

THE VOTE

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

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 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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WHAT MR. BALDWIN SAID TO UNIONIST WOMEN.

"A democracy is incomplete and lopsided until it is representative of the whole people, and the responsibility rests alike on men and on women."

We give the following extracts from *The Times'* report of the Prime Minister's speech at the Albert Hall, on May 27th, to a meeting of women Unionists. These women included 2,000 delegates from all parts of the country, who had met in London for their Annual Conference:—

"There never has been a time since we entered office, or in the life of our great Party, when we have been more united in the Government, in the House of Commons, and in the country, more confident in the security of our judgment in the past and our hope for the future, than is the case to-day.

"I will say a few words about an old political subject—the franchise. . . . The step we propose to take is in harmony with the best traditions handed down by the best men we have had to lead us. It was Burke who said long before a popular franchise of any kind came into being: 'The art of representation is a progressive one.' Whoever does not realise that will be swept away. It can hardly be said that we have been unduly precipitate in extending the franchise, either to men or women. I stated, at the election of 1924, that the Unionist Party was in favour of equal political rights for men and women. In my view, there are one or two things we should all remember. Sex is no longer a disqualification. The principle was conceded in 1918. So it is not unfair to say that the onus lies on the opponents of an extension of the franchise to say why the arbitrary age of 30 should remain. Mr. Bonar Law himself said in 1922: 'I have been a consistent supporter of women's franchise, and even at the time that the Franchise Bill of 1918 was passed, I felt that the discrimination in age between men and women should not be permanent. I think so still.'

"There is another Bill, or, rather, Act of Parliament, that I have not seen quoted, the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act of 1919. Under that Act any woman—it does not say whether she is a 'flapper' or not—may practise as a solicitor or a barrister or a doctor, or enter the Civil Service or the police, and we know many women not unsuccessful in trade or business. Is there anything unfair, foolish, illogical, in saying that women who are qualified in any of these ways by law are fit to vote? A woman of 30 may serve on a jury, she

may be a doctor of medicine, she may give a death certificate, she may decide on a question of life or death where an operation may take place, but there are people who say she is not fit to vote! That is rather difficult to defend in public. It is said there are more women than men if they all had the vote. That is quite obvious. There is no point in the argument unless you believe that the possession of the vote is the beginning of a sex war. No one claims that, and the same argument has been used on every occasion when the franchise has been extended, to suit the case. At one time, 'The poor are in the majority, they will swamp the rich.' At another time, 'The uneducated are in the majority, they will swamp the educated.' Every attempt to equalise, to make fair that great democratic basis on which we rest has been met by the same kind of arguments repeated *ad nauseam* in a hundred forms to try and impede, to postpone the inevitable reform. In all the Dominions, except South Africa, where there is no woman's vote, in the United States of America—that is to say, in practically all the countries inhabited by the English-speaking peoples—the full franchise from 21 is in force.

"I think perhaps the most foolish—I was going to say of the arguments, I merely say of the observations—which have been made against the proposed change is the inclusion of all working women, the professional women that will be included in any extension, under the generic term of 'flapper.' The figures have been quoted over and over again that the extension of the age to 21 means 5,000,000 more votes, that nearly 2,000,000 of those will be women over 30, who, owing to the peculiar nature of the existing election laws, have so far not been able to get on the Register, that something like 1,750,000 are between the ages of 25 and 30, and that the rest belong to that unhappy age from 21 to 25. We are told that there is a great deal of silliness among young people. I remember hearing that when I was young, and, of course, it is true. There always will be, but, even if we do not like the silliness of 21, it is vastly less offensive than the silliness of middle age, and the silliness of middle age is far less offensive than the silliness of senility. I am quite aware that there is a strong feeling, which has shown itself

in many of your associations, that there should be a franchise for both sexes at the age of 25. I can quite understand the feeling, and it may well be that were a Government giving the franchise to-day to the people of this country for the first time that would be a proposal well worth thinking of. I will just put this. Let me put it to any provincial candidate at the next election. You will be asked: 'Are you in favour of a man having the vote at 21 or not?' He will be a bold man who will stand up and say, 'I am not.' He will find it politically, in my view, an impossible position to maintain. 'Twenty-one' would immediately be taken as the slogan of both the other Parties, and to take away a franchise centuries old in a democratic country is a thing which, in my opinion, is not practical politics. I, for one, not only look with no apprehension at the enfranchisement of both sexes at the same age, I welcome it.

"I believe that a democracy is incomplete and lopsided until it is representative of the whole people, and that the responsibility rests alike on men and on women.

"I have perhaps not a complete and profound confidence in any feminine logic, but I have it in feminine instinct. There is a false logic abroad to-day full of fallacies, which deceives many men, but it will never deceive women's instinct."

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Woman Wins Newdigate.

The Newdigate Prize for English Verse, founded in 1806 and considered as one of the highest Oxford honours, has this year been gained by Miss G. E. Trevelyan, of Lady Margaret Hall, the first woman to attain it. This honour follows the opening, only in 1920, of all degrees (except theology) to women under the same conditions as men.

Woman President of Head Teachers.

At its 30th Annual Conference, the National Association of Head Teachers elected a woman, for the first time in its history, to the office of President. Miss J. W. Gibb, headmistress of Clint Road Council School, in Liverpool, and well known for fine educational work in Lancashire, is this first President.

First Woman High Steward.

The Town Council of Colchester have elected Lady Cowdray to succeed the late Lord Cowdray as High Steward. Lady Cowdray was the only woman Freeman of Colchester, and, owing to the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, becomes eligible for the post of High Steward. She is the first woman to be so elected.

A Royal Favour.

Her Majesty the Queen will open Crosby Hall on July 1st, thus giving additional interest to an already important ceremony. Crosby Hall is destined to give hospitality to research students of all nations working in London.

