

THE VOTE,
DEC. 14, 1928.

STREET OFFENCES COMMITTEE REPORT.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1928

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

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XXX.—OUR WOMEN MAYORS.

COUNCILLOR MISS JUSTINS, MAYOR OF STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

The historic town of Stratford-upon-Avon, steeped though it is in the noble traditions of the past, has shown itself capable of keeping abreast of the times in the appointment of a woman to play the part of principal citizen. The international fame of the birthplace of the greatest poet the world has ever known, not only confers distinction on those who hold office, but throws unusually heavy demands on their time and resources.

Miss Justins, who was born at the celebrated Shakespeare Hotel—a 15th Century House, next door to the Town Hall, which receives notabilities from all parts of the world—on the death of her father took over the management and carried on the work of the establishment for twenty-five years. She retired in 1920 and was that year elected to the Town Council. With the exception of a year or two spent away from the town during her education and short visits to other countries, her life has centred in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Her election as Mayor is the realisation of an 'impossible dream' which she used to dream, when, as a child, she stood at the window of the Shakespeare Hotel to watch the procession go by to the church, and think how wonderful it would be to wear the insignia of office. Miss Justins' eight years' service on the municipal body has proved her a woman of marked ability. Her diligence and energy has won the admiration of her colleagues. She has done

splendid work on various committees, was Chairman of the Joint Hospital Committee and of the Committee set up to deal with the housing of the working classes. Her very considerable business experience renders her work extremely valuable from a practical point of view.

By virtue of her office, Councillor Justins becomes

the Chief Magistrate of the Borough, a Trustee of Shakespeare's Birthplace, a Governor of the Grammar School and of the Memorial Theatre. Many learned societies, associations, leagues and clubs visit Stratford-upon-Avon in the course of a year—all of which the Mayor is expected to welcome.

Miss Justins belongs to several dramatic societies, and has appeared on the stage more than once. Her interest in the arts greatly extends her usefulness as Mayor of a town which attracts so many illustrious visitors and which has had the good fortune to secure a woman Architect for its Memorial Theatre.

The very high standard she sets herself as Mayor should render her year of office of great benefit to the citizens of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Shortly after her election, Miss Justins received a letter from a prominent citizen of Boston, U.S.A., who stated: "To be elected Lord Mayor of London is a very great honour, but to be elected Lady Mayor of Stratford, with its imperishable connections with Shakespeare, is so much greater."



THE MAYOR OF STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

WOMEN'S HELP IN THE CHILDREN'S COURTS.

Speaking on December 6th, at the Minerva Club, on the subject of "Women's Help in the Children's Courts," Mr. Clarke Hall, the magistrate at Old Street Police Court, gave a brief history of the treatment of the young offender in this country. At one time the child who had done wrong, and who came before the Courts, was treated as an adult, so far as punishment was concerned. Later, he was presumed to be incapable of committing a crime until seven years old, and now from seven to 14 there is an inconclusive presumption to the same effect. It was on record, however, that a child had been hanged at the age of eight years for setting fire to a barn! Only a hundred years ago a child of seven had been sent to one of our prisons which at that time were dens of the foulest iniquity; indeed, mere children could be sent to prison until well on in the nineteenth century. Then came the Philanthropic Society which took boys charged with felony and looked after them, and this led to the establishment of reformatory and industrial schools, to the former of which children under 16 are sent, and to the latter children under 12 or 14. At first, children who were sentenced to such schools for a period of years were obliged to serve a month's hard labour before being passed on to the school. That plan had disastrous results. Only recently a man, 67 years of age, was charged in a police court, and it was found he had spent 40 years in prison. He first appeared in Court at the age of nine. He served a month's hard labour and then went to a reformatory for five years. At that time there was no after-care of prisoners. At 15 he came out and stole again. He then had six months' imprisonment. Before 16 he stole again. What else was there for him to do? He then had seven years penal servitude, and so on. Apart from moral waste, was not this method of dealing with a human being financial folly? That man's prison career had cost the country between two and three thousand pounds.

Discussing the causes of delinquency amongst young people, Mr. Clarke Hall stated that it had been said that 70 per cent. of the cases were due to bad home conditions. Sometimes bad companions were the cause, at others physical difficulties predisposed to delinquency. Then there were boys who got into trouble who had good parents and no physical defects. Is that altogether to be wondered at? People, learned people, had said that the one way to produce good citizens was to have plenty of games. If that were true, what about

the children in his district who were three miles away from any place where they could have organised games? Those children took off their coats, tied two together with a piece of string and played football in the streets. That could not be allowed, for the sake of the children themselves. What were they to do? The children could not go to bed at 4 o'clock. He knew of a case where two parents and five children lived in one room and all slept in one bed. A child of five years old for hours every day was kept under the bed, because there was nowhere else for him to be. That child was brought before him for being beyond the parents' control.

