that many of the persons placed on probation do not appreciate the chance"; and he "would again ask that power might be given to the Visiting Committee or some other body to make it possible to remove undesirable cases from the second division." If there were capable women on the Prison Commission, they would at once see that the one thing necessary for this women's prison is to have a fully responsible woman Governor. Instead of that, the Prison Commissioners have recently advertised for a woman Deputy-Governor of Holloway, *who must be unmarried!* Could futility go further? What harm could a married woman Governor or Deputy-Governor do in Holloway? Then, again, all the medical officers in women's prisons should be women. The Medical Officer for Holloway reports that "the number of complaining sick and in hospital is very large when compared with a male prison of the same size—80 per cent. of the women received are below par." "A large part of our population is made up of the noisy, alcoholic woman." Why should not these women prisoners and all women prisoners in this country be wholly under the care of women doctors and women Governors? We are convinced that if women were on the Prison Commission, this change would be brought about speedily.

WHY NOT 21?

Before any women in this country secured a Parliamentary vote, a great number of people were very busy planning "fancy" franchises for women—votes for the wives of married men voters, votes for widows, votes for women with property, votes for women with Local Government qualifications, etc., etc.—anything, in fact, except at the same age and on the same terms as men. When the Speaker's Conference considered the matter, Sir William Bull gravely suggested that only women over 40 years of age should exercise a Parliamentary vote. This was later reduced to 30, and no woman in the land, whatever her qualifications, may yet vote for a candidate for Parliament before she is 30, while practically any man from the age of 21 can claim a vote. Women's organisations have always asked for the vote at the same age and on the same terms as men, and now that their demand for it is becoming more insistent, our opponents urge the advisability of raising the voting age to 25! This proposal has our uncompromising hostility. The adult age in this country for both men and women is 21. A girl, by the law of the land, can be married at 12 years of age; the age of consent for girls is 16; a girl and a boy worker begin to pay insurance dues at 16, and become fully insured under the Health Insurance Act at the age of 18. Young men and young women at 21 have to pay taxes like all other older members of the community, and are fully responsible for their actions before the law. Moreover, the great mass of young people in this country, both boys and girls, leave school at the age of 14, and are turned into the labour market to earn their living. By the time they are 21, they have had seven years' experience of our industrial conditions, and, maybe, have suffered from unemployment. Many of them may have married and have children. Have these young people not a stake in the country, and have they not a right to some say, through the ballot box, as to the conditions under which they work and live? Women know perfectly well that this raising of the voting age would not have been proposed if it had not been that women claimed equal voting rights with men. They know that, whatever other qualifications men needed to claim the vote, it was always given to men at the age of 21; and women demand the vote at the age of 21.

NOTES FROM INDIA.

The Age of Consent Bill, introduced by Dr. Gour has received enthusiastic support from the women of Ahmedabad and Baroda, in both which places meetings have been held in support. Both meetings were strongly of opinion that the Bill does not go far enough, in particular that the age of consent should be 16 instead of, as in the Bill, 14. Resolutions were sent to Members of the Legislative Assembly urging them to amend the Bill in that respect. A local campaign to educate public opinion on the need for and the effect of such legislation was enthusiastically arranged.

The February sitting of the Mysore Legislative Council was, according to *New India*, protracted and lively. Messrs. Muhammed Abbas Khan and Paramasivah moved a resolution recommending the removal of the sex-disqualification, so as to render women eligible to stand for election to the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council. The resolution found support from unexpected quarters, and official members were given free option to vote on the subject. Mr. M. Ramachandra Rao, Sir Puttanna Chetty and several members of the orthodox party strongly supported the motion. Mir Hunza Hussain and a few others opposed it, on the ground that except in very rare instances, experience showed that women, especially in rural parts, were not found to exercise even the existing franchise privileges, and were generally contented and indifferent to political life, and the resolution, if accepted, would not be of material use to a large section of the community. After a full dress debate lasting two hours and a quarter, the resolution was put to vote and carried, 21 voting for and 10 against.

