

THE VOTE.  
FEB. 5, 1926.

# BETRAYAL OF EQUAL FRANCHISE.

# THE VOTE

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

VOL. XXVII. No. 850.

(Registered at  
the G.P.O.)

ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 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.

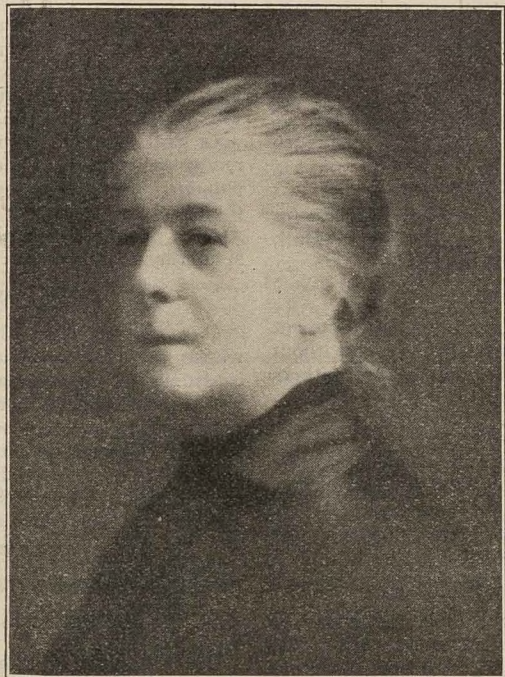
## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

AN AUSTRIAN HOME EXPERT.  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.  
WANTED—A MALE REVIVAL?  
A GREAT WOMEN CIVIL SERVANT.

THE BETRAYAL OF EQUAL FRANCHISE  
WOMEN'S WORK IN THE HOME  
WHAT WOMEN WANT FROM PARLIAMENT. S. W.  
THE MOTHER'S RIGHTS.

## AN AUSTRIAN HOME EXPERT

Housekeeping has always been a skilled industry among our sisters on the Continent, but Governments have not always recognised and rewarded this fact. Austria, however, has taken a long step in the right direction by bestowing the title of Hofrat, or Court Councillor, upon Frau Herta von Sprung, the first woman Inspector of Austrian domestic economy schools. This is the first time this title of Hofrat has been conferred on a woman. Frau Herta von Sprung is the President of the National Council of Austrian Women, the widow of a lawyer, and a well-known figure in the Women's Movement in that country. The National Council of Austrian Women was founded in 1902 by Frau Marianne Hainisch, its first President, and Frau Herta von Sprung acted as a Vice-President from the first. It was the National Council which first took up the idea of giving Austrian girls a modern education, including a thorough knowledge of housecraft. Frau Herta von Sprung, being particularly interested in domestic science, helped to organise the domestic side of the girls' education, and not only acted as Inspector of all the housekeeping and industrial girls' schools in Austria, but travelled widely to study similar organisations in other countries. She has also taken her share in politics, and helped in founding the new Democratic Party in post-war Austria. Frau von Sprung's success as a Domestic Economy Inspector has resulted in the appointment of many other women inspectors. In pre-war days, in the old Austrian Empire, Frau von Sprung had a very wide field of activity in her inspectorate. Her



HOFRAT HERTA VON SPRUNG.

official travels took her through all the mountain countries, including Dalmatia and the provinces bordering on the Adriatic Sea. Owing to her activity a great many schools were started in these districts, where she became thoroughly conversant with the life of the people. In 1918, Frau Hainisch resigned the Presidency of the National Council owing to the increasing infirmities of old age (she is now Hon. President), and Frau Herta von Sprung became elected in her place, when she received the Government title already alluded to, together with decorations. At the last Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women of Austria, a motion was carried suggesting that the question of establishing Chambers of Household Economics be examined in co-operation with other important women's organisations. Germany is also considering a similar proposal. At a recent meeting of delegates from all the great Austrian women's organisations it was decided to pursue the matter further, and as a first step to establish a Joint Standing Committee, composed of delegates from the various women's organisations. This Committee will deal with everything pertaining to the welfare of the home, not only with the interests of the consumers, but also with problems of employment and professional matters. The Committee will also try to fit the whole question of Household Economics into the economic life of the State. As things stand to-day, the Austrian women's organisations will do all in their power to realise this scheme.

GISELA URBAN.

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League was held at 144, High Holborn, London, last Saturday. The Chair was taken by Miss Anna Munro (President), and other members present were Dr. Knight (Hon. Treasurer), Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P. (Middlesbrough), Mrs. Fiskens (Glasgow), Miss Haugh, B.Sc., Mrs. Juson Kerr, J.P. (Deal), Dr. Octavia Lewin, Miss C. Neal, L.L.A. (Swansea), Miss M. I. Neal (Manchester), and the Secretary.

The Committee was grieved to hear that Miss Alix Clark was still very seriously ill. A letter of sincere sympathy and best wishes was sent to Miss Clark, also to Mrs. Dexter, who was prevented through illness from attending the Committee meeting.

Reports from the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Organizing Secretary (Mrs. Whetton), the Secretary, from the political and literature departments, and from our Branch secretaries, were considered and fully discussed.

### Women Police.

A discussion took place on Women Police, and the Committee decided to send the following resolution to the Home Secretary, and to ask him to receive a deputation on the subject:—"That the Women's Freedom League calls upon the Home Secretary to initiate legislation at the earliest possible date on the lines of the Municipal Corporations Act Amending Bill introduced last December in the House of Commons by Miss Wilkinson, which would make it compulsory on Watch Committees of Borough Councils to appoint from time to time a sufficient number of fit women as well as a sufficient number of fit men to be borough constables."