Freewoman of Colne.

Miss Christina Hartley, formerly Mayor of Southport, has had conferred upon her the Freedom of the Borough of Colne, in recognition of her services to the town.

Official Chaperones.

Under the new scheme for officially appointing women to travel with girl emigrants from Britain to Australia, six women are announced as having been appointed: three Australian, two English, and one Scots.

Successful Woman Veterinary Surgeon.

The Williams Memorial Prize, the highest award of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, goes this year, for the first time, to a woman student, Miss I. L. Roberts, University of Liverpool.

Invitation to Miss Violet Markham.

Chesterfield has invited Miss Violet Markham to allow herself to be nominated for the Mayoralty of the town.

International Women Suffrage Alliance.

Miss Annie Furnhjelm, President of the Finnish Auxiliary since 1906, has resigned her office, and is succeeded by Miss Bertha Tabelle, Town Councillor of Helsingfors.

Woman Scientist's Discovery.

It is reported from Paris that a woman scientist has discovered that lead, apparently after exposure to the rays of the sun, regains radio-active properties. She is continuing research in the hope of finding the mechanism of this change.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTES.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING.

This year's annual meeting of the National Federation of Women's Institutes is remarkable for two things: one, that the Federation is now financially self-supporting; and the other, the enormously widened range of subjects discussed. Having, through the years, got the measure of their own villages, the women of the Institutes are realising their part in the nation's life, and will, doubtless, come to realise also their international part. The subjects on which resolutions were brought forward and on which keen discussion took place included the better provision of telephones in rural areas, pollution of the sea by oil from ships, public health work, safety on the roads, attracting girls of school-leaving age to Institute membership, Poor Law reform and disfigurement of country scenery. The Federation used, officially, to bar politics, which was defined as including anything concerned with legislation of a possibly controversial type. A glance at the above list will show that the interests and activities of the rural-dwelling woman are not to be restricted in any way except by herself.

BOOK REVIEW.

VILLAGE LIFE IN 1927.

"The Death Watch." By Michael Cape Meadows. (Robert Holden & Co.) Price 7s. 6d. (Can be obtained at this Office.)

The writer of this book knows his village, and writes with the force and conviction of one who looks below the surface and is not afraid to speak the truth. Many of us will shrink at hearing such revelations of life in our fair countryside, and Mr. Michael Cape Meadows reminds us in many ways of Zola and Tchekov, so merciless is his realism, with this difference, that through the darkness of tragedy and horror the stars still shine. He has a high ideal of morality and things spiritual which live too in the village of Stanbrook side by side with the gross animalism, the unbridled lust, the superstition and witchcraft so little touched by nearly 60 years of compulsory education.

The Rector of the parish, conscious of the secret corruption around, denounces it publicly; the village takes its revenge, and one reads with horror of the criminal assault on the little niece at the rectory and her subsequent death through shock. No punishment seems too bad for these human satyrs (men we cannot call them), and yet how seldom are they punished. Over these deeds of darkness hangs the black darkness of the countryside. Only too often women sitting on the Bench and jury, convinced of the guilt of the prisoner in the dock, have acquiesced unwillingly in his discharge. "There is not sufficient evidence," above all, "identity cannot be proved," and the half-insane brute, more dangerous far than a man-eating tiger, goes forth free again to work his wicked will on youth and innocence.

Women see red facing such horrors, and it is well that such things should be brought to the light of day. It may be that modern science and the study of psychology may recognise these abnormal beasts—lunatics rather than criminals—and deal with them in time, our Courts of Justice at present fail to cope with the horror. MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON, J.P.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Women Franchise.

MR. BECKETT (Lab., Gateshead) asked the Prime Minister when it is intended to introduce the proposed Suffrage Bill; and when it is likely to become operative? MR. CHURCHILL (Chancellor of the Exchequer): I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Prime Minister on April 13th, in reply to a question by the hon. Member for Leicester, West, to which he has nothing to add. MR. BECKETT: Does the right hon. Gentleman not think that a concession of this kind is much more valuable if it is done graciously and swiftly? MR. CHURCHILL: I do not think I am called upon to express any opinion upon that. VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Plymouth): Is it not a fact that a great many people are disappointed? MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have already called the next question.

Autumn Session.

MR. CLYNES (Lab., Plating) asked the Prime Minister whether he can give information as to the duration of the Autumn Session? THE PRIME MINISTER: I regret to say it will be necessary for the House to sit in the autumn, in continuation of the present Session. In other words, we shall adjourn and not prorogue. I cannot yet, of course, say the date of the adjournment for the summer, but I hope that we may be able to make such progress with business that it will be possible to adjourn about the end of July. To a further question, asked by MR. BUCHANAN (Lab., Gorbals), the PRIME MINISTER said: I cannot make any statement about business yet. I hope that, shortly after Whitsuntide, it may be possible to say what will be undertaken, in view of the alteration of the time of the sitting of the House.

Girls (Probation).

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE (Lab., Leicester, West) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, where there is no woman probation officer appointed by the Court, girls accused of offences quite other than sex offences are sometimes placed under the supervision of the superintendent of a local Rescue Home, although not being required to reside in it; and whether he will take steps to secure that this practice is discontinued? CAPT. HACKING (Under-Secretary, Home Department): If the hon. Member will send me further particulars of the cases he has in mind, my right hon. Friend will be glad to consider the matter.

Women Doctors.

COL. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark) asked the Home Secretary whether there have been any women police doctors appointed in the Metropolitan police area? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: No women have been appointed to these posts.

Board of Education.