By a narrow margin of fourteen for and sixteen against, the resolution, recommending the immediate appointment of a Committee to suggest proper legislation to raise the marriageable age of boys and girls to 20 and 14 years respectively, was declared lost.

In the Madras Council, during the Debate on the Budget, Dr. Muthulakshmi Ammal made a speech in the course of which she pleaded for the inclusion of girls' schools in the system of medical inspection. This, she said, could be done by a staff of women doctors. She urged the greater encouragement of girls' secondary schools, and of such institutions as the Women's Home of Service and the Shri Sharada Niketan. These latter are doing valuable work in combating ignorance and poverty among Indian women, but do not entirely fulfil the conditions which would make them eligible for a Government grant.

On the last day of Baby Week in Ahmedabad, a Conference of Health Workers was arranged. At this a suggestion was made that women should be forbidden to work in factories and mills, on the ground that their domestic duties suffered and home life was injured. This was rejected on the ground that, without the earnings of women, the married man could not support his family.

New India, of March 15, announces its own cessation as a daily paper, edited by Annie Besant, the need for it having disappeared. A new *New India* will appear as a weekly, to be published in Bombay under new control.

WOMEN IN WEST AFRICA.

An unsigned article appeared in the March number of the *Elder Dempster Magazine*, dealing with the work of British women in West Africa. The writer opens by saying that a whole book and a great book could be written on her subject, and another book, equally great, on the work of other European women, as the French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Among the British women are wives of officials, wives of traders, missionaries and wives of missionaries, doctors, and teachers. The writer praises highly the beneficial work done by wives of officials, who, as she points out, are materially better off than the wives of the traders. For these latter, who have uncomfortable living conditions to combat, she has even higher praise. Both these types, however, have what the missionary

has not, and that is the prospect of going home. The missionary has more usually the prospect of long years to look at, and it is therefore, the writer says, more to her credit that she maintains such a fine standard of living and working.

New-comers to West Africa are doctors and teachers, but the writer predicts a splendid future of unselfish work for both, and bases her prediction on the work done in the past by the nursing sisters who have gone to British hospitals and medical missions in the country.

A record of work done day by day and year by year, of which the nation should be proud.

THE OPEN DOOR COUNCIL.

The Open Door Council held its first Annual Meeting on Monday, when a large audience attended. Officers, an Executive, and a Constitution were elected and adopted. Lord Balfour of Burleigh was elected Hon. Treasurer, and Miss Monica Whately, Labour candidate for Hythe, Assistant Treasurer. Miss Whately made a personal statement on her opposition to special restrictive legislation for women, a policy contrary to that of the Party she belongs to. She said that she was born a feminist and became a Socialist. She gave a telling summary of restrictive legislation, and its effects if unequally applied. Reduce nightwork to its minimum on the ground of humanity, but let us be humane to men as well as to women. An investigation into "privileges" discloses them to be "restrictions." The motive behind "protection" was not all philanthropy. Miss Froud, of the National Union of Women Teachers, a member of the new Executive, dealt with a resolution in support of Sir Robert Newman's Bill to forbid dismissal of women on marriage. She spoke as a teacher and as a citizen, and gave forceful arguments in favour of the right to work.

Mrs. Abbott, Chairman of the Council, made an appeal for membership and support, for a steady adherence to unqualified equality. The condition of women under present systems is little less than slavery, and the cure for slavery is not protection but freedom.

Professor W. Cullis was in the Chair, and spoke against restriction, especially under the guise of kindness. Perfect freedom is best. Protection for the few is obtained at the too high price of the lowering of the many. She protested against the incessant iteration in the Press of the phrase, "Votes for girls," asserting that its constant repetition caused people to forget that we already had "Votes for boys."

"DOOR OF HOPE."

Hedwig Wangel, a famous Berlin actress and the warm-hearted friend of women prisoners, addressed a large meeting at Frankfurt (Main), on March 21st.

