

# THE VOTE

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

VOL. XXVIII. No. 949. (Registered at  
the G.P.O.)

ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 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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## GREETINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR

TO THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE AND "THE VOTE."

**Her Grace the Duchess of Atholl, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education.**

I am glad to send your readers a New Year message in connection with the approaching extension of the franchise. It represents a new and momentous development in representative government, for no electors carry such vast responsibilities for the welfare of other lands and races as do the citizens of this country; in no other country in which women are enfranchised do they outnumber men, as in these islands. The responsibility thrown on us by the proposed extension is therefore without parallel. Those already enfranchised are in more ways than one justifying the privilege extended to them nine years ago. May it be the same with the new electors!

**Miss Margaret Bondfield, M.P.**

I send hearty New Year greetings to your gallant little paper, which has done such splendid work in raising the status of women in emphasising the importance of equality of opportunity.

We all look forward to 1928 as the year in which women will really be enfranchised "on the same terms as men," but it is clear that clouds of opposition are rolling up, and women, especially young women, will have to be very much on the alert to keep the Government up to its pledge.

When this question of the machinery for voting is out of the way, there will come the far more important questions of how far women are going to use their citizen rights to clear away some of the horrible blots upon our present-day civilisation, the most devastating of which is unemployment.

**Mrs. Despard, First-President of the Women's Freedom League.**

At the dawn of the year 1928, concerning which I have heard such dolorous prophecies, I take advantage of the opportunity graciously offered to me by our editor of sending a message to the League I have loved so long.

To those who are now in the front of the battle, to the young women—babes almost when our League was

started—now active members, ready to take the place of the veterans when they can no longer work, and to the memory of the staunch and stalwart workers who have left us, I offer my tribute of gratitude and affection. Individually, and as bound together in a League, I wish them joy and success in the year that is opening. I know that, whether it brings good or evil to the disturbed nations, we, at least, will stand, shoulder to shoulder, a living, active force for righteousness.

Prophecies often fall wide of the mark. There can be no doubt, however, that a mighty struggle—international war, class war, possibly revolution—is impending. Under these circumstances, the need for women of full citizenship rights is, beyond expression, urgent. To secure this, every effort must and, I am sure, will be made.

May we, in the year 1928, be able to celebrate our victory. This is the hope and prayer of your old friend and fellow-worker.

**Mrs. Dexter (National Executive Committee).**

At this time of the year we like to wish one another "The Old, Old Wish," but for the Women's Freedom League, alas! we wish our "Old, Old Wish" were a thing of the past, and we might start 1928 with all-round congratulations that at last all women were possessed of "Equal Political Rights" and free to fight for the many other burning questions women are so interested in. Still, we will go forward with brave hearts, knowing that *Right* will prevail.

**Dr. Knight (Hon. Treasurer).**

Best success to the League and THE VOTE.

We have been very busy saying "Votes for Women" through 1927, with the net result that we start 1928 holding the Government pledge of equal voting rights.

This is excellent, but to relax our efforts now would be to ensure disaster.

Throughout this year we must be busier than ever before, each of us spreading our ideals, making new friends, supporters and members.

Increased funds, too, are, of course, a necessity, and you will, I know,

A  
GOOD  
NEW  
YEAR  
1928



remember your League with all possible generosity during 1928, beginning with a New Year's gift.

Warmest thanks to all our gallant comrades in the fight.

**Mrs. Brading (National Executive Committee).**

"I wish our League every success, and think it embraces some of the finest people possible."

**Miss Anna Munro (National Executive Committee).**

SHE WHO IS TO COME.

(MRS. GILMAN.)

A woman—in so far as she beholdeth  
Her one beloved's face;

A mother—with a great heart that enfoldeth  
The children of the race;

A body, free and strong, with that high beauty  
That comes of perfect use, is built thereof;

A mind, where reason ruleth over duty,  
And justice reigns with love;

A self-poised, royal soul, brave, wise and tender,  
No longer dumb and blind;

A human being, of an unknown splendour,  
Is she who is to come.

**Miss Eunice Murray (National Executive Committee)**

To the women who have worked for freedom, I send greetings.

We may congratulate ourselves upon gains made, but much work remains to be done. Until the women of the world have won their freedom, we must fight on. We who have advanced as a result of vigilance and work must extend a helping hand to other women yet in bondage.

In our country there is still much to do. We cannot be content until we see prejudice uprooted, until we see women standing upon the same platform as men, politically and economically.

Women must be free to choose their occupations as they wish, in Church or Industry; we would knock down barriers and restrictive legislation.

We must stand together, watchful, to strike for freedom, ready to embrace it.

**Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence (President).**

I wish all the members of the Women's Freedom League and all the readers of THE VOTE a very happy New Year.

If hard work is one of the main secrets of happiness—as I believe it is—then 1928 ought to be the best year of our lives.