### Women and the Administration of Widows' Pensions

Correspondence with the Ministry of Health in regard to the appointment of women to the higher posts in the administration of Widows' Pensions was discussed, and the Committee decided to send the following resolution to the Minister of Health:—"That the Women's Freedom League urges that when the permanent appointments are made for the administration of Widows' Pensions, an adequate number of the higher posts shall be allotted to women."

### Resolutions for the Annual Conference.

The Committee sent forward several resolutions for the Annual Conference to be held at Caxton Hall, Saturday, April 23rd. Among them are:—

#### Equal Guardianship of Children.

"That this Conference calls upon the Government to introduce and carry through into law, without delay, a measure which will make mothers and fathers equal guardians of their children."

#### Women on Watch Committees.

"This Conference desires to call attention to the fact that women seldom serve on Watch Committees, and that, in the interests of public morality, it is desirable that there should be women in considerable numbers on Watch Committees."

#### Dismissal of Married Women Employees.

"This Conference calls upon the Government to bring in and to pass into law immediately a short Bill to prevent municipal authorities and other corporate bodies from imposing conditions of employment which are contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, 1919."

#### Women and Electricity.

"That this Conference welcomes the proposal to increase the supply of electricity, and calls upon the Government to ensure its being supplied at a sufficiently low rate to bring it within the means of the community."

### Women and Unemployment.

"That in view of the great number of unemployed women this Conference calls upon the Minister of Labour to initiate through the local authorities schemes for the training of women in homecraft, hairdressing, nursing, home-dressmaking, poultry-farming, bee-keeping, etc., and similar trades, according to the needs of the district."

### Lunacy Reform.

"That this Conference calls for the appointment of an equal number of women members with men on the Board of Control."

"That this Conference urges that women doctors should be in charge of all women patients in public mental hospitals; that women should be appointed on the visiting committees of all public mental hospitals; and that women inspectors should be appointed by the Board of Control."

### Women's Procession to, and Demonstration in, Hyde Park.

The Committee agreed with enthusiasm to the Women's Freedom League taking an active part in the procession and demonstration on behalf of equal political rights for women with men; and urges all our Branches to set to work to organise their contingents to walk in this procession.

### Spring Sale, Friday, March 19th.

The Committee decided that we shall have a Spring Sale at 25, Wimpole Street, Friday, March 19th, 3 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. (by kind permission of Dr. Lewin). Gifts for this Sale will be gratefully acknowledged by Dr. Knight. All members are asked to start at once.

## In Memoriam.

### Mr. W. L. GEORGE.

It is with sincere regret that we announce the death of Mr. W. L. George, author, journalist, and lecturer, at his residence at Hyde Park Terrace, last Saturday, after an illness lasting nearly two years. The Women's Freedom League will always remember with gratitude the help which Mr. George was ever ready to render to our cause long before it was popular. He was a favourite lecturer at meetings of the Women's Freedom League, and could always be sure of a crowded audience. We offer our heartfelt sympathy to his widow.

### Mrs. WM. SLADE.

Our sincere sympathy goes to Mrs. Strickland, whose mother, known locally as The Grand Old Lady of Hastings, passed away last Sunday. Mrs. Slade had nearly reached her 103rd birthday. For nearly eighty years she had been a Sunday School teacher, and for close on seventy years had spent a busy life at Hastings. The celebration of her hundredth birthday brought telegrams of congratulations from all parts of the country, including one from the King.

### PROTEST MEETING AGAINST CIRCULAR 1371 AND MEMORANDUM 44.

The National Union of Women Teachers have arranged a Protest Meeting to take place this (Friday) evening at the Central Hall, Westminster, at 7.30, to demand the entire withdrawal of Circular 1371 and Memorandum 44 recently issued by the Board of Education. *Speakers*: Miss Agnes Dawson, L.C.C., Mr. Hugh Dalton, M.P., Miss E. E. Froud, Mrs. Lowe, L.C.C., Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P. *Chairman*: Miss A. M. Jackson, President of the National Union of Women Teachers. All seats are free, and readers of THE VOTE are specially invited.

## WANTED—A MALE REVIVAL?

An amusing debate between Mr. Mitchell-Hedges, the explorer, and Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., arranged by the Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries has taken place in London. The idea of the debate arose out of an article by Mr. Mitchell-Hedges in the *English Review*, in which the writer deplored the modern ascendancy of women, and consequent decline of men, and urged a "male revival." The audience, chiefly composed of women, with a fair sprinkling of men, was distinctly hilarious, and had to be called to order more than once by the Chairman. No vote was taken, but the sympathy of the meeting was entirely on the side of Miss Wilkinson.

Mr. Mitchell-Hedges contended that women were not physically capable of doing the same work as men, and that the male sex was created by the Lord of Nature to be the leader. Right through Creation, from the lowest to the highest, the male was the natural leader (here the audience demanded with one voice, "What about bees?"). The only pioneers and founders of Empire were men. It was not within the scope of women to open up jungle tracks, and it was man's mission in life to protect woman ("They don't do it," cried the audience). This country was losing many of its best traditions. Take sport, for instance, when 22,000 people watched 22 men play football. The same with boxing and practically every sport. Men were losing their virility, and if such an unthinkable thing happened as that women should become leaders in sport, this country would become the laughing-stock of the world ("Oh! Oh!"). Whenever women's rule became paramount, the nation inevitably declined. He (the speaker) had lived among primitive tribes where the women ruled, and the men were entirely in subjection. The result was utter degeneracy of both sexes, dirt, disease, and communism. In this, history was merely repeating itself, for it was Rome's worship of women which brought her down with a crash. The prime function of men and women was to propagate their species, and there was no getting away from these facts (prolonged groans).