MR. HARRIS (Lib., Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the President of the Board of Education what is the constitution of the Board of Education at the present time; and how many times has the Board met during the lifetime of the present Government? LORD EUSTACE PERCY: The Board consists of a President, the Lord

President of the Council (unless he is appointed President of the Board), His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, the First Commissioner of His Majesty's Treasury, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Board has not met during the period referred to, nor have I any record of a meeting of the Board. MR. HARRIS: Does not the noble Lord think the time has arrived when the Board that is responsible for the administration of education should be done away with, and that he should assume personal responsibility and get the status of Minister of Education? Would it not be more suitable? LORD E. PERCY: That is a matter of opinion, but I do not think the hon. Member need be very much alarmed at the antiquated forms under which some of our business is carried on. SIR HARRY BRITAIN (U., Acton): Does it matter what he is called as long as he does his job?

Consultative Committee, Board of Education.

Replying to a further question by MR. HARRIS, LORD EUSTACE PERCY said that this Committee consists of 21 members, of whom not less than two-thirds must be persons qualified to represent the views of universities and other bodies interested in education. The following are the names of the present members, with the dates of their appointments:—SIR W. H. ADAM, C.B.E., D.Mus. (Chairman), July, 1922; SIR GRAHAM BALFOUR, LL.D., October, 1926; PRINCIPAL ERNEST BARKER, LL.D., D.Litt., July, 1922; MR. W. A. BROCKINGTON, O.B.E., July, 1926; MISS E. R. CONWAY, C.B.E., July, 1926; MR. H. W. COUSINS, M.Sc., December, 1922; REV. D. H. S. CRANAGE, D.Litt., F.S.A., July, 1922; MR. EVAN T. DAVIS, July, 1926; MISS LYNDA GRIER, July, 1926; MISS FREDA HAWTREY, July, 1926; ALDERMAN SIR PERCY JACKSON, LL.D., July, 1922; MR. F. B. MALIN, July, 1926; MR. A. MANSBRIDGE, D.Litt., LL.D., July, 1924; MR. A. J. MUNDELLA, July, 1922; MISS E. M. TANNER, July, 1924; MR. R. H. TAWNEY, July, 1924; ALDERMAN S. TAYLOR, July, 1924; MR. T. M. TAYLOR, C.B.E., October, 1926; MR. H. WARD, C.B.E., July, 1926; ALDERMAN W. C. WATKINS, July, 1924; MR. J. A. WHITE, M.B.E., July, 1924; with MR. R. F. YOUNG (Board of Education) as Secretary.

Fourteen subjects have been referred to the Committee since its establishment. The present terms of reference are: (1) To inquire as to the selection and provision of books for public elementary schools and to make recommendations for the improvement of their quality and supply; (2) to inquire and report as to the courses of study suitable for children (other than children in infants' departments) up to the age of 11 in elementary schools, with special reference to the needs of children in rural areas.

The Committee is established by statute for the purpose of advising the Board of Education on any matter referred to it by the Board, but it is open to the Committee to make suggestions both as to the subjects of major importance to be referred to them, and also as to subjects of minor but more immediate importance which might form the subject of discussion between them and myself and officers of the Board. Advantage has been taken, and will, I hope, increasingly be taken, of the opportunities thus afforded of securing close contact between the Committee and the Board.

ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH BOARDS OF CONTROL.

Lunacy and mental deficiency in England and Wales are dealt with by the Board of Control, whose headquarters are in Victoria Street, London, S.W., and in Scotland by the General Board of Control, with headquarters in Edinburgh.

The Board of Control consists of a Chairman, Sir F. J. Wills; three unpaid Commissioners—Sir Leolin Forester Walker, K.B.E., M.D., Sir Marriott Cooke, K.B.E., M.B., and Miss R. Darwin; and seven paid Commissioners—S. J. Fraser Macleod, K.C., Lt.-Col. B. T. Hodgson, C.M.G., C. H. Bond, C.B.E., D.Sc.,

M.D., F.R.C.P., A. Rotherham, M.B., Hon. H. C. Bailey, Mrs. E. F. Pinsent, C.B.E., and R. Cunyngnam Brown, C.B.E., M.D.; a man Secretary, three men and two women Inspectors.

The General Board of Control consists of one Commissioner, who is also Chairman, Lt.-Col. Sir Arthur Rose, D.S.O.; one Legal Commissioner, Sheriff J. R. N. Macphail, K.C.; two Medical Commissioners, Hamilton C. Marr, M.D., and J. P. Sturrock, M.D.; three Deputy-Commissioners, H. F. Watson, M.D., F.R.S.E., Kate Fraser, M.D., and George H. R. Gibson, D.S.O., M.D. There is also a man Secretary.

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WOMEN SPECIALLY HONOURED?

On opening our papers last Saturday, we read that "Women are specially honoured in the King's Birthday List," "The Birthday Honours List is chiefly remarkable for the awards to women," etc. The following analysis of the Honours List certainly shows that a few more women than usual appear in the List, but the List itself is noticeably longer than previous ones, whereas women again have had no distinguished honours conferred upon them, merely the lower-grade ones, and those in ludicrously smaller numbers than the men recipients.

Two men, but no women, receive a peerage; one man, but no woman, a Privy Councillorship; and six men, but no woman, baronetcies. Fifty-one men receive knighthoods. The Order of the Bath is not conferred on any woman, but two men receive the G.C.B.; eight men the K.C.B.; and 20 men the C.B. The Order of Merit is bestowed on one man alone. The Countess of Lytton is admitted to the Order of the Crown of India, but no woman has the Royal Victorian Order, whereas two men receive the G.C.V.O.; four men the K.C.V.O.; five men the C.V.O.; and four men the M.V.O. The Imperial Service Order is bestowed upon 14 men in the Home Civil Service and three men in the Indian Civil Services, but on no woman. Two women receive the Royal Red Cross (Second Class)—Miss Emily De La Hoyde, matron, Temporary Nursing Service, and Miss Catherine Annie Waugh, nursing sister, Indian Temporary Nursing Service, in recognition of the special devotion and competency displayed by them in their nursing duties with the British forces in Iraq. No woman is the recipient of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, but the G.C.M.G. is bestowed upon four men; the K.C.M.G. on five men; and the C.M.G. on 20 men.