We have the promise of the Government that our Equal Franchise Bill shall be the immediate business of the next Session of Parliament. We expect to find it an important item in the King's Speech.

When the Act is placed upon the Statute Book, the constructive work of all the branches of the woman's movement should begin.

This may be summed up very broadly in two propositions. The task before us is to secure equality for women in the vocational, administrative, and economic spheres of activity; and also to develop, by the extension of the national services of Health and Education, that chief asset in a nation's wealth—the Children.

**Mrs. Pierotti (Hon. Head, Literature Dept.)**

Best wishes to the Women's Freedom League and to THE VOTE for the coming year, which should see the fruition of their many years of labour to secure Equal Franchise.

We are now looking forward to the time when the Women's Freedom League and THE VOTE will be able to concentrate their energies on removing other of the existing inequalities between men and women.

**Miss Marian Reeves (National Executive Committee)**

Greetings and all good wishes to all members of the Women's Freedom League. I believe the year that is dawning will see the complete political emancipation

of women, and then our League and our paper, THE VOTE, which has never failed us in the most difficult days, will be free to work for full equality in all phases of national life.

Good luck to them both.

**The Rt. Hon. the Viscountess Rhondda.**

We have reason to hope that in the coming year we shall at last see equality of voting rights (which, politically, is the foundation of all other equality) established as between men and women. Whether we do so or not may depend, even yet, largely on the vigilance and energy of the women's organisations. It is such papers as THE VOTE which, by their continual insistence on the need for equality, have brought us to the point of achieving votes for women on the same terms as men, and it is very largely on THE VOTE that we of the woman's movement must depend during the coming year to see that the final stages of victory are accomplished, and that equal suffrage—the first big step on the ladder towards real equality—is at last achieved.

**Miss E. Rodgers (Hon. Head, "Vote" Sales Department).**

Will readers of THE VOTE express their appreciation of us in the following ways?—

(1) By impressing upon all members of the Women's Freedom League, who do not already take and read THE VOTE, that they cannot completely fulfil the obligations of their membership unless they keep in close touch with the varied and constantly changing aspects of the work to which they have pledged themselves. The best medium for this is THE VOTE.

(2) By reaching non-readers of THE VOTE by passing on a copy with a word of recommendation.

We cannot get at non-readers by addressing them in the paper. If we are to make a really strong forward movement in this year (which will be one of unusual responsibility), we must depend upon the loyal support and persevering efforts of our present subscribers.

**Mrs. J. H. Ross (National Executive Committee).**

MESSAGE FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Long ago, in a far-off land, a message was given to us: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." It has been given many times since from other lands and in other words, and it is still the supreme message for us. I give it you in words from an old Scots poem: "Mind ye dianna gie what ye wadna like tae tak." It is the same message.

**Mrs. Myra Stedman (National Executive Committee).**

I should like to take this opportunity of wishing all members and friends a very happy New Year and every success in their work for the League. We are confidently looking forward to seeing the fulfilment and reward of so much of our effort by the passing of the Equal Franchise Bill, but let us not slacken our work in this direction until we have reached our goal.

**Miss F. A. Underwood (General Secretary).**

Let us all live up to our motto, "Dare to be Free!" and work still harder for the removal of all inequalities of status, opportunities, rewards and responsibilities as between women and men.

Politically, equal voting rights is our first object, then more women in Parliament (both Houses), and women on all Commissions and Departmental Committees.

Economically, we must have a fair field and no favour—the right of free entry on an equal footing with men to all professions, the Civil Service, and every branch of industry, without any restriction upon the work of women which is not imposed on men's work.

**Mrs. Whetton (Hon. Organising Secretary).**

May the coming year bring happiness and joy to the readers of THE VOTE. To the young women may it bring full citizenship, with promises of golden hopes for the future. And may it see the women of the world uniting in an endeavour to lay the foundation of peace and good-will between the nations.

## IN PARLIAMENT.

### White Slave Traffic (Report).

On December 21st, VISCOUNT SANDON (U., Shrewsbury) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what was the type of matter expunged from the published Part II of the Report on the White Slave Traffic; who did the editing, at whose orders, and to what extent in quantity; whether it is the intention to shield Governments or individuals, and whether he will urge before the League of Nations that widespread advertisement of names and offences of nations and individuals is desirable, for the purposes of pillory? SIR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Before authorising publication, the Council of the League referred the Report to the Governments of the countries concerned for their observations. The replies were considered at a meeting of the Special Body of Experts, who, in the light of the further information available, corrected certain statements of fact and made some minor drafting amendments. Where the views of the experts differed from those of the Governments, no alteration was made. No corrections were made, except by the Body of Experts themselves and on their sole responsibility. The Council has authorised publication of Part II of the Report, together with the communications from the Governments and the Experts' comments. Copies of this document will shortly be available to the public. Whilst the Expert Committee categorically disclaim any intention of criticising any particular country, they make it clear that no amendments have been made with the object of shielding Governments or individuals. As regards the last part of the question, my noble Friend will realise that the information could not have been obtained except under a promise of secrecy as to names. COL. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark): Can the Foreign Secretary assure the House that none of the expunged matter refers to Great Britain? SIR A. CHAMBERLAIN: I think I should be quite safe in saying that, but, as a matter of fact, I do not know what was expunged and what was not. All the alterations were made by the Body of Experts who prepared the original Report, because they thought it necessary to correct it in the light of the later information which they received.