Miss Wilkinson, who received an ovation on rising, denied women's alleged incapacity for doing the same physical work as men, and cited examples in her own constituency—miners' wives, with shifts of men coming straight from the pit-head three times daily into their tiny homes, with no provision for hot water or baths, and all the other daily work in addition, including the bearing and rearing of children. One such woman during the war replaced a man as a motor-driver, and when asked by Miss Wilkinson how she liked the change of work, replied, "Well, I've come to the conclusion, if you want a soft job, take a man's." Many men, however, such as blast-furnacemen and others, were doing work beyond their

strength, and women should help to bring in machinery which would relieve such arduous labour.

The history of evolution said nothing about the male invariably being the leader. It all depended on the species. In the case of bees, the drones or male bees were only reared for one purpose, and then despatched. The real work of the hive was done by the female or worker bees. In the old suffrage days, a favourite argument for women's superiority was frequently derived from the example of the female mantis, an insect who kept her husband in a little pocket in her body. But she (the speaker) did not think these examples proved anything either way.

It was not true that men were the only pioneers and founders of Empire. Civilisation could never have been built up if men had not been helped in this work by their wives. The hardships and sufferings of women in pioneering days were well known. They shared the same dangers and hardships as their husbands, and, in addition, endured the pains and perils of childbirth without the alleviation of modern inventions and discoveries or needful attention.

As to Great Britain's lack of sportsmanship, people were forced to spend their leisure hours watching sports instead of joining in them, because the nation was so inadequately provided with playing-fields. It was only the rich who could afford to indulge in sport. As to women being leaders in sport, Miss Wilkinson asked whether the prowess of Miss Helen Wills in the United States, or of Mlle. Lenglen in France, had made these countries a laughing-stock in the eyes of other nations?

The real reason for the fall of Rome was because a handful of luxury-loving parasites of both sexes exploited the working-classes, and if Great Britain fell, it would be by the same cause—by injustice, industrial oppression, and exploitation of the backward races.

It was a ghastly prospect if the prime function of the sexes was merely to propagate the species. The purpose of existence was far higher than this. It involved the creation of beauty, art, science, and the provision of such conditions as would enable human beings to develop their souls, and realise their highest spiritual aspirations. Women must be free, with personality, brains and courage, prepared to meet men on their own ground; and men must be freer than the present economic system permitted them to be. Society was in a rotten state if women were driven to pretend they were weak and submissive so as to get their own way. The only healthy State was one in which women met men in fair and friendly competition on all points, and joined together to sweep away the musty nonsense that had been preached about the sexes in the past, combining together to build a better world.

## A GREAT WOMAN CIVIL SERVANT.

Miss Rose E. Squire has just retired from the Home Office after a 30 years' distinguished official career. She began work as a sanitary inspector under the old vestry at Kensington, and later became a Factory Inspector in the days when women were often required to work in factories 27 hours without a break, and when the system of fining employees was appalling. In the cases arising out of the Truck Act, Miss Squire's name began to appear in all the Law Courts. For the last four years she has been a constant adviser in the preparation of the new Factory Bill. Last Monday a dinner was given in Miss Squire's honour at the Criterion Hotel. Sir Malcolm Delevingne presided, and speeches, warmly appreciative of her work, were made by Sir Malcolm, Miss Maude Lawrence, and Miss Margaret Bondfield. The Queen sent a very gracious message to Miss Squire on her retirement from the Home Office, and this was read by Lady Amphill at the dinner.

One of the things claimed for Miss Squire at last Monday's dinner by one of her friends was that there is not an Act of Parliament, a Blue Book, or a section of a Blue Book referring to her department, that Miss Squire cannot quote.

"Well, why not?" she said. "After all, if one is a Civil Servant one must take one's job seriously, and I would much rather know the whole of an Act or a Blue Book than simply rely on extracts from either. Blue Books have always had a fascination for me. But learning them meant a good deal of study."

"In the days when I became a factory inspector, women did not get the legal training that some of them do now. Women factory inspectors to-day are often women who have been called to the Bar, but I had to study Blue Books and Acts for the simple purpose of getting to know what was necessary for me in my work."

## THE VOTE.

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

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, 1926.

Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

### EDITORIAL

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

### THE BETRAYAL OF EQUAL FRANCHISE.

The text of the King's Speech has been issued, and it does not mention equal franchise—not even the proposed Conference, by the promise of which the Government, last February, successfully torpedoed Mr. Whiteley's Equal Franchise Bill! We do not pretend to mourn the loss of the Conference. No woman's organisation asked for it or welcomed it. Suffragists had quite enough experience of their Bills being talked-out in the old bad pre-suffrage days; but we have expressed to the Prime Minister our extreme indignation at the omission of any reference to equal franchise in the King's Speech. We have pointed out to him that, in a country which believes in representative Government, the equal enfranchisement of all its citizens—men and women—is of vital importance, and we have called upon the Government to introduce and to carry into law, without delay, a simple franchise measure conferring the Parliamentary vote on women at the same age and on the same terms as men. We have pointed out to Mr. Baldwin that there are in this country four and three-quarters of a million voteless women over the age of 21 compared with only 313,000 voteless men over that age, and that more than two millions of these voteless women are over the age of thirty! The time is more than ripe for the removal of this glaring injustice under which women suffer. Women shoulder the burdens of citizenship equally with men; they have to compete with men in the professions and industry, and they demand the same political power of the vote which men enjoy to safeguard their interests as citizens and workers. It is true that Mr. Baldwin and his Government have a large majority, and the men and women in his Party may be very loyal; but is it wise for him and his Ministers to alienate the great mass of women, unattached to any Party, in the way they have done ever since they came into office—first by defeating the Equal Franchise Bill, which women had every reason to hope would have passed into law, through an empty promise to deliberate on the matter, and throughout their whole time in office by refusing in every direction to recognise that the Government should act fairly and impartially as between its men and women citizens? Does Mr. Baldwin wish to drive all these unattached women—a great many of whom are voters—and their men supporters into pursuing an anti-Government policy? Women have already had some experience in this particular political policy, which they adopted with some effect in pre-suffrage days. We warn this Government that more than one political Party has been sent into the political wilderness because their leaders, through their actions in office, have proved hostile to the women's cause. The Women's Freedom League has never been any respecter of political parties, and has never hesitated to fight any Party in power which refused to do justice to women. For nineteen years we have agitated and worked first and foremost for the equal enfranchisement of women and men. This is still the primary object of the Women's Freedom League, and the first plank of our platform, and the same determination exists as of old among our members to wrest this reform from the powers that be, no matter how unwilling those powers may be to grant it.