When we come to the Order of the British Empire, Princess Mary, Viscountess Lascelles has the G.B.E. bestowed upon her, together with Dame Nellie Melba; six men also receive a similar honour. The D.B.E. is bestowed upon Lady Antrobus, Hon. Secretary of the Overseas Nursing Association, and upon Miss Emily Penrose, M.A., late Principal of Somerville College, Oxford; but the K.B.E. is bestowed upon 20 men. One woman, Miss Joanna Cruickshank, matron-in-chief, Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service, receives the C.B.E., while 70 men are the recipients of a similar honour. Seven women have the O.B.E. bestowed upon them—Mrs. Charlotte Elizabeth Ferguson-Davie, M.D., in recognition of services in the Straits Settlements; Mrs. Katherine Hyde Bourne, in recognition of public and social services in Jamaica; Miss Maud Mary Blakely, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service; Mrs. Elizabeth Miriam Burgwin, for services to education; Miss Eliza Grace Musgrove, matron of the Devon County Mental Hospital; Miss Elizabeth Sanday, woman superintendent, Accountant-General's Department, General Post Office; and Miss Ethel Steel, M.A., lady principal, Royal School for Officers' Daughters, Bath; but there are 159 men recipients of the O.B.E. One hundred and ninety-nine men are given the M.B.E., compared with 23 women—Miss Charlotte Pidsley, principal of the Annie Walsh Memorial School, Freetown, Sierra Leone; Sister Winifred Geyde, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Nursing Service; Mrs. Millicent Amor, headmistress, St. Pancras Church Girls' School; Miss Kate Blakely, accounting clerk and lady superintendent, Imperial War Graves Commission; Sister Cope-land, Kent County Mental Hospital; Miss Violet Cottell, superintendent, Secretary of State's Clerical

Staff, Foreign Office; Miss Mary Cudworth, member of the York, Selby and District War Pensions Committee; Mrs. Flora Jefferies, member of the Southend-on-Sea War Pensions Committee; Miss Sarah Lovell, head nurse, London County Mental Hospital, Claybury; Miss Mildred Lowe, superintendent, health visitor, and inspector of midwives in Warwickshire; Miss Joan Mitchell, higher executive officer, Ministry of Health; Miss Annie Newman, head nurse, London County Mental Hospital, Horton; Miss Mildred Paget, clerk in the Foreign Office; Miss Henrietta Peeke, headmistress, Church Girls' School, Hadleigh, West Suffolk; Miss Gaskell Seed, superintendent health visitor, Manchester; Miss May Smith, M.A., general secretary, Official Medical History of the War; Miss Vera Paton-Smith, controller of women's staff, General Staff, War Office; Miss Frances Stevenson, chief superintendent of typists, Board of Customs and Excise; Miss Hilda Conquest, private secretary to Financial Adviser, Egyptian Government; Miss Agnes Gibson, headmistress of Scottish School for Girls, Alexandria; Miss Harriet Lassell, matron of Kas-el-Aini Hospital, Cairo; Lady Edith Heald, Rangoon; and Mrs. Helen King, Bengal.

The British Empire Medal for meritorious service has been bestowed upon 27 men and one woman—Miss Elizabeth Woods, chief officer, Holloway Prison. The Order of the Indian Empire has been conferred upon 26 men, but on no woman; the Star of India on two men, but no woman; the Kaisar-i-Hind Medal on four men and three women—Miss Ethel Douglas, M.B., B.S., medical officer in charge of the Kinnaird Women's Hospital, Lucknow; Mrs. Mary Ruddle, Madras; and Miss Rachel Piggott, Zenana Mission, Hyderabad, Sind, Bombay.

One man, a Nonconformist minister, is added to the Order of Companions of Honour. Why should not Miss Maude Royden have received a similar honour? The important honours received by men are "for political and public services." Have women not rendered important political services to the Party in power during recent years, and are there no women mayors, or women chairmen of local governing bodies who have rendered important public services? Has not Mrs. Willson, who in five years will have built 1,000 houses at a price of just over £400 each, performed a valuable public service? Why should not Mrs. Elliott Lynn have received adequate recognition for her flying achievements? We are also convinced that a number of women who have received minor honours in the present List would, had they been men, have had very much more important honours bestowed upon them—their achievements would have been rated at a much higher value. We once again affirm that the State should act impartially as between its men and women citizens, and we protest against all the more important honours being reserved for men, while women are the recipients only of minor and paltry recognition.

MANCHESTER'S WOMAN POLICE DOCTOR

The *Liverpool Echo* reports that the post of the woman police doctor appointed by the Manchester Watch Committee will not be a whole-time one, but will be advertised at a retaining fee of £50 a year, with a fee of 10s. 6d. for each attendance. The appointment will be the first of its kind in Manchester, where, in the ordinary way, six doctors are retained for police work. The Chairman of the Manchester Watch Committee said that in police work it was desirable to have a woman doctor, as there were 22 women employed in various departments, and there were also cases where women and children had to be examined by doctors. The Deputy-Chairman of the Liverpool Watch Committee told the *Echo* that the matter had not been considered in Liverpool. They had a full-time police medical officer in Liverpool, and he added that there never had been any demand for a lady doctor for the police, and it was only cranks who would ask for one. Liverpool evidently needs women on its Watch Committee.

EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN.

American Women Voters Congratulate British Suffragists.