### House of Lords.

On December 22nd, SIR JOHN SIMON (Lib., Spen Valley) asked the Prime Minister when he proposes to announce the decision of the Government regarding the scheme for the Reform of the House of Lords, which he promised in his speech at Cardiff to make known before the end of the year? THE PRIME MINISTER: I had hoped to be able to make a statement on this subject before the House rose, but I am not yet in a position to make an announcement.

### Prorogation of Parliament.

The King's Speech proroguing Parliament stated that during the Session a Bill had been passed in regard to Unemployment Insurance; striking progress had been made in providing new housing accommodation in England, Wales and Scotland; a Bill had been passed dealing with Trade Disputes and Trade Unions; the Royal Assent had been given to the Landlord and Tenant Bill; a Bill had been passed to assist the British Cinematograph Film Industry; and a Bill had been passed providing for the reorganisation of certain legal services, and the amendment, in certain respects, of the law relating to Sheriff Court business in Scotland.

## SYMPATHY WITH OUR PRESIDENT.

PETHICK.—On December 20th, 1927, at "Trewartha," Weston-super-Mare, Fanny, widow of Mr. Henry Pethick, J.P., of "Trewartha," Weston-super-Mare, in her 84th year. Interment at Arno's Vale Cemetery, Bristol, to-morrow (Friday), at 2 p.m.

Readers of THE VOTE and members of the Women's Freedom League will join with us in offering our sincere sympathy to our President, Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, on the death of her mother.

**Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P.**

1928 will, we hope, see the vote granted to women on the same terms as men, and the ending of the ridiculous law which has barred out the young women and so many independent women workers.

Active feminists will feel thankful that this issue is at last out of the way, and we can then turn our attention to the other crying evils that could be solved if the suffrage movement was put behind a determination to right these social wrongs.

I hope that 1928 will see a rededication of all those active women workers to the cause of humanity.

**Mrs. Margaret Wintringham.**

A New Year brings new opportunities and new hopefulness; let us therefore plan our work for the complete enfranchisement of women with no thought or word of discouragement. We must resolve to do all we can to help to consolidate a determined public opinion in this country, which believes in representative Government, supporting a measure of equal enfranchisement of all its citizens, so that the interests of all sections of the community may be guarded. There is more and more need for the vigorous activity of every thinking woman, so that this measure, which has always been so splendidly advocated by THE VOTE, may become law.

**Mrs. Zangwill (National Executive Committee).**

This year will almost certainly bring to women the end of their long-drawn fight. Bring it to an end, I say. Is it not rather the beginning that is now coming into sight? For the vote is not an end; it is a means. The struggle for woman suffrage has been not so much a fight, as the capture of a sword with which to fight. In itself, save as a symbol, this sword is of little use. But we need it "in our hand," in order to "build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land."

To liken woman suffrage to a sword is perhaps an unhappy simile. For the chief use of our new power should be not to forge swords but to destroy them. We prate of social reform. Of what use is any reform when the thundercloud of war still hangs over us? "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," we cry, forgetting the past, ignoring the future. By such childish irresponsibility we make possible a repetition of that past in the future. We try to build our Jerusalem on sand—no, not even on sand; on a morass of mud and blood into which for four years humanity sank, and into which it may once more sink, and that finally.

## WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

### Women Architects.

At a general meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects, held on December 5th, the following women were elected as Associates—Amy M. Hargroves, Mrs. Edith M. W. Hughes, and Elsie Rogers.

### The First Women's Hospital.

The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, staffed by women for women, laid the foundation stone of the new extension before Christmas, when Sir Alan Anderson, son of the founder, performed the ceremony.

### Women Municipal Voters.

It appears that on the Voters' Registers for the London County Council there are 977,748 women and 971,404 men. The election takes place in March, 1928.

### Women's Honours at London University.

Last week, the Senate of London University conferred the degree of D.Sc. in Chemistry on Miss F. V. McKie, an internal student of Bedford College, and in Zoology on Miss H. S. Pearson, an internal student of University College.

The William Henry Hudson Memorial Prize for 1927 was awarded to Miss Constance Beevers, of the Gresham College Centre.