### WOMEN AND THE MINISTER OF LABOUR

Government Departments are extremely loth to give women their proper share in the work connected with those Departments; and the Ministry of Labour is no exception to this rule. Last July, when it was decided to set up a Juveniles Committee "to inquire into and advise upon the public system of education in England and Wales in relation to the requirements of trade and industry," we asked the Minister of Labour to bear in mind the fact that there are many thousands of girls continually registered as unemployed as well as many thousands of boys, and to consider the appointment of suitable, experienced women as well as men to this Committee. He replied that he did not ever think it right to appoint women on a Committee just because considerations affecting women were to be dealt with, or *vice versa* as regards men; but that the proper principle, to his mind, was to get hold of the best brains in either case! Subsequently, *one woman*, Miss Violet Markham, was appointed to this Committee, which has *five men* members! Last week we reported in THE VOTE that we had written to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Labour urging the appointment of a woman as a fully accredited delegate to the International Labour Conference to be held at Geneva in May, especially in view of the fact that the chief subject for discussion at this Congress was to be emigration and immigration, and what modifications should be introduced into the system of inspection of emigrants on board ship. Last year, the British delegation had consisted of *two men* Government delegates and *eight men* advisers; together with *one man* delegate representing the employers and *six men* advisers; and *one man* delegate representing the employees, with *five men* advisers and *one woman* adviser. This year we naturally wish to see this disproportionate selection of men and women altered. First of all we received an acknowledgment of our letter on a postcard from the Ministry of Labour, and then the following letter:—

MINISTRY OF LABOUR,  
27th January, 1926.

MADAM,—I am directed by the Minister of Labour to refer to your letter of 21st January addressed to the Prime Minister on the subject of the appointment of a woman as a fully accredited delegate to the Eighth Session of the International Labour Conference, to commence at Geneva on May 25th next.

In reply, I am to say that the Minister is fully aware of the provisions of the second paragraph of Article 389 of the Treaty of Versailles, which lays it down that "when questions specially affecting women are to be considered by the Conference, one at least of the advisers should be a woman," and that he will bear in mind the representations of your Committee when nominating the British Delegates to the Conference.

I am, etc.,  
(Sgd.) R. G. SOMERWELL.

We are of course aware of Article 389 quoted in this letter, but we think the Minister of Labour would admit that it has not hitherto been very generously carried out in the appointment of the British Delegation. We have, however, pointed out to the Minister that Article 7 of the Treaty of Versailles, and the corresponding Articles of the other Treaties of Peace, state that *all positions under or in connection with the League of Nations shall be open equally to men and women, and that women are accordingly equally eligible with men for nomination as Delegates or Advisers to Sessions of the International Labour Conference, irrespective of the questions which the Conference is to discuss.* We earnestly hope that the Government will see its way to appoint a woman as a fully accredited delegate to the International Labour Conference this year, as well as women technical advisers to deal with a subject which is of special importance to women within the Empire.

## WOMEN'S WORK IN THE HOME.

A Conference dealing with the subject of "Women's Work in the Home" was held at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C.1, on Friday of last week.

Miss Anna Munro, President of the Women's Freedom League, who was in the Chair, explained that the present meeting originally arose out of an informal discussion on the same subject some months previously, the topic being considered of so much importance as to deserve the calling of a special Conference.

Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P., stressed the elasticity of the subject, owing to the many differing kinds of homes in existence, and the variety of work arising out of these. She compared a miner's home, where a woman had frequently to cope with different shifts of men coming in at odd times during the day, and very little facilities in the way of space or hot water, with a household comprising a dozen servants. The speaker also referred to the domestic confusion of the average home compared with the highly organised industries in the world outside. A great deal of the drudgery entailed in running a home was due to faulty house-planning by male architects, and lack of labour-saving devices. Women should apply their minds seriously to the elimination of all unnecessary domestic labour, which neither added to one's comfort nor the beautifying of the home.

Miss Haslett, of the Women's Engineering Society, affirmed that women trained on mechanical lines, as in engineering, could be of enormous practical value to the woman in the home. In all probability the woman engineer was already filling a gap in adapting power resources to save labour in the home. Women engineers also realised the efficient organisation of modern industry and the necessity for using the best tools. Home work, the oldest and most important of all industries, had never yet been equipped with proper mechanical devices. A more intimate acquaintance with household tools was needed by housewives. Industrial psychology and the elimination of fatigue was an important item in present-day industry, but the problem of home psychology was ignored by everyone. Women to-day, in the home, were being subjected to physical and mental strain which would never be permitted for a moment in an up-to-date factory. Electricity would probably play an important part in the homes of the future, especially now that the Government has signified its intention of tackling the subject seriously. An Electrical Association for Women, of which she (the speaker) acted as Director, was now attracting much interest from all classes of women. Wiring houses for lighting purposes was a *fait accompli* in many modern homes, but wiring for heating purposes had scarcely begun. When giving evidence with regard to electricity in the home before a recent Government Committee, Miss Haslett said she had advocated a greater extension of hiring facilities of the more expensive appliances, such as washing machines, vacuum cleaners, etc., and had suggested that supply companies and municipalities should either combine to buy these for subsequent hiring out, or that women themselves should purchase them by co-operative buying. It had been estimated that a woman in the home spent 50 per cent. of her time cleaning, 20 per cent. preparing meals, 10 per cent. sewing, 10 per cent. tidying, and 10 per cent. shopping and odd jobs. An up-to-date labour-saving house would save quite 50 per cent. of this expenditure of time and energy.