Lady Rhondda (Chairman of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee) has received the following cable from Miss Mabel Vernon, Secretary to the National Woman's Party, Washington:—

"We congratulate you, your fellow-workers, and all British women, especially those to be enfranchised, on success of brilliant campaign shown by Baldwin's announcement. All women gain by your achievement. Hope you secure speedy, effective action by Government."

The following reply has been sent by Miss Beaumont, Hon. Secretary to this Committee:—

"Miss Vernon,
"National Woman's Party.

"DEAR MADAM,—At a meeting, held on May 17th, I was instructed, on behalf of the above Committee, to write expressing our thanks to the National Woman's Party for your kind and appreciative cable.

"While sharing with you and all feminists in the satisfaction of having obtained from the Prime Minister the promise of an Equal Suffrage Bill next Session, we yet realise clearly that the victory is not yet won. A clamorous campaign of opposition has been launched, both amongst Members of Parliament and in the constituencies of this country; and it will only be by hard work and vigorous counteraction that this opposition can be met and overcome. We believe that public opinion is ripe for this long-delayed measure of justice, and, while recognising that sex antagonism arising from fear, prejudice and mistrust will seek to defeat our aim, we earnestly hope for a victory this year. Such a victory will not be won without the united efforts of all who care for the Women's Movement, and we greatly value your good wishes.

"Yours faithfully,
"FLORENCE M. BEAUMONT."

Equal Franchise Resolution.

At a meeting of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, held at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1, on May 31st, the following resolution was passed unanimously, and a copy sent to the Prime Minister. Lady Rhondda was in the Chair:—

"That this meeting of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee (22 affiliated organisations) notes with satisfaction the Prime Minister's unequivocal advocacy of Equal Franchise in his speech to the Unionist Women's Organisation on May 27th, but regards with some anxiety the suggestion made in certain quarters that the new Session be postponed till next year, and, in view of the short time remaining for effective action during this Parliament, urges the Prime Minister to adhere to his original intention of starting the new Session this autumn, and to introduce the Equal Franchise measure in November."

Trafalgar Square Demonstration.

At the same meeting, it was decided to hold a Trafalgar Square Demonstration for equal voting rights for men and women, on Saturday, July 16th, at 5 p.m. Banners and flags of the old suffrage days will be well in evidence, and bands and community singing will enliven the proceedings. Thirty speakers will take part in the Demonstration, including old and young suffragists.

Open-air Campaign.

In the meantime, open-air campaigns in support of Mr. Baldwin's pledge to women are taking place in the country, and, in London, weekly open-air meetings are being held in Hyde Park and Regent's Park; on Clapham Common; at Highbury Corner; and at the White Stone Pond, "Jack Straw's Castle," Hampstead Heath, etc.

INDIAN IDEALS OF WOMANHOOD.

By PRINCIPAL M. T. VYAS, M.A. (London).

(From "New India" of May 11, 1927.)

Education is being increasingly recognised as the most important, constructive and moulding factor in the lives of people, societies and nations. We should seek in education the ultimate solution of all problems that confront society. India has to realise this more and more, if her future is to be in any sense worthy of the glorious ideals of her past, and the more so when she is passing through a period of transition. It is with deep regret that one has to draw the attention of Indians to the appalling lack of education among their women. India's ancient glory was, without exaggeration, in a great measure due to the place that woman held in ancient Indian society. She held a definite place in the family, society and nation, and shared their common life. She was indispensable in all activities, whether of the family or in the larger sphere of the community; no religious rite was complete without her participation, and her advice and co-operation were always essential to man in the discharge of his duties. It is necessary for us to take a general survey of the women of Ancient India, their position and culture, for as Herbert Spencer, the great apostle of individual freedom, has rightly said, it is the position of women in society that is the test of the civilisation of a people. It is in the women of a nation that we should seek for its soul. The best of India's civilisation, her culture, her spirit of self-sacrifice, of harmony, beauty and art—where are these to be found but in the women of India to-day? In spite of the lack of education, do not the women of India represent some of the best traits which made India once so famous? The very names of those great women of Ancient India are still an inspiration to the aspiring youth of India. Let us consider some of them here.

What was woman in the Vedic period of great literature, the period of the Upanishads? Mr. Keay admits that "the position of the women of the Aryan invaders of India was one of authority and honour, and marriage, sometimes, took place by free choice of man and maid. The custom of infant marriage and enforced widowhood were not prevalent amongst the Aryans of the Vedic times. The authorship of some Vedic hymns is ascribed to women, and in the deep discussions on the philosophical truths which are related in the Upanishads, women are mentioned as taking part. Thus Gargi joins in the discussion, and Maitreyi, wife of Yagnavalkya, was conversant with the Brahma idea, and heard from her husband philosophical doctrines. The celebrated conversation in the Upanishad, between Maitreyi and Yagnavalkya, shows what intellectual and spiritual comrades they were. It also shows the mind of the ideal woman and wife, seeking after the Highest, the Goal of life.

In the Buddhist period, we find that the cause of women's education received a great impetus. Buddhism did not recognise any distinction of sex, either in secular or spiritual life. Women were entitled to monastic life as much as men. The Buddhist Viharas were full of learned men and women, who carried on the educational work in the broad sense of the term. They became missionaries of their faith. Sangamitra, the daughter of the great Asoka, went to Ceylon, and with the help of the king, Devanampiya-Tissa, founded a nunnery there. We have a noble instance of the part played by a woman in the fields of philosophy and religion in the philosophical discussion between Mandanamishra and Shri Shankaracharya. Both were profound scholars. Shankaracharya, the greatest Indian philosopher, it is said, took an oath that he would become Mandanamishra's pupil if he were defeated by him in the discussion. Mandanamishra similarly declared that, if he lost, he would give up family life and be the disciple of Shri Shankara and learn wisdom at his feet. Sarasvati (or Bharati), wife of Mandanamishra, was chosen to judge. The contest lasted six months, and at the end Sarasvati declared her husband to have lost the case,

and Mandanamishra became a disciple of Shri Shankara according to the terms of the contest. Sarasvati, as an ideal wife, followed her husband, and she, too, accepted Shankara as her Guru. In the great Digvijayas (spiritual conquests) of the four corners of India, Sarasvati, it is known, was his great helper. The name of Lilavati, the daughter of Bhaskaracharya, is familiar to students of Indian mathematics. The father educated the daughter in philosophy and mathematics, after she had become a widow early in life. The work "Lilavati" bears witness to her accomplishments.