From every point of view the Children's Courts, which came into being in 1920, are most important. There were two dangers to be avoided—excessive harshness in dealing with young offenders and carelessness about bringing them into Court. No one liked bringing a child into Court, but for the child's sake he must be kept straight. By the Juvenile Courts Metropolitan Act, 1920, in addition to the Stipendiary there are to be two Justices, one of whom *must* be a woman. It was not stated that the other should be a man, and Mr. Clarke Hall thought it would often be a good thing if both were women. It was the business of this Court to find out the best way to deal with the children who came into Court. He did not much favour fines; often the parents could not pay them; and he had discarded birching as it was no deterrent and gave the child prestige among his companions. The best thing to do was to put the child on probation under a woman probation officer. That meant often that the whole family was put on probation. The probation officer had access to the child's home, saw the parents and the difficulties, and helped the mother to deal with the child.

Not all children could be treated in this way. Some had to be sent to industrial schools, and Mr. Clarke Hall thought that women who were interested in the matter might get in touch with the heads of those schools and sometimes write to some of the children. They were touchingly appreciative of such kindness.

Miss Marian Reeves, in presiding, said that it was a great privilege to hear Mr. Clarke Hall's views on this important subject. Mr. Clarke Hall was a magistrate who did not think that his whole duty consisted in judging people or children. He tried to understand their difficulties and to help them through.

A hearty vote of thanks was given to Mr. Clarke Hall at the close of the meeting.

THE MODERN ARGENTINE WOMAN.

By HERMINE HALLAM HIPWELL.

It is said, and rightly, that this is an age of transition, and swift, disturbing change, where the structure of society is concerned. Woman's position in the general scheme of things all the world over has been furiously questioned, attacked, defended and vindicated.

In Argentina, more properly speaking in Buenos Aires, the attitude of the general public—which, as in most Latin countries, one always expects to be masculine in character and outlook—towards woman has changed in a remarkable manner during the last fifteen years. From a creature supposedly ever at the beck and call of man, with no outside interests, save an occasional visit to the theatres, friends, or Mass, and a limited power of comprehension even of those matters which touch all women as mothers and wives, whatever their standing in life, the Argentine woman has suddenly developed into a woman to whom the world of sport and affairs is as well known as the intimate circle of the home.

It cannot be said that this change has been gradual, taking the country unawares, but rather that the Argentine woman, thanks to the many facilities afforded by ultra-modern life in a capital fully equipped to answer all its demands, has suddenly and forcefully taken her rightful place in the social order. For it is

an undisputed fact that in Argentina, even as in France, Spain, and Italy, though in these last two countries to a lesser degree, it is the woman who rules the family, and through the family, the whole social fabric. It is equally true that, until the time of the Great War, the influence exerted by the women of Argentina was mainly indirect. Now, however, they have become prominent in the world of affairs, executing in person that which before they had carried out by deputy. Their deputies were invariably the male members of the family, who, in spite of their Latin bravado, stood in awe of the masterful mother or grandmother ruling the house with the proverbial rod of iron—and ruling it far better than their sons or husbands or brothers could have done.

Legally, it is true, the Argentine woman is still in an inferior and wholly unfair position, and equal suffrage, though it has often been discussed, is still but the dream of a small group of idealists, whose only official support comes from the Socialist party in Congress. Indeed, where suffrage for women is concerned, *La Nacion*, the leading Argentine daily newspaper, in an excellently written, but wholly erroneous article, roundly declared a little while ago that the women of Argentina preferred not to have a vote, since from the safe sanctuary of their homes they could always rule

more effectively and efficiently than from the Council or the Senate. This may be an undisputed fact, which is doubtful, but it does not do away with, or in any manner remedy, certain flagrant wrongs, which will only be abolished when the women of the country are given full political rights. If the women were barred from the learned professions, if they did not hold high positions in the legal and medical, as well as in the educational, world, this attitude of a leader writer on the foremost South American daily would perhaps be logical, but, as this is far from being the case, his conclusions are both surprising and ludicrous.

Though the majority do not realise it, modern Argentina, with her vast progress, her tremendous possibilities, owes her present state of advance and her position as the leading South American Republic wholly to her women-folk. Unrecognised by the law

of the land, which still classes them with children and the physically and mentally unfit, the Argentine women of to-day have done a very great deal for the development, not only of culture, but also of the material well-being of a country which, officially, barely recognises their existence, denying them even the most elementary rights.