### U.S.A. First Woman Bailiff.

D. J. Reid, of Pennsylvania, is the first woman to be appointed Bailiff in any United States Court.



## THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30th, 1927.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—  
To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.  
To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders,  
printing, and merchandise, etc.

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.

### A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

To all our readers we wish a Happy New Year! May 1928 crown the work of suffragists with success, and before that year closes may we see a measure on the Statute Book giving equal voting rights to women and men in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. And not only in our country, but also in our sister nation across the Channel, for there also the battle for votes for women is to be fought out in grim earnest—this time in the Senate. *La Française* urges its readers to renew their energy and to do everything in their power to keep the agitation going, so as to ensure the success this year which is so long overdue. We, too, appeal to our readers not only to help forward the equal enfranchisement of women and men by every means in their power, but throughout the year, in season and out of season, to press for the equal consideration of women with men in every branch of our national life and for their full equality in every direction. Let women make it clear to all concerned that they want no special consideration or treatment in their competition with men just because they are women, and that they demand the same freedom that men claim in controlling the conditions of their life and, more especially, of their livelihood. "A fair field and no favour" is the desire of every healthy modern woman, and she very rightly resents special restrictions upon her activities because of her marriage or her sex imposed by outside, meddling folk. Women have learnt many things in their long struggle for political equality, and among them a genuine distrust of men's "protective" measures for the ordering of women's lives. Women prefer to take equal chances with men on life's highway, and long experience has taught them that such "protective" measures are in reality special obstacles which impede their progress. We have always held that equal political power with men is women's first step towards full equality with men. Equal voting rights will turn women in the right direction, but as soon as they are won, women must march straight forward to gain other kinds of equality. Women voters have this matter largely in their own hands. With their majority of votes will they acquiesce in the professional woman being barred from employment in the Civil Service and by Local Governing bodies just because she marries, while the Government and Local Governing bodies allow married women to continue to work as charwomen? And will the industrial women voters acquiesce in the special restrictions placed on their work by Acts of Parliament, which undermine all their efforts to secure equal opportunities and equal pay with men in industry? We do not believe that they will. When women are conscious of the full extent of their political power and learn to use it as men have done for the furtherance of their own cause, the world will not continue to remain mapped out in separate compartments for men and women, but women will claim and secure free entry to all of them. A Happy New Year to everyone who helps forward the full equality of the sexes!

### JOSEPHINE BUTLER.

The Centenary of the birth of Josephine Butler will be celebrated next year. This great Englishwoman was born April 13th, 1828, and for nearly 20 years was the chief figure in the agitation against the Contagious Diseases Acts in this country, which were abolished in 1886. This system of State Regulation of Prostitution had its origin in France, was in force in most European countries in the first part of the nineteenth century, and was introduced into certain towns in England by a series of Acts (passed in 1864, 1866 and 1869), known as the Contagious Diseases Acts. Since that time, the system, even where it still prevails to some extent, is thoroughly discredited. In the first half of the nineteenth century, however, both medical and police authorities believed that prostitution was a social necessity, and that its anti-social consequences could be obviated by State control and repressive methods directed against the prostitute. Josephine Butler saw more clearly than this. She was convinced that no good could come from any system based on injustice and inequality between the sexes, and that such a system could only increase the evils which it sought to suppress. Next April, in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Cambridge, Bristol, Oxford, Worcester, and Leeds, in many countries on the Continent, in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, there will be special services and public demonstrations in celebration of her work. Throughout the world there is a growing conviction that there must be an equal moral standard for both sexes, and we are now learning how much of it is due to Josephine Butler's challenge.

### FRESH AIR—OR COTTON WOOL?

Last week, a policewoman made a smart capture of two alleged motor thieves in Hyde Park single-handed and at night, and was warmly congratulated by Mr. Hay Halkett, the Marylebone magistrate, when the two men were charged at the Court, on the admirable way in which she had dealt with the matter. While the evidence was being taken, however, this magistrate, for no apparent reason, since her work had been entirely successful, said: "You know, I don't like you policewomen being subjected to risk, and this was rather a risky job. I think you ought not to be employed in the park by yourself at night dealing with cases of this sort. I think your work should be confined to a more peaceful sphere." The policewoman told him that there were usually two policewomen together. Then Mr. Hay Halkett made the quite irrelevant remark: "But you are useful mainly among women!" We thoroughly disagree with him. If a policewoman is clever enough to capture two motor thieves, the public may well ask why, in the name of common sense, she should be relegated to look after women? Let magistrates get rid of their ridiculous notions about what kind of work is fit or unfit for women. A policewoman, like a policeman, is well able to look after herself in ordinary circumstances, and if, by belonging to the Police Force, she is willing to take the same risk as her male colleagues, why shouldn't she be allowed to do so? At any rate, we don't see why a magistrate's sentimental ideas about women should stop her. Some women, like some men, have not the least fear of the risk of a scuffle. All women ask is a fair field and no favour, and when they secure a success they only want proper recognition of it, and not back-handed compliments regarding other spheres of usefulness. This particular policewoman who secured the arrest of the two men was not hurt, and, so far as the report goes, was not even threatened with harm.

## EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1927.

### Equal Franchise.

The year 1927 will stand out in suffrage annals for the deputation to the Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin, at which he gave his promise of Equal Franchise in time to enable women to vote on an equal qualification with men at the next General Election. It will be remembered that an organisation called the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee came into being in 1926, to run a Hyde Park procession and demonstration. As this Committee appeared to be of great usefulness, it has remained in being, and it was to it that the Prime Minister wrote when consenting to receive a deputation on Equal Franchise. The great majority of women's organisations for political purposes belong to the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, so this important and historic deputation was in the best this important and historic deputation, in conjunction with the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, was in the best sense representative. Since this public acceptance of responsibility for previous statements by the Prime Minister, all political associations of women have concentrated on moving public opinion and individual opinion to support the passing of the necessary measure. At first, an Autumn Session was expected and the introduction of an Equal Franchise Bill looked for then, but it was soon announced that there was to be no Autumn Session, so the Bill could not appear until the new Session beginning on February 7th, 1928. On that day it is hoped that all doubts will be removed by definite words in the King's Speech. To this end the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee has continuously held indoor and outdoor meetings, in which the Women's Freedom League has played a conspicuous part. Bitter experience in the past has made suffragists sure of no political thing until it is safely on the Statute Book. They know that even a public promise by the best intentioned can be brought to naught by circumstances uncontrollable even by Prime Ministers. They know too well the many intentional slips which, added to the many accidental slips, make contact between political cups and lips so chancy. So meeting after meeting has been held, and a constant stream of reminding resolutions sent to all requiring such reminders. The Women's Freedom League held a most successful Clyde Coast Campaign, at which heavy rain alone prevented audiences at the meetings, ordinary rain having little effect upon attendances. Here good work was done in the cause of Equal Franchise.

### Protective Legislation.

The other outstanding question in the political women's movement is that of so-called protective legislation applied to women only, and, further, the classification for legislative purposes of "men" in one class and "women and children" or "women and young persons" in another class. A piece of legislation was actually passed—the Lead Paint (Protection from Poisoning) Act—excluding women from the building painting trade. It is now known, through the efforts of protesting women, that no inquiry was made as to the incidence of lead poisoning among women, and that the Clause excluding them from the trade was put in for quite other reasons—reasons which do no credit to their owners. It is still hoped, by disclosure and sound argument, to get this obnoxious Clause, restricting the employment of women, rescinded. One result of this attack upon lucrative employment has been the creation of a new Society formed by Women Decorators already established in business, whose future livelihood is in danger.

The Open Door Council, formed in 1926 to obtain an open door for women in all spheres of work, has been mainly instrumental in the work of opposing this restriction. It has also been active in criticising the Government's Factories Bill of 1926, which has never got further than publication. Rumour kills it one day, restores it the next, and the day after alters it beyond recognition, but most frequently says it will be intro-

duced in some form in 1928. The whole Section which classes the adult woman with children and young persons is objected to by the non-Party women, who wish adult women to be classed with adult men, and children and young persons to be classed as such. Many of the Clauses in the 1926 Bill do, in the opinion of non-Party women, seriously hamper the employment and, if employed, the advancement to the higher grades, of the industrial woman worker. Here it is right to note that the women of the Labour Party differ from the non-Party women, claiming that the present benefit to women of such enactments as shorter hours, no night-work, provision of seats, prohibition of weight-lifting, etc., is all important, and that to obtain them first for women is a sure way to obtain them in future for the men. The non-Party women claim that the result of placing conditions upon the employment of women, from which men are exempt, must have, indeed has been proved so to have, the result of throwing women out in favour of men. The recently published Report 44 of the Industrial Fatigue Research Board will go far to support the feminist and non-Party declaration that such protection as is found necessary for the industrial man worker is as amply sufficient for the industrial woman worker; that, in short, industrial protection should be directed to the work done and not to the sex of the worker.

### Labour Women.

It is noteworthy that considerable change is taking place among trade union and Labour Party women. They are demanding a greater share in the control and administration of the unions and better representation at the Trade Union Congress, while the rank and file in the Party branches are beginning to form their own opinions and venture to differ from their headquarters.

### Women Candidates.

The Labour Party is putting up many more women candidates for Parliament than either Conservative or Liberal; altogether there are nearly 40 at present named as intending to stand at the next General Election.