Miss Marian Berry gave an extremely interesting account of the training and efficiency of the German housewife, the wonderful equipment of the German kitchen, and the facilities for electrical supply even in the tiniest village. The teaching of housecraft was considered of the highest importance in Germany. It began at the kindergarten stage and proceeded right through to the highest classes. Germany is also noted for its wonderful system of continuation schools for

both sexes from the ages of 14 to 17, with their compulsory tuition of 8½ hours per week. Domestic Economy forms one of the subjects of the curriculum. The same subject is also equally well taught in the secondary schools. Every German town has its Municipal School of Domestic Science which is attended by high school girls of 16 years of age for at least a six months' course. There are also private schools of Domestic Economy, founded by the Union of Hausfraus, an important organisation in Germany, providing three or six months' courses, and an extended one of one or two years for women who are going to be married.

Lady Horsley pleaded for the exclusion of alcohol from the modern home, because it offered no advantages, was no longer considered either a food or a stimulant, and in its various aspects was distinctly detrimental to the nation. The present condition of the country made this question an extremely critical one to-day. Since 1914 we had spent more than 2,000 millions upon this drug, last year's expenditure being 320 millions, at a time when unemployment was rife, trade bad, and over a million people were living on the dole. There were only two ways of inculcating temperance—legislation, or dealing with it outside the home; and education, or dealing with it inside the home. Women should banish alcohol from the home as far as possible, and see to it that no child left school without having received definite instruction upon the physiological and social effects of alcohol.

Mrs. Northcroft claimed that the root of the trouble lay in the bad old tradition that housework was the prerogative of one sex only. It took a man as well as a woman to make a home, and it was high time that men woke up to this fact and took an equal share in the duties of home-making, instead of being content to shift all its responsibilities on to the shoulders of women. Housecraft was a highly-skilled occupation, and there was no doubt that women owed their superior mental alertness and suppleness of mind to the fact that for centuries they had used their wits in a hundred different directions and grappled with the solution of complex problems in the home, whilst men had been content to sit by and be waited upon. She advocated as a remedy that the present academic trend of modern education should be distinctly modified so as to permit of the introduction of a graduated system of housecraft, compulsory for both sexes, beginning at the kindergarten stage, continuing through the middle years of school life, and concluding with the university, thus fitting both the young man and the young woman, before they finally specialised in their life work, with a groundwork of domestic knowledge in addition to their ordinary occupation, which would be of incalculable benefit not only in future homemaking, but in all sorts of emergencies.

Mrs. Tidswell, a Teacher of Domestic Science and a member of the National Union of Women Teachers, contended that the teaching of housecraft should not be confined to the elementary schools, but extended to all classes of society. The present methods of teaching were severely handicapped by the housing problem, and by the old-fashioned equipment provided by the authorities in the Domestic Science Centres. The dignity and importance of housecraft was not rightly estimated in this country, where boys were only taught the subject when they were certified as mentally defective!

Dr. Knight stressed the necessity of home hygiene, and emphasised that mothers of families should not discharge their numerous domestic duties so zealously that these became detrimental to their health. It was better to let some duties slide, however necessary, rather than that the homemaker should be laid aside by illness.

An animated discussion followed the close of the speeches, a great deal of interest being focussed on the subject of electricity as a future labour-saving asset in the home.

## WHAT WOMEN WANT FROM PARLIAMENT

An eloquent address on this subject was given by Miss Eleanor Rathbone, President of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, at the Girls' High School, Southsea, last week. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Portsmouth Women Citizens' Association, Women's Freedom League, National Union of Women Teachers, Catholic Women's League, Portsmouth Church Council for Preventive and Rescue Work, and Portsmouth and District Free Church Women's Council. Miss Cossey, M.A., Chairman of the Women Citizens' Association, presided.

Some people, declared Miss Rathbone, said the day for women's societies was over, but she emphatically stated they were as necessary now as ever they were. She referred to the questions the suffragists used to talk about—among others, the Guardianship of Infants Bill, Pensions for Widows, and the Separation and Maintenance Order. These, she said, had been placed on the Statute Book during 1925, though they fell short of what women had asked for.

Miss Rathbone then spoke at length of the reforms women wanted from Parliament. First, she said, was Equal Franchise—votes for women on the same terms as men—and she emphasised the necessity of getting the young women interested and enthused; then Equal Pay and Equal Opportunities—though as regards the former, in her opinion, Family Allowances were a necessary corollary.

An Equal Moral Standard for men and women was also much to be desired; but it was difficult to introduce legislation in that connection, and advancement would most readily come from education. In the last 20 or 30 years great improvements had been effected. While dealing with the question of an Equal Moral Standard, Miss Rathbone spoke of Child Assault, referring to the late Conference on this important matter, and to the report of this Conference which has just been issued. Interwoven with this question was the need for more women police, and the speaker pleaded eloquently for the appointment of women police in every town and city in the kingdom.