What the next twelve months will show can only be a matter of surmise. The country is on the eve of important political changes; the newly-elected President Irigoyen is a brilliantly clever man, fully aware of the position which, in spite of laws and their restrictions, the women hold in the public life of Argentina, and it may be possible that during this, his second term of office, he will see his way to extend to women, the full rights of citizenship of a very great and prosperous republic.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Mental Hospitals (Women Visitors).

SIR ROBERT NEWMAN (U., Exeter) asked the Minister of Health how many women patients of unsound mind are detained in borough or county mental hospitals in England and Wales where there is no woman member on the Visiting Committee; how many of these are detained in hospitals under the control of Councils who have no women members and are prevented by law from co-opting women on these committees and whether he intends to propose legislation making it compulsory that a certain number of women shall be appointed to serve on all county and borough mental hospital visiting committees where women are detained? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Information in regard to the first part of the question is not available. The point raised by my hon. Friend in the latter part of the question has been noted for consideration when legislation dealing with the subject is proposed.

Lock Hospital, Harrow Road.

MR. THURTLÉ (Lab., Shoreditch) asked the Minister of Health whether the Report of the Inquiry into the Lock Hospital, Harrow Road, has yet been submitted to him; and, if so, whether he proposes to publish it at an early date? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. The question of publication will be considered later on.

Woolwich Borough Council (Surcharge).

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE (Lab., Leicester, W.) asked the Minister of Health whether he has issued any instructions to the public Auditor in reference to equal pay for equal work for men and women; and on what grounds the public Auditor surcharged the Woolwich Borough Council for paying to women bath attendants and convenience attendants the same wages as to men with identical qualifications and the same hours? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. I understand that the Auditor made the surcharge referred to in the second part of the question on the grounds that the work done by women and men in the lowest manual labour grade was not equal, and was subject to different awards by the Joint Industrial Council concerned.

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that that answers the second part of the question, which refers, not to the lowest manual labour grade, but to those persons who have particular qualifications for particular work? Why does the Auditor deal with those particular persons in that way? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The Auditor's reason was exactly what I stated.

Juvenile Training Centres.

SIR ROBERT NEWMAN asked the Minister of Labour how many juvenile training centres have been established for boys and girls, respectively, in the mining areas; how many it is estimated will have to be established to

accommodate all the boys and girls out of work in those districts; and whether the Government has arrived at any decision as to how many it is intended to establish? SIR ARTHUR STEEL MAITLAND: At present in the distressed mining areas there are 26 juvenile unemployment centres for boys, accommodating over 3,000 boys at a time. Except in a few districts where the numbers available to attend do not warrant the establishment of a centre, or where a short waiting period is necessary, pending the extension of accommodation, all boys, at present registered as unemployed in these areas, are already provided for, and it is hoped to maintain this position. Fares are paid where necessary to enable boys from outlying districts to attend. Unemployed girls of 16 years of age and over are provided for in the home-craft training centres of the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment. There are 21 of these centres open at present in the distressed mining areas, accommodating over 300 girls at a time. The question of establishing juvenile unemployment centres for younger girls is being actively explored.

HOUSE OF LORDS REFORM.

WOMEN MUST COME IN.

Last Tuesday, in the House of Lords, the Earl of Clarendon moved:—

"That having regard to the preamble of the Parliament Act and to the resolution passed by this House on June 23rd, 1927, it is hereby resolved:—

1. That it is desirable that early steps should be taken to limit the number of members of the House, and to make suitable provision for an elective representation or nomination as would ensure to each political party a fair position in the House; and
2. That the following constitution of this House would in the opinion of this House fulfil these conditions:—
 - (a) 150 peers to be elected by proportional representation, or the cumulative vote in each Parliament by the whole body of peers to sit and vote in the House;
 - (b) 150 persons to be nominated by the Crown in proportion to the parties in the House of Commons in each Parliament, to sit for the life of the Parliament;
 - (c) The Crown to have the power to appoint a limited number of life peers in each Parliament."

In the course of his speech Lord Clarendon said: "If the legal bar preventing Peeresses in their own right from sitting in this House can be removed, and I hope it can be, it seems to me only right and fair that Peeresses in their own right should have a voice in the election of the 150 Peers who, if our proposals are accepted, will eventually form the nucleus of the New House; and I venture to suggest that it would be only fair that they themselves be eligible to appear and be represented among the 150 representatives."

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EDITORIAL.

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

REPORT OF THE STREET OFFENCES COMMITTEE.

