

THE VOTE,  
FEB. 22, 1924.  
ONE PENNY.

SPRING SALE NEXT FRIDAY!

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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FRIDAY, FEB. 22, 1924

**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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## WOMEN M.P.s AND LOCAL OPTION.

The Welsh Local Option Bill, after an interesting debate in which strongly divergent views were expressed, was talked out last Friday afternoon, so that the Bill is virtually dead during the present Session. The closure was moved on the stroke of 4 o'clock, but rejected by 229 to 209. This was the nineteenth appearance of the measure before the House.

MR. RHYS DAVIES (Under-Secretary to the Home Office) said he was authorised by the Government to state that the Bill combined in one measure two really distinct matters. The local option principle of the Bill would be regarded with favour by the Government, but the case for such drastic treatment of all clubs did not appear to be made out. The Government could not hold out any hope that it could view with favour this important part of the Bill, which would be left to the free vote of the House, and if it was read a Second time the future attitude of the Government towards it would depend on the form in which it emerged from the Committee stage.

LADY ASTOR, who followed Mr. Davies, reminded him that the members of his Party had put local option in their programme, but she declared that no Party was sound when it came to the question of drink. They were all frightened of something. She was not afraid of the clubs—she was not frightened of anything when it came to what she considered a social, moral, and democratic question. She was supporting the Bill as a Conservative, but could not say she had the whole of her Party behind her. She would like to say she had the best of them. New Zealand, Canada, and Australia all had local option, and they were not going back on it. It could not be said that the Colonies were not democratic, or that they lacked freedom. All she was asking for was that the people of England should have the freedom to vote as they wanted. The pressure that used to come from the public-houses now came from the clubs, and the pressure from the clubs had given cold feet and weak hearts to hon. Mem-

bers opposite. Lady Astor reminded Members that those of them who lived in what were called the better quarters of the town would refuse to have six public-houses in one square. Why should not the women have a chance? As long as their children had to grow up under those conditions, they had hardly a dog's chance of getting away from those public-houses. She appealed to the members of her Party to be democratic and progressive, and to support the principle of the Bill.

MRS. WINTRINGHAM urged that the Bill had been long overdue. It would act for the good of all classes; it would raise the standard of life without imposing fresh taxation; and the money spent in drink could be devoted to better clothes, better housing, measures of social reform, better food, and better conditions generally. In Wales alone, in 1922, £20,000,000 was spent on drink, and she thought the women of Wales would have preferred it if that £20,000,000 had been spent in constructive measures rather than wasted on drink. She was amazed at members of the Labour Party who did not support the measure. Clubs, especially those in rural districts, were developing the social instinct, and it was a great pity they should be exploited by drink. Never yet had she heard of any women's institute applying for a licence. Why should not men's clubs be run in the same way? Yet in Wales £13 a head was spent in liquor by the members of the 97 clubs during 1922! When they remembered there was one licensed house to every 90 families, Mrs. Wintringham thought they must recognise that the time had come for the women to express an opinion. She was reminded of a picture in *Punch*, showing a little child who had stumbled against a stone, turning to his mother and saying, "Why don't you look where I am going?" The responsibility of that House was very great. Parliament existed for the happiness, well-being, and protection of all the people, and it was the bounden duty of all men and women of good will to curtail the activities of a trade which had brought infinite misery into the lives and homes of countless thousands.

## WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

### Woman Palaeontologist.

Mrs. Robert Gray, whose death is reported at the age of 92, was a well-known palaeontologist. Her collection of fossils proved of the utmost assistance to geologists at home and abroad, and the Geological Survey of Scotland, recognising the value of her work, published a list of her fossils, in addition to their own memoir on the Silurian rocks. Mrs. Gray's collection of over 40,000 specimens is now deposited in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington. Twenty years ago, the Geological Society awarded her the Murchison Geological Fund.