The need for women Members of Parliament and the status of wives and mothers were the next points dealt with. Under the Unemployment Insurance Act the wives and children of men out of work received benefit, but under the Health Insurance Act the women and children got nothing. Miss Rathbone said that when a man was ill there was only the sick pay and the medical benefits, and she urged that during sickness the wife and children should receive benefit as under the Unemployment Insurance, and also the wives and children of insured men should receive medical benefits. She suggested that a resolution on this question should be put to the meeting. After some discussion, Mrs. Whetton, on behalf of the Women's Freedom League and the Portsmouth Women Citizens' Association, moved the following resolution:—"That this meeting, organised by six non-Party women's organisations, believing that there is insufficient provision for guarding the health of mothers and children, requests the Government to take into consideration the extension of the benefits of Health Insurance to the wives and children of insured persons: (a) by granting allowances to dependents during the illness of the insured person; and (b) by granting medical benefits to wives and children of insured persons."

This was seconded by Miss Hiebish, of the National Union of Women Teachers, supported by Mrs. Ward, a representative of the Portsmouth and District Free Church Council, and was carried unanimously.

Miss Rathbone answered a number of questions, and was accorded a hearty vote of thanks on the proposition of Mrs. Purchase, seconded by Mrs. Whetton. In her reply, Miss Rathbone paid a tribute to THE VOTE and to *The Woman's Leader*, and urged the women present to buy and read them.

S. W.

## THE MOTHER'S RIGHTS.

So much interest has been taken in Mrs. Nevinson's protest in the Press as to the uselessness of the Government's Guardianship of Infants Act (see THE VOTE of January 8th), that at the request of several members we reprint her letter in full.

It was because this Act would not make a mother equal with a father in authority over her children that we fought so hard against this measure before it became law, and supported Mrs. Wintringham's Bill, which did give equal rights over the children.

"SIR,—This is an Act 'to amend the law with respect to the guardianship, custody, and marriage of infants (July 31st, 1925),' and it states: 'Whereas Parliament by the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, 1919, and various other enactments, has sought to establish equality in law between the sexes, and it is expedient that this principle should obtain with respect to the guardianship of infants and the rights and responsibilities conferred thereby: Be it enacted,' and so on.

"In the next clause it is stated that in questions brought up in court 'the welfare of the infant shall be the first and paramount consideration,' and the Court shall not consider that 'the claim of the father, or any right at common law possessed by the father, in respect of such custody, upbringing, administration, or application, is superior to that of the mother, or the claim of the mother is superior to that of the father.'

"On the strength of these enactments I witnessed the signature of a mother to an anti-vaccination declaration, only to be told, a few days later, that the form was returned to her as invalid in law and another must be sent signed by the father as 'the head of the family.' What, then, does the law mean?

"With women sitting in Parliament making the laws, and women on the Bench administering them, it is strange to think that, in spite of the enactments quoted above, we are still under the 'uni-parental' law, whereby those born in wedlock have a father as only parent, and those born out of wedlock have a mother as only parent, and a wife with a month-old infant in her arms must still suffer that crowning insult to motherhood of being told that vaccination exemption forms must be signed, not by herself, but by 'the parent of the child.'

"As the Act came into force on October 1st, 1925, it is surely time that lawyers, justices, and vaccination officers should be informed where the quoted clauses mean anything or nothing.—Yours, etc.,

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON, J.P.  
County of London."

December 28th, 1925.

## WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

## Mme. Curie and Male Prejudice.

In 1911, when Mme. Curie's candidature to the French Academy of Science was first brought forward, the anti-feminist elements found a serious rival to her in M. Brauly, who was elected by a majority of votes. But now, by the death of M. Haller, which took place some months ago, another vacancy has occurred, and the question is once again to the fore. This time there is no possibility of finding a serious rival, but the Academy is still hesitating and trifling in the vain effort to put off the evil day as long as possible.

## A Nove Women's Club.

London now has a dressmaking club for women, probably the first of its kind. The aim of the club is to provide practical help for those women who do their own dressmaking; and the club room at Kensington is equipped with dressmaking tables, sewing machines, fitting stands, and much necessary impedimenta to successful home dressmaking, but which the average home dressmaker cannot buy for herself.

## Woman Magician.

Miss Mary Maskelyne, Mr. Clive Maskelyne's sister, and a granddaughter of the first magician of that name, has decided to go into the conjuring business herself.

## WHERE TO GO.

## WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

## LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Monday, February 8th, at 3.30 p.m.  
Spring Sale Sub-Committee at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Tuesday, February 23rd, at 7 p.m.  
Mid-London Branch. Public Debate at the Caxton Hall, Westminster. "Is Democracy a Failure?" Affirmative: Miss Cicely Hamilton. Negative: Miss Nina Boyle.

Friday, March 19th at 3—7.30 p.m.  
Spring Sale at 25, Wimpole Street, W. (by kind permission of Dr. Lewin).

Saturday, April 24th, at 10 a.m.  
Women's Freedom League Annual Conference, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

## PROVINCES.

Monday, February 8th, at 7.30 p.m.  
Middlesbrough Branch. Public Meeting in the Temperance Institute, Woodlands Road. Will all members be present?

Monday, February 5th, at 8 p.m.  
Wallasey Branch. Public Meeting at the Town Hall. Speaker: Mr. F. J. Hanham (Deputy Manager, Ministry of Labour, Liverpool). Subject: "Unemployment: Some Causes and Cures."

## SCOTLAND.

Friday, February 5th, at 7.30 p.m.  
Edinburgh Branch. Public Meeting in the Philosophical Rooms, 4, Queen Street. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro.

## OTHER SOCIETIES.

Friday, February 5th at 7.30 p.m.  
National Union of Women Teachers. Public Meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, to protest against Circular 1371 and Memorandum 44.