"THE WOMEN ARE WONDERFUL."

A survey of daily, evening and weekly London and Provincial papers during the months of April and May, 1927, gives point to the war-time saying, "The women are wonderful." And indeed they are. They have shown themselves to the journalistic mind as everything at once. To begin with, we get a few general pronouncements:—

"We can see no reason for supposing that the addition of these 5,000,000 women, over and under thirty, to the voters' rolls will debase the electorate in any way."

"Votes of 'flappers' could not by any possibility reduce political discussion to a lower level than at present."

"Nothing could be more injudicious and mischievous than the proposal of the present Cabinet."

"Well may several members of the Cabinet and others as well hold up their hands in holy horror at the idea of petticoat Government."

Then we have a selection, in which a very high opinion is shown:—

"Girls of 21 are just as capable of exercising the franchise as boys of 21."

"The more women who had the vote, the better."

"At 21 women are 'older' and more mature in judgment than men of the same age."

"Everyone knows that a girl of 21 is much older in mind than a boy of the same age."

"That a girl of 21 is less qualified to be the possessor of a vote than a man of the same age on the score of mental equipment would not be easy to prove."

"It was, in fact, wholly illogical to impose upon women a qualification different from that imposed upon men."

"Most of the women between 20 and 30 earn their own living, and many occupy important positions in the business and professional world, so that the argument of frivolity hardly applies."

"The young women of the present day have reached a high standard of mental and physical training. . . there is a creditable general level of intelligence and interest in the affairs of the world, including their own."

"Give the women a chance, and a knowledge of their responsibility. They'll not fail us."

"Woman in the mass has proved herself as capable of arriving at and registering sane decisions upon matters of public import as the male electorate."

This is followed by a selection, showing an exceedingly low opinion:—

"Now that ignorant and undeveloped girls are to be given the vote, that will tend to put the Government of this country into the hands of thoughtless and inexperienced persons."

"Ninety-nine women in every hundred want a husband, a home and children."

"This incoherent mass of half-baked humanity."

"It would be disastrous. I do not think young women of 21 know anything at all about politics."

"There are those who prophesy that this inclusion of a great mass of immature opinion into our Parliamentary system will imperil popular Government so seriously as to lead to its downfall."

On somewhat different lines are the views expressed as to whether "women" are Tory or Socialist. No guidance can be gained from reading these:—

"Women are naturally more conservative than men."

"We do not anticipate that the change will have any revolutionary effect."

"The Conservative notion that the young women will vote for them is merely hope calling itself conviction."

"Women want peace and ordered freedom. Being the greatest sufferers from it, they have no mind towards the invariably disastrous industrial strife by and for which Socialists live, while they are instinctively opposed to other salient features of the alien insanity which Socialists have imported and labelled 'Labour policy.'"

"The political influence of the women electors will increasingly be exercised through the only practical medium of national peace. . . the Conservative and Unionist Party."

"... It is a tendency for women to have more caution—a quality needed in the Government of this country."

"There is no doubt that 75 per cent. of the Conservative Party are against this mad gamble for votes, and regard it with justifiable indignation."

"The Socialists calculate it will secure for them from 60 to 70 per cent. of the seats at the next General Election, and make their return to power certain."

"The Socialists are reckoning on obtaining the bulk of the votes."

"Conservatives are becoming convinced that the change is inimical to the future prospects of the Party."

"Women will have greater power than men in determining the Government of the country. . . Years ago it was thought that women are less disposed to change than men, and that, therefore, the Conservative Party would stand to gain by their enfranchisement. But there is no such confidence to-day. . . The feminine intelligentsia is said to be even more extreme than the masculine."

"Young ladies of 21 are all very nice at that age.' To give votes to women at 21 'would mean handing over their constituency to the other side'" (i.e., Labour).

"Unionists are apprehensive that the extension of the franchise will be to the detriment of the Party."

"This particular piece of enfranchisement will have a slight effect upon Parties and policies, because it will lower the average age of the electorate, and that cannot fail in some degree to benefit Labour."

"Unionists don't intend to sit down tamely to the prospect of their country being governed or misgoverned by the Socialists owing to the introduction of votes for flappers."

Finally, there is the point as to whether there has been any demand for the proposed extension of the franchise. Here, again, one is no wiser after than before reading:—

"When men surrendered the right to beat their wives, the fortress of male dominance was breached beyond hope of repair. Since that time, the movement towards complete civic equality of man and woman has never ceased."

"Never has a great reform evoked less excitement."

"The demand is increasingly persistent. Nearly all women organised in any body which takes action in political matters have expressed themselves over and over again in favour of equal political rights."

"Nobody to speak of has asked for the flapper's vote. . . nine-tenths of the 2,500,000 which it is proposed to add to the electorate do not care twopence about it. No one can contend that the proposed new voters will add any steadying element to our politics. There are capable professional and business women between 21 and 30, whose influence might be of value. But they are quite inconsiderable in number."

"Women's organisations, both Party and non-Party, organisations purely social and philanthropic, organisations simply educational, and organisations more particularly professional, are joining to demand Equal Franchise."