It is one of the duties of modern life to care for girls and women during and after imprisonment. The first step is to do away with the old prejudice which mankind still holds against those unfortunate ones. The period of imprisonment ought to be used for instruction, and after release an opportunity of employment should at once be given. The day of freedom should not be allowed to turn into a day of disappointments. The State ought to set an example by not excluding officials who once failed for ever from civil service. So long as the State does not forgive, the private citizen is less likely to do so.

In order to help released prisoners, Hedwig Wangel started a Home for girls and women, where they can go and stay after their time in prison is over. They do not pay for their board, and they are taught house or office work, and afterwards are helped in finding a post. This Home is called the "Door of Hope," and used to be run by Hedwig Wangel herself. It was started years ago, and gradually developed into a large place, which is now supported by many warm-hearted friends of the unfortunate, and which is going to save many in the future. The second house of this kind will be opened soon near Frankfurt, with the help of the generous inhabitants of that town. LISEL KAUFMANN.

BOOK REVIEW.

The Comments of Juniper. Six Plays from the Life and Legend of St. Francis of Assisi. By Laurence Housman. (Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd.) Price 5s. (Can be obtained from this Office.)

We Suffragists already owe much to Laurence Housman for his noble championship of our cause in days gone by. Now he is placing us, and the world, under a further debt of gratitude by bringing the thirteenth century once more into touch with the twentieth, and showing us the beauty and significance of that gospel of St. Francis, which is as much needed now as it was then—if only we could accept it.

Many books have been written about St. Francis of Assisi, but nobody thought of dramatising his Life and Legend till the happy inspiration came to Laurence Housman. In this latest volume of his plays, we see the "Little Poor Man" making peace between the proud nobles and the rebellious citizens of Assisi, and making peace also between his own followers, who had not doffed human nature when they donned the "sad-coloured robe" of the Order. We see the Brothers in all their native simplicity and listen to their talk, and, in particular, we are charmed with the wisdom of Juniper, who was accounted "the fool" among the Brothers, but who really understood his Master better than all the rest. His artless "Comments" and irresponsible behaviour could not hide his insight into the deep things of God, and we cannot wonder that he was dearer to the heart of Francis than almost any other of his children.

When Francis became "the fashion," and every word and deed of his was charged with miracle, Juniper's common sense and gift of humour helped to keep the Order sane, and in the last sad days, when Pope and people were alike determined that Francis should die as became a Saint, the Little Poor Man turned to Juniper for comfort and help in a world which misunderstood him, as all great and simple natures are misunderstood. If only Juniper had been the "Father Minister" of the Order, instead of Elias, it would have kept nearer to the ideal of its founder, and the history of the Church in the next few centuries might have been very different.

In these latter days, the Order seems to have returned in great measure to its first simplicity, and it may be that it still has a great work to do. Poverty of spirit, humility, obedience—how strange the words sound in these proud, luxurious days, and yet they may be the very message for which the world is waiting! In any case, Laurence Housman has done his best to bring it home to us. W. M. S.

COMMON SENSE AT RICHMOND!

The *Surrey Comet* reports that the question of whether a headmistress should be called upon to resign in the event of her marrying was discussed by the Richmond Education Committee at their meeting on Wednesday, when the appointments of headmaster and headmistress of the new Central School on the Selwyn Estate, which is to be opened at the end of August, were made.

Councillor W. R. Robinson moved that it should be a condition of the appointment of the headmistress that she should resign on marriage, without prejudice to her reappointment, on the grounds that married women teachers prevented single women teachers from obtaining positions, and that a woman's chief duty being to her husband, her children, and her home, she could not carry out her duties in the proper way. The Vicar (the Rev. J. F. Kendall) seconded, on the ground that marriage was bound to impair the efficiency of a woman head teacher. Mr. Sanderson and Councillors Earle and Morrison opposed the motion, which they contended would limit the number of candidates, and, as a result, they might lose a very valuable teacher whose marriage might not be detrimental in any way to her work.

On being put to the vote, eight voted for the motion and eight against, and the Chairman (Alderman Maguire) declared it "not carried."