### Queen of French Agriculture.

Madame Horteur, who died last week at the age of 74, was formally crowned last August by M. Chéron, Minister of Agriculture, as the "Queen of French Agriculture." Madame Horteur, who had been a widow for many years, lived all her life in the little village of Rully, Department of Saône-et-Loire, where she has been famous for many years as one of the most successful farmers in France. She was the mother of 17 children, and, during the war, eight of her sons and six of her sons-in-law served with the colours. In consideration of her services to her country, Madame Horteur was created Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, and awarded the *Medaille de la Reconnaissance Française*.

### Farm Women Oppose Militarism.

The United Farm Women of Manitoba, at their annual Convention, expressed strong disapproval of the Cadet movement, claiming it fostered militarism. Although the Cadet movement was condemned, the resolution dealing with this subject endorsed the Boy Scout movement as being non-militaristic. Regret was expressed by speakers that the majority of the pictures presented to schools by the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire depicted war subjects, and a resolution was passed approving of the giving of pictures to schools by various organisations, but, urging that these promote ideals of peace and other virtues.

### University Women's Conference.

The third biennial Conference of the International Federation of University Women will be held in Christiania, Norway, this summer. The Conference, which will last four or five days, will be attended by 400 or 500 delegates. Among the topics to be discussed is the question of why women so often remain in subordinate positions, whether university training fits women for commerce and diplomatic service, and the proposed establishment of an international scholarship fund.

### Women's Suffrage in South Africa.

In the House of Assembly at Cape Town, last week, the Women's Enfranchisement Bill passed the Second Reading by 54 votes to 48. The Prime Minister, General Smuts, supported the Bill, and urged the need for establishing a single qualification for women in all the four Provinces.

### Woman Solicitor-General?

Speaking recently under the auspices of the Imperial Industries Club, Sir Henry H. Slessor, K.C. (Solicitor-General), said that he would not be surprised if his successor as Solicitor-General should be a woman. The best work of the world of the future must be done by the two sexes in partnership.

### Lady Wolseley's Gift.

Lady Wolseley has offered to establish, in memory of her father, the late Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley, a reference department and museum devoted to horticulture and agriculture, at the Hove Public Library.

### City Freedom for A.B.C. Manageress.

The Freedom of the City of London has been conferred on Miss Isabella Duncan Benbridge, an A.B.C. manageress, in Basinghall Street. Miss Benbridge started as a waitress, and served in the City for 31 years before attaining her present position. She is a personal friend of Lady Cooper, the ex-Lady Mayoress, whom she has known for many years. Several women citizens' names are inscribed on the London roll of Freemen, amongst them being that of Florence Nightingale.

### African Women's Progress.

African women are taking more and more interest in public affairs. They are clamouring for positions in Government offices, as hospital service offers little scope for their talents and energies. At a recent public meeting in Lagos, they drew attention to the crude drainage and sanitary position of native markets, which women most frequent.

### Woman Barrister's Post.

Mrs. Helena Normanton has been appointed honorary Standing Counsel (or legal adviser) to the Women's Unionist Organisation.

## WOMEN IN THE FREE CHURCH MINISTRY

Miss M. G. Collins, who was recently ordained as Minister of the North Bow Congregational Church, is not the first woman Congregational Minister in this country, as was reported at the time, though she is the first to undertake sole charge of a church. The first woman Congregational Minister was the Rev. Constance Coltman, M.A., B.D., who, as co-Pastor with her husband, the Rev. Claud Coltman, M.A., occupied a joint Ministry for a time at Greville Place Church, Maida Vale, W.

The Ministry of Women has always received more favourable recognition in the Free Churches than in the Anglican Communion, and practically every branch of Nonconformity can point to one or more pioneer women preachers in their midst. To the Congregational and Baptist Churches, however, falls the honour of having recognised the first fully ordained women pastors. In the Baptist Church to-day, two recognised women ministers are officiating, the Rev. Mrs. Living Taylor, who acts as co-Pastor with her husband at a Baptist Church at Barking, but will shortly be leaving there for a pastoral appointment at Zion Church, Bradford. The other Baptist woman minister is Miss E. Gates, who is in charge of the twin parishes of Little Tew and Clevely, in Oxfordshire.