"Apparently Members have not had any demand worth mentioning from their constituents in favour of these franchise proposals."

"No one can be surprised at the Prime Minister's announcement."

"Women's franchise, a new proposal."

"A leap in the dark."

"The perilous pledge."

In gathering these astonishingly diverse views, I have not picked out any particular papers, but have covered the country, omitting only feminist papers which would naturally have a bias so strongly in favour of equality of franchise as not to be that of a general public opinion expressed in the general Press.

One is left more than ever convinced that women are as men, of all sorts, kinds, types and conditions, good, bad and indifferent. When men grow out of the belief that women are all alike, and can then accept them as quite ordinary human beings like unto themselves, the papers will be better guides to facts.

HELEN ARCHDALE.

POOR LAW REFORM.

The Government proposes, next Session, to introduce a Bill embodying reforms in Poor Law administration, and women throughout the country generally are concerned with its proposal to abolish Poor Law Guardians and to transfer their present powers and duties relating to the relief of the poor, the apprenticeship of poor children, emigration, and vaccination to the County and County Borough Councils. The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship has just published a timely pamphlet on this subject (which can be obtained from this Office, price 1d.) giving the number of women now on the Boards of Guardians, the number of women on County and County Borough Councils, and showing how the proposed change will affect the services of women who have, for so very many years, taken part in the powers and duties it is proposed now to transfer to other bodies. It warns women that they must be vigilant to safeguard the services of women.

WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

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

Sunday, June 12th, at 3 p.m.
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Meeting arranged by the Women's Freedom League at Hyde Park. Speakers: Miss Anna Munro, Mrs. Schofield Coate, J.P., and others.

Tuesday, June 14th, at 6.45 to 7 p.m.
Mid-London Branch. Meeting at 144, High Holborn, followed at 7 p.m. by Open Meeting and Discussion on Widows Pensions. Non-members invited.

DARE TO BE FREE.

Tuesday, July 5th, at 7 p.m.
Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party, at Caxton Hall.

PROVINCES.

Wednesday, June 22nd, at 3 p.m.
Portsmouth. Garden Whist Drive at 14, Festing Grove. Tickets 1/6 each.

Friday, July 1st, at 3.30 p.m.
Ashford. Garden Party. Further details later.

Friday, July 1st, at 8 p.m.
Rye. Meeting at the Monastery. Dr. Octavia Lewin, on "Born healthy—keep fit."

SCOTLAND.

Saturday, June 18th, at 3 p.m.
Glasgow. Cake and Candy Fair, in the McLellan Galleries.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Saturday, June 11th, at 5.30 p.m.
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Meeting in Hyde Park, arranged by the National Union of Women Teachers.

Sunday, June 12th, at 3.30 p.m.
The Guildhouse, Eccleston Square. Course of Addresses on "Ancient Civilisations." R. E. M. Wheeler, M.C., M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., Keeper, London Museum, on "Some of the Ancient Civilisations of Britain."

Sunday, June 12th, at 7.30 p.m.
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Meeting arranged by St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, at "Jack Straw's Castle," Hampstead Heath. Speakers: Miss Ba clay Carter, Miss Butler-Bowdon, Miss Fedden, Mrs. Wynne Nevi-son, J.P.

Monday, June 13th, at 8 p.m.
The Speech Club, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square. Debate: "That this Meeting is of the opinion that a Liberal Party is still needed in British Politics." Proposer: Speaker from the Eighty Club.

Tuesday, June 14th, at 6 p.m.
Peace Society, 11th Annual Meeting at the Guildhall (near Mansion House Station). Speakers: Sir John Simon, M.P., Mr. J. H. Thomas, Miss Maude Royden, and others.

Tuesday, June 14th, at 8 p.m.
At Caxton Hall, the Westminster Society for Equal Citizenship. Public Meeting. Speaker: Miss Macadam, on "Votes for Women." Chairman: Mrs. Hoster, F.I.P.S.

Thursday, June 16th, at 7.30 p.m.
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Meeting at Highbury Corner, arranged by the Women's Freedom League.

Saturday, June 25th, at 5.30 p.m.
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Meeting in Hyde Park arranged by the Six Point Group.

Thursday, June 30th, and Friday, July 1st, at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
At the Royal Society of Arts, John Street, Adelphi. Conference arranged by the British Commonwealth League, on "The Social and Industrial Positions of Women other than British Race governed under the British Flag."

Saturday, July 16th, at 5 p.m.
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Great Trafalgar Square Demonstration for Vote for Women.

BRANCH NOTES.

HASTINGS.

At a Members' Meeting, held last Wednesday, the following Officers and Committee were elected:—President: Mrs. Darent Harrison; Vice-Presidents: Mme. Osterveen and Miss Nora MacMunn; Committee: Mrs. Prelooker, Mrs. Mobbs, Mrs. Strickland, Mrs. Callow, Miss Vicat Cole, Miss Kate Rance, and Mrs. Porter. Miss Mary Rance has undertaken the duties of Assistant Secretary, as well as Hon. Treasurer. It is hoped to arrange a Garden Party and Whist Drive in July.

Birthday Fund, S.E. Branches.—Will members kindly send donations for the above to Miss White, 8, Holmesdale Gardens, Hastings.

RYE.

A meeting will be held at the Monastery, Rye, on Friday, July 1st, at 8 p.m. Dr. Octavia Lewin will speak on "Born healthy—keep fit."

ASHFORD.

A Garden Party is being arranged for Friday, July 1st, at 3.30 p.m. Further details later.

GLASGOW.