Saturday, February 6th, at 3 p.m.  
Saturday Speech Club, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Debate on "Ireland." Speaker: Mrs. Boyd. "The Free State Point of View."

Tuesday, February 9th, at 7 p.m.  
The Electrical Association for Women, E.L.M.A. Lighting Service Bureau (top floor), 15, Savoy Street, W.C.2. Lecturer: Mr. W. J. Beauchamp. Subject: "The Public Service of Electricity and the Housewife (some economic considerations)."

Thursday, February 11th, at 3 p.m.  
Parents' National Educational Union, 29, Portman Square, W. Speaker: The Rev. A. Herbert Gray, D.D. Subject: Parents and their Elder Children." Chair: Mrs. Howard Glover.

Friday, February 26th, at 8 p.m.  
National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, Mass Meeting on Equal Franchise at the Central Hall, Westminster. Speakers: Dame Millicent Fawcett, G.B.E., LL.D., Miss Maude Royden, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P. Chair: Miss Eleanor Rathbone, J.P., C.C., M.A.

## BRANCH NOTES.

**HAMPSTEAD.**  
Mrs. Harverson was At Home to members and friends of the Hampstead Branch of the Women's Freedom League at the Isis Club, on Monday, January 25th, when a large gathering was present. Mrs. Sudd Brown, who presided, wished all present a happy New Year, and urged them to work for the causes which the League had at heart. She dwelt on the importance of holding a cheerful view of life, and assured the audience that the ultimate results would correspond with the attitude taken. An amusing address was given by Mrs. Wynne Nevinson, J.P., on "Some Amendments to Unjust Laws for Women." The speaker mentioned the two recent Acts of Parliament affecting women, namely, the Guardianship of Infants, and the Maintenance and Separation Orders. After careful study of the first Act, and consultation with several lawyers, Mrs. Nevinson said the law was still ambiguous in regard to the rights of a mother to her child. Although the Act presumed to confer equality, it did not appear to give the mother the right to apply for a vaccination exemption order; and should a woman appear in Court with her month-old baby in her arms to ask for it, she would be told to go and fetch the "parent of the child." Mrs. Nevinson gave some amusing cases in regard to married women's property before and after the passing of the Act of 1882. Like other workers for the suffrage, Mrs. Nevinson said how greatly impressed she had been as a child and young woman on finding that a married woman's property and earnings belonged to her husband. In her childhood, the weekly wash was done at home by a charwoman whose husband spent every penny he could get on drink, and the speaker wittily described how the woman always wrapped the 25. 6d. for the day's work in her handkerchief, and stuffed it in "her bosom" for safety. Between the speeches a delightful selection of songs and recitations was given by Miss Wincley, Miss Dunsford, and Miss Marshall.

At the close of the evening, Dr. Knight moved a warm and appreciative vote of thanks to the speaker, chairman, hostess, and entertainers. In doing this, she referred to the special campaign for Equal Franchise which was being organised, and which was to culminate in a combined demonstration in Hyde Park, and expressed the hope that Hampstead would furnish a large contingent. Mrs. Hornbrook cordially seconded this vote of thanks. Several new members joined the Branch, and there was a good sale of our paper THE VOTE.

(Hon. Sec.) MISS BERRY, 16, Denning Road, N.W.3.

## MID-LONDON.

A Branch meeting was held at 144, High Holborn, W.C., on Thursday, January 28th; Miss Sparkman presided. Resolutions dealing with the Widows', Orphans', and Old Age Pensions Act, Education, Equal Franchise, and the Equal Guardianship Act were framed for the Conference. A Public Debate is being arranged by the Branch between Miss Cicely Hamilton and Miss Nina Boyle, on Tuesday, February 23rd, at Caxton Hall, Westminster, at 7 o'clock. Subject for debate, "Is Democracy a Failure?" Will all members who were not able to be present at the Branch meeting kindly book this date and do their best to make this debate known? A few seats will be reserved at 1s. each.

(Hon. Sec.) MRS. FLOWERS, 73, Clavering Road, Wanstead.

## ASHFORD.

We had a very fine meeting at the Hempsted Street Hall last Friday afternoon. Mrs. Miles, Vice-President of the Ashford Branch, presided. She was supported by Miss Anna Munro, Princess Karadjia, and Mrs. Kither. Miss Munro gave an inspiring address on the subject of "Women's Needs in the Past, Present, and Future." Princess Karadjia spoke eloquently on the need for a woman film censor. As an outcome of her speech a resolution was framed and sent to Headquarters to go before the Annual Conference. We warmly thank Mrs. Miles for her kind offer to form a Shakespearean dramatic society in connection with the local branch. She suggests an elocution class once a fortnight. Those of us who have heard her wonderful recitation realise that this is an offer not to be set aside. As she rightly said, it will help us to give entertainments to raise funds. Mrs. Miles is very busy working for the League of Nations; she is also President of all the Women's Institutes in Kent, and we think it very good of her to work for us as she is doing. As an outcome of this meeting we made six new members.

## BEXHILL.

Miss Thornton, President of the Bexhill Sisterhood, presided at a well-attended meeting held at the Albany Hotel, by kind permission of Miss Skinner, on Thursday evening. Miss Anna Munro spoke on the subject of "Women, and the Political Situation." At the request of some of those present our meetings in future will be held in the evening. We were very pleased to welcome some new members.