### Conferences.

Many Conferences have been held during the year with bearing upon the women's movement. Most notable in this respect was the Unionist Women's Annual Conference in the Albert Hall and the Unionist Party Conference at Cardiff. At the first, the Prime Minister met with dissent in advocating equality of franchise at 21, the Conservative women desiring the male vote to be taken away under 25. At Cardiff, however, he won a fine victory, receiving the unmistakable support of his Party. The Congress of the Co-operative Women's Guild carried a strongly worded equality resolution with only one dissident. The British Commonwealth League held a valuable Conference to consider "The social and industrial position of women of other than British race governed under the British Flag" and "Some problems of Government." Among the points raised were the double moral standard, franchise at home and abroad, the appointment of women on all Commissions dealing with women or with children and the nationality of married women. The Conference of the National Union of Women Teachers passed strong resolutions on equal franchise, equal pay, and the right of married women to work. They also held a most informative Educational Conference, one of many such held by different educational bodies, including an Imperial Education Conference, on which we were glad to note an increase in the number of women called to take part. On the scientific side, many papers were read by women at the British Association meeting on a variety of subjects, mainly with a human interest. The women engineers held a Conference, which showed women established and flourishing in many branches of that science. The International and the National Council of Women held successful annual meetings, as did the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, the



International Co-operative Women's Guild, the League for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations, the Labour Party Women, and, of course, our own Women's Freedom League, which showed by the resolutions passed its steady, unshakable faith in womanhood.

#### Honours.

The Honours Lists this year, although better as regards the number of women awarded the lesser Honours, is still far from anything approaching adequacy, either in number or status, to the women who have rendered fine service to the State and to humanity. The Order of St. John of Jerusalem, conferred for services in the cause of humanity throughout the Empire, showed the same favouritism and partiality for recognising the services of men more easily and more generously than those of women.

#### Commissions.

There is still lamentable reluctance to appoint women to Commissions, only a few being discoverable during the course of 1927. Most recent are the Statutory Indian Commission with no women, and the Street Offences Committee with only five. In permanent session is the Prison Commission with no women, the whole staffing and administration, even of prisons for women being controlled by men. Three women delegates attended the International Economic Conference—one British, one Dutch, and one German. At the Colonial Office Conference on Medical Research there were no women. On the Income Tax Commission no women. Other bodies on which women should be, but are not, are too numerous to give in detail, but a notable, and in its consequences disastrous, absence is from the Board of Management of the Lock Hospital in Harrow Road.

#### League of Nations.

In the League of Nations there are very few women given a chance to work, but from those who have entered notable results have come. The Report, Parts I and II, on the Traffic in Women and Children, has shaken the world, and Dame Rachel Crowley, the Secretary, and the women who took a courageous part in the investigations have shown the wisdom of allowing women participation in the League's work. On the Opium Commission, too, women did good work, but their position is still inadequate to their capabilities. A reactionary step was taken when the contract of a woman librarian was not renewed solely because she was a woman. Miss Jeppe's report on the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East was a light shining in darkness, and should help to kill reaction and give other women wider opportunities.

#### At Home.

At home, we have to chronicle the death of the first woman to be elected to the British Parliament, the Countess Markievicz; and we have to welcome a new Member, the Countess of Iveagh, whose election for Southend brings the number of women Members to seven. In local government, we have to congratulate 13 women Mayors and one Lord Mayor, while the list of Councillors, still far from adequate, is increased. Women have been prominent in electrical enterprise; the Civil Service still strives for equality; the University women opened their beautiful International Hall of Residence, Crosby Hall; the Consultative Committee of Women's Organisations has sent in valuable resolutions on a variety of important subjects, and has held debates in addition to its monthly sessions; the Blanesburgh Report on Unemployment has been a fruitful source of both praise and blame, showing the rooted legislative attitude that women require less to live on and less training than men; Oxford has limited the numbers of women for her colleges; the Guardianship of Infants Bill has proved, as feminists foretold, to be unequal in operation; a tendency towards international, rather than national, concentration among women is shown by the formation of the International Advisory Council of the American National Woman's Party; a deputation was received by the Home Secretary on Sexual Offences against Young Persons, and it is hoped

that legislation to raise the legal age of marriage will result; the sporting and athletic side of women's activities has been marked by successes in swimming both the English and the Bristol Channels, in aviation, motorcycling, tennis, etc. For the first time, a Women's Cricket Association has been formed, having a successful first season.

#### Women Police.

The position of women police is not satisfactory, the official mind being slow to grasp how to make, and how to use when made, the real policewoman. The evidence at the Street Offences Committee shows once more how necessary are women police in that connection alone. A welcome innovation was the appointment, by Manchester, of a woman police doctor. An attempt has been made, it is hoped, to make it unsuccessful, in Scotland, to reintroduce a form of Contagious Diseases Act. This is being resisted strongly by organised women.