In October, 1927, the Home Secretary appointed a Committee to "inquire into the law and practice regarding offences against the criminal law in connection with prostitution and solicitation for immoral purposes in streets and public places, and other offences against decency and good order, and to report what changes, if any, are in their opinion desirable." Its members were:—Mr. Hugh Macmillan, K.C. (Chairman), Sir Chartres Biron, Sir Leonard Dunning, the Bishop of Durham, Sir Henry Fairfax-Lucy, Miss S. Margery Fry, J.P., the Rev. R. C. Gillie, Mr. W. A. Jowitt, K.C., Lady Joynson-Hicks, Miss E. H. Kelly, J.P., Mrs. Ella Morison Millar, J.P., Mr. A. F. I. Pickford, Sir Joseph Priestley, K.C., Mr. H. W. W. Wilberforce, and Mrs. Wilson-Fox, the Secretary being Mr. R. L. Bicknell, of the Home Office. This Committee sat for the hearing of evidence on eighteen days in all, and issued its Report last Monday, a copy of which can be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C., for 1s.

The main specific recommendations contained in this Report are as follow:—

- (1) That the existing general and local legislation in England and Scotland relating to solicitation between the sexes be repealed.
- (2) That there should be substituted a simple enactment of general application, constituting it an offence for any person of either sex to importune a person of the opposite sex for immoral purposes in any street or public place.
- (3) That the expression "importune" be defined as referring to acts of molestation by offensive words or behaviour.
- (4) That it be made an offence for any person to frequent any street or public place for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation so as to constitute a nuisance, but that the evidence of one or more of the persons aggrieved be essential to a conviction.
- (5) That for the offences to be constituted in terms of our recommendations (2) and (4), the maximum penalty for a first offence be a fine of forty shillings, and that progressive penalties be imposed for second or subsequent offences, with a power of imprisonment without the option of a fine in the case of repeated offences.
- (6) That no change be made in the existing law regarding solicitation offences as between men.
- (7) That Police Orders relating to solicitation be revised to bring them into accord with our conclusions and recommendations.

The Committee accepts the principle that mere solicitation by itself should not be a criminal offence. It emphasises that the gravamen of the offence from the point of view of the criminal law resides not in its immorality, but in its interference with the rights of other persons, and came to the conclusion that the word "importune" is best suited to describe the kind of conduct with which the law should deal, but makes it clear that the term shall be construed as referring to acts of molestation by offensive words or behaviour. The Committee suggests that the present law might be amended to read somewhat, as follows:—

(1) Every person who, in any street or public place, importunes any person of the opposite sex for immoral purposes, shall be guilty of an offence. In this section the term "importunes" shall be construed as referring to acts of molestation by offensive words or behaviour.

(2) Any person who frequents any street or public place for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation so as to constitute a nuisance shall be guilty of offence:

Provided that no person shall be convicted of an offence under this section except on the evidence of one or more of the persons aggrieved.

The Committee favours the elimination of the expression, "Common Prostitute," by the consideration that the offence of importuning, regarded objectively (as the Committee thinks it should be), is the same whether the person who importunes is or is not a prostitute. It considers that there should be no specific references to either the character or the sex of the offender.

With regard to women police, although their employment is not included among the main specific recommendations, the Committee recognises that there is a special sphere of usefulness for women police, particularly in preventive work, and states that it is of the highest importance that women selected for this work should be of good education and standing, with knowledge and experience of the world, and should receive special training for this work. In a Memorandum appended to the Report, signed by Miss Fry, the Rev. R. C. Gillie, Miss Kelly, and Mrs. Morison Millar, the usefulness of women police is emphasised, and the employment of more women police is urged; but the signatories point out that the services of women police should not only be utilised in preventive work. Women police should be more generally employed, with powers of arrest, and should be charged with the supervision of women prisoners while in custody and also during Court proceedings.

The Women's Freedom League view is that the recommendations of this Report will not satisfy the general public because they are not sufficiently definite, and we foresee trouble between the police and the public if and when "importuning" is established as an offence. We differ entirely from the views of this Committee on the Public Places (Order) Bill, first introduced by Lady Astor in the House of Commons in 1925. This Bill asked that our present solicitation laws should be swept away, and that there should be a single enactment directed against any person wilfully causing annoyance in any street or public place to any person by words or behaviour, proceedings to be taken only on complaint by or on behalf of the party aggrieved. We stand by the provisions of that Bill, which we believe are the only sane, just, and safe methods of dealing with street offenders. The Committee's view is that the person alleged to have been annoyed will almost invariably refuse to give evidence. We do not believe it. We are convinced that if the general public, who use the streets and public places, were encouraged by the authorities to give evidence when they are so annoyed, they would respond to the appeal, for it is to the interest of the general public that there should be decency and order in our streets. Only last week, a well-known London magistrate had before him a youth charged with insulting behaviour to young women. The magistrate, when told by the police officer that the young women declined to come and give evidence, refused to convict the man, and described the conduct of the young women as "cowardly!" That is the right attitude, and the same epithet must be applied to men—we are told they are "all men"—who refuse to come forward and give evidence against a woman. To create a new offence in law, and to refuse to give the safeguards that the public want, will not help anyone. We say again that there must be no conviction of men or women for street offences unless the person said to have been annoyed, molested, solicited, or importuned, comes into Court to substantiate the charge. There could be quite simple, unequivocal legislation enacted on those lines.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POLICE.