## HASTINGS.

A successful meeting was held at the Grand Hotel last Thursday afternoon. Mrs. Darent Harrison, President of the local branch, presided with her usual ability. Miss Anna Munro, who was warmly welcomed, gave an inspiring address on the wonderful progress of the women's movement during the past 25 years. There was still much to be accomplished, including Equal Franchise, Representation in the League of Nations and in the Honours List. The question of Women Police, which is attracting much attention locally, was a popular subject. A vote of thanks, proposed by Mrs. Strickland and seconded by Councillor Annie Lile, J.P., ex-deputy Mayor of Hastings, terminated a very enjoyable meeting. All those present had an opportunity of meeting Miss Anna Munro during tea. Three new members were made, and the literature sold well.

(Org.) MISS M. L. WHITE.

## MIDDLESBROUGH.

We are very sorry to record the sudden death, on January 18th, after a fall on the previous day, of one of our oldest branch members, Mrs. Thirkell. For many years she was most active for the League, and has always been a loyal member, keenly interested, and supporting the branch in many ways.

## WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT.

DESARD HOUSE, 2, CURRIE STREET, NINE ELMS LANE, S.W. 8.

When Mrs. Despard was in residence here, friends were asked to send "Valentines" consisting of either money or articles for sale—food, fruit, fancy articles, small pictures, fancy goods, and other articles that might be sold to bring in funds for our work here on Valentine's Day. This year we are more in need of funds than we have ever been. We are arranging a "Valentine" day advertisement and reception of goods, and, later in the evening, a jumble sale for our poorer neighbours who are wanting clothing and boots for themselves and their families. All sorts of household fittings and appliances (a tick for a double mattress is a very great-felt want), and, indeed, anything useful in a household is of service to them, so we are very much hoping that any of our friends who read this notice will send either a subscription, or anything they can spare, to help on this work so ably started by members of the Women's Freedom League. We are already receiving parcels and sacks of clothing, etc., for the jumble sale part, and for that are very much indebted to Miss Riggall, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. C. S. Gaulay, Dr. Knight (who sent samples of cloth, etc.), to make into children's garments), Mrs. Freeman, Miss Olive Turton, Miss Stutchbury, Mrs. Duckworth, the Misses Hayward (who are keeping a box especially to collect worn garments, etc.), Miss Warren, Miss Pratt and other friends, Miss Greenville and friends, and anonymous helpers. We are looking forward, therefore, to a well-replenished condition of our coffers, our children's wardrobe, and those of our neighbours.

On Monday, February 15th, members of our committee will be in attendance here from 3.30 to 6 p.m., and glad to see anyone who comes, and to accept their gifts.

(Hon. Superintendent) MISS A. M. COLE.

FRIDAY,  
FEB. 5,  
1926.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY

Please send me THE VOTE every week, post free, for 6 months, for which I enclose 3/3.

Name .....

Address .....

**THE VOTE, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.**

### BOARD RESIDENCE.

LADY requires Paying Guest, very comfortable modern home, Stoke Newington district. Young business or professional lady preferred. 30/7 week'y, partial board.—Write Box K B.A., THE VOTE Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

### TO LET.

FURNISHED COTTAGE, in Suffolk, 21/- weekly. Simply Decorated. Oak beams exposed.—Apply HAYLAND, The Peasant Shop, 41, Devonshire Street, Theobald's Road, W.C.1.

### 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.

SMART CUT, AND PERFECT TAILORING.

COSTUMES MADE TO ORDER FROM 7 GUINEAS

**H. Melissen,**

Ladies' Tailor,

PERSONAL ATTENTION.

62, GREAT PORTLAND STREET, LONDON, W.1.

### CLUBS.

ISIS CLUB, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue (2 minutes Hampstead Tube Station). Magnificent Reception Rooms. Central heating. Sunny bedrooms. Sandy soil. Lectures, dancing, listening-in. Telephone: Hampstead 2869.

PIONEER CLUB, 12, Cavendish Place, Oxford Circus, W.1. Bedrooms. Debates. Concerts. Town Membership, £5 5s.; Professional and Country, £4 4s.

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.

### NOTICES.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND ADJUSTED.—Consult Miss H. M. BAKER, 275, High Holborn, W.C.1. Income Tax Returns, Repayment Claims of all Descriptions. Telephone: Holborn 377.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, February 7th. 3.30 p.m. Music. Lecture. Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.A., J.P.: "Family Endowment." 6.30 p.m. Miss Maude Royden: "The Hymns We Sing."

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND CHAIRMANSHIP. Classes, Private Lessons and Lectures, also Saturday Speech Club. New term now beginning.—MISS LUCY BELL, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C.1.

### REST AND HOLIDAYS.

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

CORNWALL.—Paying Guest received in modern farmhouse. £2 2s. week. Clotted cream 3/- lb., post free.—SELSEY St. Stephen's, St. Austell, Cornwall.

RYE, SUSSEX.—OLD HOPE ANCHOR. Ideal Guest House. Modern comforts; good cooking. Separate Vegetarian cooking a speciality. Write for booklet.

STRESA.—The most delightful spot on Lake Maggiore, Italy, for spending a quiet summer holiday.—MRS. COSTA, Hotel St. Gothard. Terms *en pension* £3 weekly.

SAND BANKS. 3 miles Bournemouth. Board Residence. Winter terms very moderate.—MISS ALLEN, "Cosy Nook," Sand Banks, Dorset.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

MRS. SILVESTER SPARROW, Teacher of Pianoforte and Singing, also requests engagements as Dance Pianist and Accompanist.—43, Black Lion Lane, W.6.

### Prepaid Classified Advertisements.

Number of Words.	Once.	Three Times.	Six Times.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
20	1 6	4 0	7 6
30	2 3	6 3	12 0
40	3 0	8 6	16 0

Displayed Advertisements  
8/- per inch.

## 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.

Published by the MINERVA PUBLISHING CO. LTD., at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1, and Printed for them by PAGE & PRATT, LTD., 151-2, Gt. Saffron Hill, London, E.C.1.