SCOTTISH WOMEN IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Miss Eunice Murray had an interesting article in the *Scots Magazine* for February on "The Position of Scottish Women in the Eighteenth Century." She says their position was admittedly a poor one. "The Church and Law had long combined in a firm effort to hold women in subjection, and in subjection they were held. They were badly educated, their only hope was an early marriage, the sole aim of their education was to please man, to secure his approbation and so to escape the disgrace of being left an old maid—word of horror!—Had not a writer assigned the duty of 'leading apes to hell' as the work suited to old maids?" Miss Murray doubts if woman's life in the eighteenth century was a particularly happy one, but she is certain that man's was, and she does not wonder that men sigh for the good old days. She quotes from an eighteenth-century pamphlet: "The sweetest quality a wife can have is to respect her husband; she is not to anger her husband by an assumption of knowledge nor to set her will against his; if she is to be loved, she must rest humble." She can achieve success "by looking up to him (the husband), obeying him, and never, however much provoked, must contradict him." Miss Murray asks if it is any wonder that the eighteenth-century woman was a colourless creature, lacking in ambition. She quotes various advertisements in the Press to show what kind of education the more well-to-do girls received. One establishment offers to instruct young ladies "in the principles of the French and English languages, in Tambour, Dresden, and all kinds of fashionable needlework, in the making of their own millinery things, and in several instruments of music, viz.: the harpsichord, guitar, as likewise in singing." But women became aware of their deficiencies and desired better things. Early in the eighteenth century a Woman's Intellectual Club was founded in Edinburgh, and the women elected a speaker, who, in describing the objects of the club, said: "We are entering into this club as adventurous sailors into a new-discovered land." Later in the century women began to assert themselves, and to appear in print. Ann M'Vicar, who was born in Glasgow, became, when Mrs. Grant of Luggan, well known in the world of letters. She wrote her views on woman suffrage, and pictured a House of Commons in which the representation of the sexes should be equal; and she alluded to members and "membresses." There were also some beautiful songs written by Scottish women in the eighteenth century, such as "The Flowers of the Forest," by Jean Elliot; "The Auld House," by the Baroness Nairne; and "The Braes of Yarrow," by Miss Horne. In conclusion, Miss Murray says: "As the eighteenth century drew to a close, we see how much the position of woman had improved. No sooner was the desire for knowledge aflame in her breast than progress was sighted. She found her feet, and if we found her in the beginning of the century in bondage, by the end of it we leave her bursting the fetters that had held her in subjection, and we see her marching towards her goal."

A DAUNTLESS PIONEER.

The death of Miss Annie Baker, last Saturday, removes a remarkable pioneer. Frail and feminine, full of charm and humour, where her cause was concerned she had the courage of a lion. She was familiar with the worst dens of Continental cities, and of Cairo and other Eastern towns.

For over 40 years she worked in the office of the National Vigilance Association, assisting Mr. Coote, its founder, and succeeding him as Secretary and Director of the Association and of the "International Bureau."

Miss Baker was invited to join in the deliberations of the League of Nations special department from the first, and was well known in every European State for her successful work in promoting National Committees to combat the traffic, the interchange of information which guaranteed the respectability of foreign situations, and International Congresses.

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.1.
Hon. Treasurer—Dr. E. KNIGHT.
President—Mrs. PETHICK-LAWRENCE.
Hon. Organising Secretary—Mrs. WHETTON.
General Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, April 22nd, at 3 p.m.
Hampstead Branch. Members' Meeting at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3 (by the kindness of Dr. Knight).

Monday, April 25th, at 6.15 p.m.
Mid-London Branch. Members' Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1., to discuss and vote on Conference Resolutions. All Members urged to be present.

Saturday, April 30th, at 10 a.m.
Annual Conference of the Women's Freedom League, at Caxton Hall, Westminster.

Friday, May 6th, at 2 p.m.
The Women's Freedom League Jumble Sale, to be held (by kind permission of Miss C. Le) at The Women's Freedom League Settlement, 2, Currie Street, Nine Elms, S.W. Send your parcels from now onwards to 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

League, at Caxton Hall, Westminster.