December 10th.—**Mr. Stuart Deacon**, Stipendiary Magistrate for the City of Liverpool since 1910, previously at the Bar.

Judges' Rules.—There was an increase of voluntary statements since the War. He always made a point of satisfying himself as to their real voluntary nature, and the circumstances in which they were taken; he had occasionally ruled out statements when not satisfied. Sometimes a prisoner would begin to blurt out facts before police had time to caution him. He did not think police used their powers to any improper extent.

Statements.—Police should be well instructed and then trusted; in case of doubt, refuse to admit the evidence; any improper ordeal should make it inadmissible. It would be better to allow time to think over statement before signing it. It would be best for a statement, after a man had been charged, only to be taken before the officer in charge of the police station or the governor of the prison.

Liverpool had a decrease in serious crime. Felt sure there was no corruption of Liverpool police; last year there was one bad case of bribery, involving nine or ten constables.

Advice of Police to Plead Guilty.—He had never found this; could not believe it the practice. Police evidence was weighed and compared; he had rarely been unsatisfied. Does his best for the undefended prisoner; often asks him if he wishes a solicitor. The habitual offender was at no disadvantage; he thought police generous and fair to them.

Women Police.—They had none. Two ladies employed by the police take statements from children. Indecency and assault: statements from women and children should be taken by, or in the presence of, a trained woman; in the case of children, of a parent or guardian. This was generally done in Liverpool. It should be either a policewoman or a woman outside the Force, and the latter, he thought, might be best for children, who might be frightened of uniform or of a member of the Force.

Mr. Bertram C. Brough, Stipendiary Magistrate for the North Staffordshire District since 1909, previously at the Bar, stated that offences had increased, but serious crime diminished, in his district, even during the General Strike. On good terms with the miners. Crime was decreased all over the Midlands. He had very good relations between police and public. A needy ex-prisoner would approach the officer who had prosecuted him and ask for clothing or money. He thought his police showed increasing tact and vigilance in preventing crime. If the first duty of a constable was to prevent crime, he thought they were particularly successful in Staffordshire. Their Chief Constable valued his men for the cleanness of their districts, not for the number of their convictions.

Statements.—Verbatim best, including questions. It was undesirable and improper to question a prisoner upon his own case. He thought police powers were not generally used improperly. In some districts with much undetected crime, some police might get the idea that convictions might help their promotion. A case properly brought and acquitted does not reflect on police, but means only that sufficient evidence could not be brought. When a witness' personal character may be involved, it would dry up evidence to give a full warning of all possible results, but probably the judge or magistrate would caution him before he incriminated himself, or let himself in for a scaring cross-examination, as in the Savidge case. Where the accuracy of a statement taken by the police is likely to be called in question, it would be advantageous to take it before a magistrate, or in the presence of a probation officer, police court missionary, or by a shorthand-writer not in the police. It would be unobjectionable for the police to give a prisoner a written statement of the facts they had, but nothing should be said about them.

Women Police should be present in interrogations of women and girls by men police, especially in police stations, in sexual cases, etc., unless the mothers or adult relations or friends were present. Only existing alternatives were women probation officers or missionaries.

Complaints against Police.—He had known a few cases of untrue police evidence; in one case the officer, after finding it false, did not like to withdraw it.

December 11th.—**Mr. H. Riches, O.B.E.**, Chief Constable of the Middlesbrough Borough Police for 26 years, previously in the Metropolitan Police, at Norwich, etc., said that in his district offences had increased, chiefly from absence of parental control and idleness due to unemployment, while police were decreased from economy. The difficulty was met by the Police Telephone Box System, introduced in 1926. There were twenty-one boxes (population was 140,000), each a "miniature police station," on one of the beats, the headquarters of that constable, in telephonic communication with the Central Police Office, where a superior officer was always on duty to act at a moment's notice, with mechanical transport ready day and night, able to be on the scene within five minutes. The public had access to these telephones, and had quickly learnt to ring up the Central Office at once in any necessity. The beat man visited his box periodically, and rang up Central Office for any instructions. The public got immediate attention, and the police officer got more time to parade his beat and prevent offences. It seemed to him it would be a great advantage in the Metropolis, and would mitigate crime. Their relations with the public were excellent. Every complaint, however trivial, was gone into, and, unless he investigated it himself, was noted in a book.

Women Police.—A matron (untrained) was always on duty at the Central Police Station. The matron takes entire charge of women until they are bailed, discharged, or admitted to prison. No policeman ever comes near them after arrest. A Sub-Police Station was provided for the detention of women, with special cells and a private room for the matron.