#### Married Women.

The position of married women remains bad. Women doctors have been dismissed, women teachers also, simply because they married. Married women as cleaners and in various occupations have been dismissed or refused employment on account of their being married. A Bill to improve this situation was introduced, but the House refused a Second Reading. The nationality of married women remains unaltered.

#### Irish Jurors.

In Ireland, a retrograde step has taken place in making non-obligatory jury service for women. There also the women are protesting against their non-appointment to Commissions and similar bodies.

The second woman Associate of the Royal Academy received that honour this year.

#### The Churches.

In the Churches small advance has been made, the most permitted to women being quite ancillary services. There is most sign of improvement among Nonconformist congregations.

#### Peeresses.

A new form of Peeresses' Bill was introduced, but was rejected. A new attempt is expected if Reform of the House of Lords materialises.

#### "Mother India."

During the year, a book dealing with life in India appeared, called "Mother India," and was greeted by strong protests from some quarters, approbation from a few, and horror from others. This book has already had the effect of stimulating women's organisations in support of progressive Indian women.

#### Social.

Among interesting social functions to be noted were the placing of wreaths on John Stuart Mills' statue, on the 121st anniversary of his birth. Prominent suffragists attended, and many women's organisations were represented and sent floral tributes. Another interesting occasion was the handing over to Crosby Hall for its endowment, by Dame Millicent Fawcett, of a birthday gift which she declined to accept for herself. The Women's Freedom League held high festival on Mrs. Despard's birthday, when our First-President made a forceful and happy speech to those gathered to greet her. Our Green, White and Gold Fair combined social pleasure successfully with business and was much enjoyed by all participating.

#### General.

The conclusions that may justifiably be drawn from a survey of 1927 are very cheering. Although material progress may not seem great, the actual work done by women, their awakening to the necessity of remedial action, has been enormous. As is so frequently the case, increased offence rouses increased defence, so we find the forces of reaction, clasping hand with prejudice, and opposing all proposals of advance on the part of those they are accustomed and prefer to see only in strictly ancillary positions.

## Women's Freedom League.

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

### WHERE TO GO.

#### WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

##### LONDON AND SUBURBS.

1928.

**Thursday, January 5th, at 7.30 p.m.**  
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Open-air Meeting at Highbury Corner, organised by The Women's Freedom League. Speakers: Miss Beamish and Mrs. Flin'. Chairman: Miss Cockle.

#### DARE TO BE FREE.

**Thursday, January 12th, at 7.30 p.m.**  
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Open-air Meeting at Highbury Corner, organised by The Women's Freedom League. Speaker: Miss B. Pearson. Chairman: Miss Cockle.

**Thursday, January 19th, at 3 p.m.**  
Hamstead Branch Members' Meeting, at 16, Denning Road, N.W.3 (by kind permission of the Misses Berr).

**Thursday, January 19th, at 7.30 p.m.**  
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Open-Air Meeting at Highbury Corner, arranged by the Women's Freedom League. Speaker: Miss E. E. Froud. Chairman: Miss Theo. Smythe.

**Monday, January 23rd, at 3.15 p.m.**  
Goders Green. Branch Meeting at 98 Brookside Road (by kind permission of Mrs. Jaynes).

**Wednesday, January 25th at 3 p.m.**  
Fair Sub-Committee Meeting, at 144 High Holborn, W.C.1.

**Wednesday, February 8, at 4 p.m.**  
Tea and Politics-up-to-date. First meeting of Session. Minerva Club, Brunswick Square.

**Friday, February 10th, at 5 p.m.**  
Organisation Sub-Committee at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

**Saturday, February 11th, at 10 a.m.**  
National Executive Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

**Saturday, April 28th.**  
Annual Conference.

##### PROVINCES.

1928.

**Thursday, January 5th, at 3 p.m.**  
West Walthamstow Labour Party, Women's Section, The William Morris Hall, Somers Road. Speaker: Miss Marian Reeves. Subject: "Equality for Men and Women."

**Friday, January 27th.**  
Ashford. Branch meeting. Mr. Toke on "Work of the Monks in Kent."

**Friday, February 24th.**  
Ashford. Branch Meeting. Nurse Scott on "Home Nursing."

**Friday, March 30th.**  
Ashford. Branch Meeting. Dr. Littledale on "Local Birds."

##### SCOTLAND.

**Saturday, January 14th, at 7.30 p.m.**  
Glasgow. Whist Drive in the Athenæum Restaurant (entrance Buchanan Street), with Cake and Cany Stall. Tickets from Miss Lenton, c/o Miss McLelland, 5, Hayburn Crescent, Partick, Glasgow.

##### OTHER SOCIETIES.

**Saturday, December 31st, 3-6 p.m.**  
Children's Carnival and Fancy Dress Ball at Hammersmith Palais de Dance, in aid of the Six Point Group. Tickets 2/6.