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PROVINCES.

Tuesday, April 12th, at 7.30 p.m.
Equi Political Rights Campaign. Portsmouth. Goodie's Café, Elm Grove. Speakers: Miss Froud and others. Chair: Mrs. Whetton.

Saturday, April 30th.
Wallasey, Jumble Sale in St. Mary's Girls' Schoolroom, Liscard Road.

Saturday, May 7th.
Portsmouth. Jumble Sale.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Friday, April 8th, at 6.30 p.m.
Women's Engineering Society. Miss E. M. Kennedy on "A Eusiness Woman's Trip to America." Chair: Mrs. Willson.

Friday, April 8th, at 7.30 p.m.
Dinner to Dame Rachel Crowley, Lyceum Club, Piccadilly.

Saturday, April 9th, at 3 p.m.
The Speech Club. Symposium, five-minute speeches on "The book I have most enjoyed during the past twelve months."

DEVON WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

The Devon Council of Women held a two-day Conference at the Castle of Exeter, on March 25th and 26th. Under the Presidency of Mrs. Phillips, J.P., a very interesting discussion on "A Colony for the Mentally Deficient" was opened by Canon Badger, M.A., Chairman of the Monyhol Poor Law Colony, who gave a detailed description of the mode of management of this Colony and the treatment of the patients. Councillor Mrs. Browne took the Chair, when "The Work of Local Authorities in connection with Maternity and Child Welfare" was considered. Miss Halford, Hon. Secretary to the National League for Maternity and Child Welfare, gave an excellent address on this subject, and Mrs. Vlieland said she could not speak warmly enough of the help given to the Child Welfare movement by the Exeter City Council. There were now over 600 mothers attached to the various Centres in the City, and in Exeter they had excellent health visitors and skilled midwives. Miss M. Bayley, J.P. (Plymouth), presided over a discussion on "The Administration of Justice," when the following resolution was carried: "This Conference views with regret a recent decision of the Standing Joint Committee not to appoint women police in the County of Devon, and trusts that the Committee will give the matter further consideration at an early date." Miss E. C. Paine, Chief Probation Officer at Old Street Police Court, followed with an address on "Probation Work," at the end of which the following resolution was carried: "That the Conference feels the time has come when a system of trained probation officers should be considered for Devon, in accordance with the Criminal Justice Act." The Conference afterwards discussed the Solicitation Laws, following an address on the subject by Miss Alison Neilans. As a wind-up to the two-day Conference, a public meeting was held in the Guildhall, presided over by the Mayor, at which Lt.-Col. C. D. Turner (Governor of H.M. Prison at Exeter) spoke on "Modern Prison Administration." Sir Robert Newman, M.P., in proposing a vote of thanks to Col. Turner, said there was one blot on the present system of dealing with prisoners, and that he would never be quite happy until he saw capital punishment abolished.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM.

The French section of this League is organising a Summer School, from August 25th to September 8th, to be held at Gland, on Lake Geneva. The subject to be discussed is "Inter-Racial Problems."

BRANCH NOTES.

MIDDLESBROUGH.

Equal Political Rights Campaign.

A successful Public Meeting, organised by the Women's Freedom League, was held in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough, on March 30th, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P. Letters, expressing regret for their absence, had been received from Mr. Trevelyan Thomson, M.P., and Mr. Ivor Hedley, prospective Conservative candidate for the East Division.

Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., in moving a resolution urging the Government to grant the franchise to women upon the same terms as men, said that it must be remembered that working-class girls served many years in industry before they were 21, and by that work learnt what it was to face life and make their own way in the world.

Councillor Stanley Sadler (prospective Conservative candidate for the West Division), who supported the resolution, said that he believed that there were more girls of 21 earning their own living than boys, and if they were able to earn their own living they ought to have votes.

Miss Annie Williams, of the W.F.L., also spoke, and Mr. J. W. Coleby voiced the opinions of the Women Liberals, and supported the resolution.