Morality.—A prostitute renting a furnished house alone does not offend against the law. The public do not know this, and it sometimes gives rise to some charges of bribery and favouritism by the police.

Clubs.—Should be unrestricted right of entry by specially detailed police officers to all.

Information about Crime.—Police are dependent upon criminals and their associates, and this is paid for from a special small fund. Information can be obtained if money is spent, but not without, and the more that is paid for it, the more reliable it is. Information that cannot be got for 5s., might be got for 10s. All such information receives severe scrutiny; they have to take it for what it is worth.

The Commission is not meeting again till after Christmas.

WIT AND WISDOM.

"When the first man was forbidden to take what he wanted, he got a woman to steal it for him."—*Storm Jameson.*

HOW TO ESTABLISH YOUR FUTURE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE BY SETTING UP A RETIRING FUND.

Write or Telephone to—

MISS W. MARY NEW,
 (Women's Section)

SCOTTISH EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY

18, CORNHILL, E.C.3.

Phones: AVENUE 1672 and 2253.

WE REFRAIN FROM SAYING MORE.

Last Tuesday a woman was charged at Tower Bridge Police Court with assaulting a man Police-Constable and a woman Police-Sergeant, and the *Evening Standard* reports that the magistrate, Mr. Oulton, before sentencing the accused to four months for the woman, and two months for the man, made some extraordinary statements, among them:

"This case should be of significance to all those who are considering the employment of policewomen with the duty of arrest. Is it not anomalous that when, by the selection and training of our police force, it is at the highest level, its level should be lowered by the introduction of a weakening element? Men and women, drunk or sober, think twice about resisting arrest from a policeman. If to-day protection of women from danger be no longer of paramount importance, we may yet hesitate to place a policewoman in greater jeopardy than a policeman. In this case the policewoman was assaulted by a woman—a woman who was sufficiently combative to assault a policeman also. I suppose she was as dangerous as some men—probably more so with 150 convictions, five of which are for assault. At all events, it is fortunate that the policewoman could rely on help from a policeman. Some days ago I tried a woman who snatched a whistle from a policeman who was arresting her husband. If the officer, thus rendered unable to summon help, had been a woman, the result might have been disastrous. I have refrained from saying more, against my inclination to do so."

Why this upside-down view of facts? Why not congratulate the woman Police-Sergeant on having made a smart arrest of this woman with 150 convictions? After all, it isn't stated that the woman Police-Sergeant was hurt. Has Mr. Oulton never heard of ju-jitsu? If a policewoman has a similar training to a policeman can it not be understood that she is well able to take care of herself? We know a fair number of women, even without this special training, who would not at all mind running the policeman's usual risks. Women generally, repudiate this kind of "protective" handicap imposed so frequently by men to keep them out of jobs for which they know themselves quite suitable.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Woman Barrister's Successful Appeal.

Sentence on a man was reduced from six months to four months imprisonment at the London Sessions last week. Miss Stevenson, his Counsel, made an eloquent plea, explaining the circumstances of his case.

Woman Preaches in Chelsea.

Mrs. Janet Binns, M.A., wife of the Rev. J. B. Binns, Minister of the Markham Square Church, Chelsea, took her husband's place in the pulpit last Sunday. Mrs. Binns is taking a theological course with the intention of becoming ordained.

Lady Iveagh's Election Speech.

Lady Iveagh has just made her first talking film. It will form one of the series being prepared by the Conservative Central Office for the General Election Campaign.

Worked her way round the World.

Miss Violet Biddle, of Plymouth, has just returned home after working her way round the world. She has been two years on the tour, and by working in various capacities has earned sufficient to support herself and pay her expenses.

French Woman's Success.

Mlle. Bagnigon has achieved the distinction of being the first woman to occupy a Chair of Law in a French University. She has been appointed Professor of Law at the University of Rennes.

The First Cross-Country Race.

Mlle. Blanchette has won the women's first cross-country race of the season near Paris.

OUR BOOK REVIEW.

Religious Fanaticism. By Ray Strachey. Published by Faber and Ginger, Ltd. Price 7s. 6d. (Can be obtained from this office).

Last year Mrs. Strachey wrote an exceedingly interesting religious novel called "Shaken by the Wind," and in this book she gives us an account of the actual happenings on which her story was founded, taken from the papers of Mrs. Hannah Whittall Smith, her grandmother, together with an account of the many curious sects which flourished in America in the nineteenth century. Reviewing these, several interesting conclusions are drawn, which show that when the emotional nature is given free rein, and religion is divorced from wisdom, terrible errors arise, errors which become strangely contagious owing to the close relationship between religious and sex passion—and which lead, if persisted in, to a state of mind entirely divorced from common sense, which becomes practically insanity. "Sub-conscious impulses disguise themselves as inspiration, and mankind still seeks divine unction for its secret uncomprehended desires," when the forces of diseased imagination are let loose upon "ignorant and ill-educated people."