1928.

**Monday, January 2nd, at 3 p.m.**  
Association of Headmistresses Conference on "The Education of Women in India," in connection with the Four-and-a-half Colleges Appeal, in the Great Hall, University College, Gower Street.

**Wednesday, February 8th, at 8 p.m.**  
Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee. "King's Speech" Meeting in Caxton Hall, to decide Policy of Action. Chair: The Viscountess Rhondda. Speakers: Mrs. Abbot, Miss E. E. Froud, Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, Miss N. Stewart Parnell.

**Sunday, February 19th, at 11 a.m.**  
Hampshire House Club, Ravenscourt Park. Speaker: Miss F. A. Underwood on "The Life and Work of Josephine Butler."

#### WOMEN TAILORS.

What sounds almost too good to be true appears in the *Yorkshire Post*, as follows:—

##### "PROGRESS OF A PIONEER SCHOOL.

"Under a Leeds headmistress, Miss Loughlin, excellent progress is being made (says our London correspondent) by the recently opened pioneer trade school for teaching young women to make men's ready-to-wear clothing.

"The school is situated in Old Castle Street, near the eastern boundary of the City of London, and a first party of about 70 or 80 girls, between 14 and 16, have entered upon a long course of practical tailoring in all its branches, together with instruction in such matters as the geography of textile production, the economics of the purchase and sale of cloth, character of fabric, and factory conditions in the textile industries.

"The school has been established by the London County Council, which is spending something between £2,000 and £3,000 a year on its maintenance, with the co-operation of the Wholesale Clothing Manufacturers' Federation and the Tailors' and Garment Workers' Union of Leeds and London.

"Both the employers' and the employees' organisations have appointed panels of five members each to supervise and advise upon the work of the trainees, and these experts have generally formed a high opinion of the work that is being done."

#### WOMEN'S HUMOUR.

The *Birmingham Post* London Letter recently indulged in a spirited defence of woman, and forcibly rebutted the charge that women have no humour. The following are extracts from this pithy Letter:—

"In the past 20 years women have lived down a good many preconceived notions of their sex that had been held hitherto as almost undisputed truths. We have proved that we can stand as great, or greater, physical and mental strain than can men; that our courage in the face of danger is pretty well on a par with the masculine quality; that we do not lose our heads when faced with a sudden crisis to anything like the extent that we believed we did; and, finally, that we possess an unsuspected versatility in that we can adopt new work, new surroundings, or a new mentality. Whether the female has really evolved these and other qualities during the last two decades, or whether she always possessed them, but was given no opportunity to demonstrate them, it is hard to say. Generalisations on the sex have been a favourite verbal gambit of the male for centuries, and the currency of generalisations invariably argues a laziness of mind in the community."

"But lately there has been unearthed yet another, hoary and green with age. Apparently we still possess no humour. The reasons adduced for this charge are that women's papers have no 'humorous columns,' and that we do not patronise theatrical farces. Now it is as dangerous to define humour as it is to generalise upon women, for both are elusive, and by their nature cannot be pinned like a butterfly for scientific analysis. But one is constrained to inquire of a fair-minded public whether perusal of the average 'funny column' of ancient inanities, or attendance at the average farce as seen on the English stage, is really unmistakable proof of a sense of humour?"

#### EQUALITY POSSIBLE.

The *Belfast News Letter* reports a meeting of the Belfast Women Citizens' Union, in which the following occurs:—

"Speaking on 'Is Equality Possible Between Men and Women?' Miss Foggo, organising secretary of the Ulster Women's Temperance Union, said the answer was in the affirmative. Equality was not only possible, but it was also desirable and absolutely imperative if they were to keep their place in the sun. The foundation of all progressive civilisation, she contended, was built on the principle of equality of rights, and a denial of those rights was tyranny pure and simple. The legal subjection of women was tyranny of the worst sort, because it bore on the man, woman and child. Progressive civilisation was built up in the homes of the people, and they could not win it on the battlefield, in the factories, the universities, or the workshops, for each one of these represented but a phase of human life, while the home was the true sphere of life. 'The laws of necessity and need,' she added, 'are behind our demand for equality.' They were asking for equality of liberty, status, and opportunity. They all knew that man's respect, chivalry and understanding, never stood as high as they did to-day, because women were making a demand on their chivalry."

#### BRITISH COMMONWEALTH LEAGUE.

The British Commonwealth League has arranged a Luncheon at 17, Buckingham Street, W.C.2, on Friday, January 6th, at 1 p.m., in honour of our member, Miss D. Solomon, the Honorary Secretary, to welcome her return from South Africa, and in honour of Miss Eleanor Allen, D.Ps., to wish her good-bye on her sailing for Australia. Members are urged to book early. Places, 2s. each.

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