Miss Collisson, organiser of the British Commonwealth League, and who was on the staff of the University at Sydney, delivered a spirited address.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

WALLASEY.

At our Annual Meeting, Councillor Nurse McFall was elected President of the branch, one of our two women Councillors, Chairman of the Distress Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, member of the Health, Care of the Blind and Mentally Defective, Housing, Finance, and Parks Committees, and Council representative on the Wallasey Insurance Committee. We are very fortunate in enlisting Nurse McFall's active interest in the branch, and hope for great things during her presidency.

Mrs. S. Panter Brick was elected Chairman, Mrs. Simpson was re-elected Hon. Treasurer, and Mrs. Andain, Hon. Secretary.

A Jumble Sale is arranged for April 30th, in St. Mary's Girls' Schoolroom, Liscard Road.

At the last meeting of the Poulton Ward of the Women's Conservative Association, Mrs. Andain spoke upon "Women Police." (Hon. Sec.) MRS. ANDAIN, 22, Cromer Drive.

DUNOON.

A well-attended meeting was held within the Burgh Halls, on Wednesday, March 23rd, Mrs. R. May presiding. Once more we are indebted to Miss I. H. McLelland, of Glasgow, for a most interesting and instructive address. Outlining a possible programme for our next winter's work, our speaker gave the exact advice and help we were in need of. The resolution, re "The Married Women's (Employment) Bill, 1927," was carried unanimously. We are indebted to the ladies who helped at our meeting, and to all the members who turned out so splendidly, despite the weather.

(Hon. Sec.) MRS. E. SMITH, Olney Bank.

WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT.

The Women's University Settlement, Southwark, this year attains its fortieth birthday, and Miss Margery Fry, Principal of Somerville College, gave an address at its recent annual meeting. She claimed that the value of such a Settlement was in enabling people not only to study social problems in an academic spirit, but also to try to cope with them. The Settlement has recently added a Nursery School to its many activities.

GIRLS' NEW TRADE SCHOOL.

The *Daily Telegraph* reports that the London County Council will open, on April 26th, the eighth London trade school for girls, at Old Castle Street, Aldgate. The school, which will give technical instruction to girls from 14 to 16 years of age, who wish to be trained as power machinists in the men's wholesale tailoring trade, is being equipped with up-to-date power machinery. The new trade school is the outcome of suggestions made by the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment. One of the Juvenile Advisory Committees has also advocated a school of this kind to meet the "great demand for power machinists." The fees will be £3 a year for girls from London, Middlesex, or Kent; trade scholarships will be awarded.

OUR LENDING LIBRARY.

"What I Remember." By Millicent Garrett Fawcett, J.P. LL.D.

"Ancilla's Share." An Indictment of Sex Antagonism. Anonymous.

"The Police Court and its Work." By Henry Turner Waddy.

"The Poor Man's Court of Justice." By Cecil Chapman.

"Life's Fitful Fever." By M. W. Nevinson, J.P., L.L.A.

"In Darkest London." By Mrs. Cecil Chesterton.

"Athletics for Women and Girls." By S. C. Elliott Lynn.

"Moteley's Concession." By C. Nina Boyle.

"Passion's Thrall." By May Strachan.

"Women's Problems of To-day." By Leonora Eyles.

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NOTICES.

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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, April 10th, 1927. 3.30. Music. Lecture. Father Andrew, S.D.C., on "Christianity." 6.30. Maude Royden. "Discipline of the Spirit."

MISS CONSTANCE CONNOLLY, 37, Norfolk Street, W.C.2. Specialises in circularising, printing, duplicating, and verbatim reporting. Rapid Secretarial Course for Gentle-people.

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OF INTEREST TO WOMEN CITIZENS.—The Edward Wright and Cavendish-Bentinck Library contains sections on current political and social problems, including the Woman's Movement, Family Allowances, and League of Nations. Book Boxes of 20 books available for Study Circles.—Apply Librarian, N.U.S.E.C., 15 Dean's Yard, Westminster.

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