The first part of the book gives a short account of the various foreign religious sects, which were allowed immunity in America—Dunkers, Rappites, Shakers, Nothingarians—people who built without nails, and could not tolerate the harmless necessary hook—and many others. Prophecy, mysticism, celibacy, community life, all played their part in these sects, and all kinds of strange beliefs were deemed possible and safe. Often the communities were led by a woman, such as "Mother Anne," or Jemina Lee, or by a leader who demanded absolute obedience as a new Moses or a Messiah.

Camp meetings and revivals added fuel to the flames; Adventists and believers in the Millennium led their followers by strange and often absurd ways to a final disillusionment. Again the experiments of Owen and Fourier, the Brook Farm community immortalised by Hawthorne and Dr. Alcott's share in it, all were wrecked by the lack of balance and the ignoring of the frailties of human nature, as they attracted often worthless idle members to upset the plans of the more devoted. Most interesting to us here in England is the account of Lawrence Oliphant, his mother and wife, whose lives were wrecked by the prophet Harris, who managed to obtain complete control over their lives and fortunes, till the inevitable climax came, and the Oliphants were left, hopelessly ruined, morally and financially. To many of these misguided people sexual passion came to mean the only real spiritual life. It is a sad and terrible picture of human minds led astray by what should have been the holiest and happiest thing in life—a desire for divine guidance and close relationship to God in even the smallest events of life. The poor souls—or, as Mrs. Whittall says—and her racy commonsense is the only entertaining feature of the book—"the dear 'Saints,' were trying to be more than human; they tried to enter a region of which they knew nothing, and where they were, therefore, certain to be deceived." A strange record of men's folly, which so often does more to keep the Heaven we seek away from us, than do all our sins.
J. M. T.

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Monday, December 17th, 4 to 7.30 p.m.

"Little Sale" at the Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. All friends welcome.

Friday, January 18th, at 3.30 p.m.

"At Home" at Pitt's Restaurant (close Main Entrance Kew Gardens), Kew Green. Speakers: Mrs. Bigland on "Women at Work in the League of Nations," and Miss F. A. Underwood on "The Work of the Women's Freedom League."

Saturday, January 26th, at 10 a.m.

National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Saturday, April 13th, at 10 a.m.

Women's Freedom League Twenty-Second Annual Conference, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W.1.

PROVINCES.

Friday, December 14th, at 2.30 p.m.

Ashford Branch. Whist Drive at S.E.R. Billiard Room.

Wednesday, December 19th, at 3 p.m.

Bexhill Branch. Whist Drive at Albany Hotel.

Monday, December 31st, at 3 p.m.

Ashford Branch. Christmas Party at Hempstead Street Hall.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Saturday, December 15th, at 3 p.m.

Saturday Speech Club, at the Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Debate: "That Nature is more cruel than Man." Proposer: Mrs. Morris-Wood. Opposer: Mrs. Hilliard.

Monday, December 17th, at 8 p.m.

Speech Club Dinner, at the Minerva Club.

Tuesday, January 8th, at 3 p.m.

Women's Guild of the George Street Congregational Church, Croydon. Speaker: Miss F. A. Underwood. Subject: "Josephine Butler."

Tuesday, January 8th, at 8 p.m.

Fabian Society (Women's Group). Meeting at Caxton Hall. Lecturer: Miss Susan Lawrence, M.P. Subject: "Women in Industry."

Friday, February 8th, at 7.30 p.m.

National Council of Women. Meeting in the Music Room, Werneth Park, Oldham, by kind permission of Dame Sarah Lees. Speaker: Miss M. I. Neal. Subject: "Equal Opportunities for Women and Men."

Wednesday, February 22nd, at 8 p.m.

Character Builders Association, 45, Lancaster Gate, W.2. Speaker: Miss Marian Reeves. Subject: "Protective Legislation as it Affects Women."

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

MISS CRAVEN, The Howard League for Penal Reform, 23, Charing Cross, S.W.1., writes on our report in last week's VOTE of her evidence at the Police Commission:—

"There is just one point on which the report is misleading, and if you could draw attention to it in the next number I should be grateful. On page 394, under "Capital Punishment," the paragraph reads as if we accused the police of giving a man advice to plead guilty to murder. Of course that is quite inaccurate, and our comments on the advice to plead guilty had no connection with the paragraph on Capital punishment."

We are glad to insert the above, but do not think any of our readers would take Miss Craven's view of our meaning.—Ed.