A very successful concert in aid of the Glasgow Branch of the Women's Freedom League was held on Saturday, May 21st. Mrs. E. May Brown kindly lent her drawing room at "Kirkbree," 4, Park Gardens. The Rev. Henry S. McClelland, B.A., B.D., presided, and Miss Marion Landells, soprano, Mr. A. V. Frogatt, baritone, Mr. David Dixon, violinist, with Miss Mollie Davie and Miss Mina MacDonald at the piano, gave their services. The Chairman remarked on the progress the women's movement had made, quoting from a sermon of his own, preached in 1917, in which he referred to the need for woman suffrage and to its probable early realisation. That sermon seemed very out of date to-day, he said. He referred to the three great antagonisms in the world to-day—race antagonism, sex antagonism, and economic antagonism. All three brought evil in their train—war, murder, inequality, all manner of wrong. He spoke of the need for an equal moral standard for men and women, and recommended the work of the League to the audience. The musical programme, beautifully rendered, was an altogether delightful one and very much appreciated. It included folk songs, Scots, Hungarian and Appalachian.

Miss Eunice Murray's appeal on behalf of the League was greatly enjoyed, her interesting points of the struggle for political franchise during John Stuart Mill's time and later, getting home every time. Now that we had some measure of the franchise, it seemed strange, she said, to look back on less than 20 years ago, when women were imprisoned for just ringing the bell at No. 10, Downing Street. She emphasised the fact that we had not yet reached our goal even in regard to the franchise, and that in other lines, notably, Equal Parentage and the right of the Married Woman to Work, there was much to be done. She referred also to the insidious move to reintroduce something in the nature of the Contagious Diseases Acts, and said that the organised women would oppose any such move with all their strength. For all this and much more there was need of the Women's Freedom League and need for money to carry on its work. She appealed to the audience to help, both by joining the League and contributing. The collection amounted to £25 14s.

A vote of thanks to the artistes was proposed by Miss Murray. In the absence of Lady Wilson, who had to leave before the end, Mrs. Gray proposed a vote of thanks to Mrs. Brown. Mrs. Mosen pointed out that thanks were also due to Miss Mina MacDonald, whose idea the concert was and who had carried out the organising and arranging. Mrs. Brown, in replying, thanked the Rev. Mr. McClelland for so ably taking the Chair. One remark of Mrs. Brown must not be omitted. Referring to her gift of the use of her drawing-room, she said she thought it was the duty of every woman to help other women. The Chairman replied, and a very successful evening was brought to a close shortly after 10 p.m.

ECHOES OF THE JUMBLE SALE.

Mr. Curdie, our very able helper, lost his hat at the Jumble Sale on May 14th. It was sold! The discovery was made afterwards—too late, of course. The Secretary, when she has time, contemplates leaflets with hints and notes for Jumble Sales and Sellers. She has learned much from this one.

CAKE AND CANDY FAIR, JUNE 18TH.

Contributions of any and every kind are required for the Fair in McLellan Galleries. These should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, 158, St. George's Road, or to the hall on morning of sale. We want flowers, fruit, vegetables, provisions, cakes, sweets, contributions for White Elephant Stall, etc.

(Hon. Sec.) L. MOSEN.

EQUAL FRANCHISE MEETING.

The Westminster Society for Equal Citizenship will hold a Public Meeting at Caxton Hall, Westminster, Tuesday, June 14th, at 8 p.m. The principal speaker will be Miss Macadam, M.A., whose subject will be "Votes for Women," and the Chairman Mrs. Hoster, F.I.P.S. We urge all our members and friends to support this meeting, and make it as widely known as possible.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

Abolition of the Trade of Prostitution.

MADAM,—As long as there exists a trade in young girls and women, so long will there be regulations proposed or in force affecting these young girls and women, especially in connection with the venereal diseases they are bound in this trade to suffer from, in common with the clients.

In many countries there are regulations to protect the clients of this trade of prostitution from these diseases, by attempting the impossible, i.e., in effect, to provide the trade with a constant stream of ever fresh young girls and women free from venereal diseases.

Several attempts were made during the war to reintroduce this regulation into this country, and now the Edinburgh Corporation ask for the compulsory outrageous examinations for venereal diseases, with compulsory treatment and detention, which, in practice, can be applied only to the young girls or women sold in this trade.

Efforts made to do away with this contemptible regulation in any country, or to prevent its reintroduction, can never be final. To be final, they must demand the utter abolition of the trade of prostitution. A self-respecting womanhood and a self-respecting manhood would at once demand its abolition.

Yours faithfully,

F. K. POWELL.

FRIDAY,
JUNE 10,
1927.

THE VOTE

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MISCELLANEOUS.

CLOTTED CREAM, 3/- lb., post free. Furnished House to let at NEWQUAY, 5 rooms; also Flat—Apply SELSEY, St Stephen's, St. Austell, Cornwall.

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FAMOUS FOR ITS 1/6 LUNCHEON. 10/6 First Fifty Members Join. The Owls Club in the 16th-century "Wig & Pen," 230, Strand. Open till midnight. Very cosy Writing Room, etc., for people of literary and kindred pursuits. Excellent Devonshire cooking. Founded by H. & F. Ames.—Apply Secretary, Owls, 230 Strand.

NOTICES.

SUFFRAGETTE PRISONERS' DINNER Tuesday, June 21, 7.45 p.m. at the Restaurant, Craig's Court, Whitehall. Tickets 4/-.—Apply NINA BOYLE, 6, Balcombe St., N.W. 1.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND ADJUSTED.—Consult Miss H. M. BAKER, 275, High Holborn, W.C. 1. Income Tax Returns, Repayment Claims of all Descriptions. Telephone: Holborn 0377.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, June 12th, 1927. 3.30. Music. Lecture. M. Wheeler, M.A., D.Litt. 6.30. Canon Raven, of Liverpool Cathedral.

PUBLIC SPEAKING.—Lectures, classes, and private lessons. Saturday Speech Club.—Miss LUCY BELL, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C. 1. Tel.: Museum 4791.

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