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BRANCH NOTES.

BEXHILL.

We have commenced the Whist Drives at the Albany Hotel, thanks to the Misses Skinner who are kindly allowing the use of their room. We enjoyed last Wednesday's drive very much. We welcomed old and new friends. We intend to make these drives of some benefit to Headquarters, and although we cannot do very much we hope to be able to send an appreciable amount by the end of the winter. If we had a larger room we could do more.
W. L. WHITE.

SWANSEA.

Members of the Women's Freedom League who attended the meeting at 9, Sketty Road, on Wednesday evening, December 5th, enjoyed a treat in the address given by Mrs. Rowland Williams, on "The Growth of the Feminist Movement in Britain." Mrs. Williams dealt with her subject in a very comprehensive manner, tracing the development of the British Parliament, and showing the status of women in the country from the time of Boadicea up to the present. She revealed the startling fact that during mediaeval times women had the power to vote, but did not exercise it, and through the wording of the first Reform Bill they were deprived of this privilege which they have struggled to regain.

GLASGOW.

A very successful and interesting monthly meeting of the members and friends of the above Branch took place on Thursday, 6th December, in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, at 8 p.m. Miss Irwin, C.B.E., presided with her usual efficiency. The most interesting feature of the meeting was a lecture by Miss Nina Boyle entitled, "A Winter on the Volga." She gave a vivid description of the terrible sufferings of the people, and the awful conditions she met with during her winter's stay in Russia a few years ago. Questions were asked by Miss Murray, Mrs. Mosen, Miss McEwan and Mr. Alex. Curdie, and were answered very ably by the speaker. Councillor Miss Eunice G. Murray moved a hearty vote of thanks to Miss Boyle for her most interesting lecture, and to Miss Irwin for so ably presiding in the chair. A collection was taken and VOTES sold.

Chutney and Lavender.—Mrs. Mosen very kindly brought some Chutney and Lavender to sell in aid of the funds, and was successful in disposing of same. (Hon. Sec.) R. McDougall.

BRADFORD.

The name of the newly elected Vice-President of our Bradford Branch was mis-spelt in our last week's issue. It should be Mrs. Buttle.

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES.

A successful evening's entertainment was held at Victoria Hall, Bloomsbury Square, arranged by two members of the Minerva Club. The occasion was the production by Miss Jess Caird-Lothian of sketches, monologues and dances composed by Miss Marie Russell.

The programme showed exceptional versatility, containing much that was humorous and some pathos. There was an amusing monologue, "For Geoffrey's Sake," skilfully rendered by Miss Irene Hayr. "Sukie's Silk Scarf" was a clever sketch, while "A Bit of 'Eaven'" and "The Incoming Tide" were poems of real merit. The programme included two of Miss Russell's songs, but perhaps the outstanding feature of the evening was the beautiful dance introduced into the Greek Play "Phryne and the Sculptor," and the illustrative dance "In Love with Fortune," both pleasingly interpreted by students of the Fay Compton Studio. It is evident that in this particular line Miss Russell is likely to excel.

All the items gained much from the artistic production of Miss Caird-Lothian, and her own sketch "The Willow Tea Service" was a charming study of old world sentiment in a Scottish setting.

It is interesting to note that Miss Marie Russell is the daughter of the late Mr. Thomas Russell, D.L. of Ascog, sometime M.P. for Bute, who was Chairman of the Muirhead Trust for providing medical training for women in the days before the Universities would admit them. He was a great educationalist and founded an Agricultural College in Scotland.

THE NEW EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP.

On Saturday, 5th January, at 5.30 p.m., at the Central Hall, Westminster, Sir Michael Sadler, President of the English Section of the New Education Fellowship, will address a Public Meeting on "Examinations." This subject has a special importance at the present time, and the meeting is significant in view of the Examinations Enquiry which is being organised by the New Education Fellowship in preparation for the International Conference in Denmark next summer. Mrs. S. Platt, Visiting Lecturer to Training Colleges, is the English national representative for the Examinations Enquiry, and she will lay before the Denmark Conference the results of her investigation.

It is hoped that national committees will be formed after the Conference to continue in the different countries the work of investigation, and that the final results of all these deliberations will be gathered together in a concise form and presented to the responsible authorities in each country. Important results may be expected from this international memorandum on a problem that is uppermost in the minds of a great many educationists.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The Offices of the Women's Freedom League and the Minerva Publishing Company, Ltd., will be closed from Friday, December 21st, 5.30 p.m. until Thursday, December 27th, 9.30 a.m.

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NOTICES.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, December 16th, 1928, 3.30, Music. Lecture: Rev. J. H. Rushbrooke, M.A., D.D. 6.30. Rev. J. B. Binns, M.A. "Life's Supreme Heroism."

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