The Unitarians (not always included among Free Churches) have several women ministers, one of whom, a German woman, the Rev. Gertrude Petzold, did good work in this country before the war. The Society of Friends has always recognised the spiritual equality of the sexes, and women share equally with men in such administrative positions as are established. In the Presbyterian Church, the principle of women in the Ministry is accepted in principle but deferred in practice, but the acceptance of *women elders* in the English Presbyterian Church is an important step in this direction, as elders are ordained, the Minister being, theoretically, only the presiding elder. There are to-day several women elders up and down the country, three at Gravesend, and others in Manchester, Northumberland, and Newcastle. Last year, a woman elder, Mrs. Lesley Lewis, of Gravesend, was the first woman to address the Assembly, which she did in the interests of women in the Ministry. In the Wesleyan Church, the position is very similar, though the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church is more advanced. In both cases the door is open, but no woman has yet availed herself of the opportunity awaiting her.

## IN PARLIAMENT.

### Trade Unions (Women Membership).

CAPT. BULLOCK (Waterloo) asked the Minister of Labour whether there were any trade unions who refused to admit women to full membership, and whether, in that case, he would give their names and the reasons actuating them in such a policy? Mr. SHAW replied that there was a large number of trade unions with no female members. Whether that was due to a refusal to admit women members, or to other considerations, he could not say; nor was he in a position to state the reasons actuating trade unions in their policy. LADY ASTOR (Sutton, Plymouth) asked if the Minister was aware that a great many trade unions did not accept women to membership? Mr. SPEAKER intervened by saying that Ministers did not control the trade unions.

### Women Civil Servants' Pay.

MR. D. G. SOMERVILLE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the Minister of Labour if the Government accepted the principle of equal pay for work of equal value for both sexes in the Civil Service, and in industries generally, so far as its influence could be exerted; and if there were any branches of industry where at the present time the principle was not acted on? Mr. SHAW replied that, with regard to industry, the question of pay for work done was a matter for settlement by discussion between the employers and workers concerned. He had no information as to cases in which the practice was not followed. With regard to the Civil Service, the hon. Member was referred to the Resolution of the House of August 5th, 1921. Mr. SOMERVILLE inquired if the right hon. Gentleman denied the right of women to equal pay for equal work? Mr. SHAW said he did not deny anything; he simply stated the facts.

### Women Police.

CAPT. WEDGWOOD BENN (Leith) asked the Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs if he could make any statement on the question of women police. Mr. RHYS DAVIES replied that he was not yet in a position to do so. CAPT. BENN then inquired if the hon. Gentleman could say when a statement of the Government's policy would be made on the matter? Mr. DAVIES said he was afraid he could not add anything to the reply. SIR CYRIL COBB (Fulham, W.) asked if the need for the re-establishment of the women police force on a more effective and numerically larger basis in the Metropolitan district was receiving consideration; if the Home Office was contemplating any steps to supply the need; and if arrangements were being made to remove the whole of the present Metropolitan force of women police (20 members) from their present duties at the opening of the forthcoming British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in April next, and to utilise their services within the Exhibition, thus leaving the Metropolitan district without women police officers? Mr. DAVIES referred the hon. Member to the reply already given to Capt. Benn, in regard to the first two parts of the question. As to the last part of the question, the answer was in the negative.

### Women Teachers (War Service).

CAPT. RAMAGE (Newcastle, W.) asked the President of the Board of Education if he was aware that women teachers who, with the sanction of the Board, served in military hospitals during the war were now penalised for their war service by not being allowed to count those years for purposes of salary; that men teachers who performed similar service in military hospitals, as members of the Royal Army Medical Corps, had been accorded this right; and if he would reconsider the case of those women teachers who, although ineligible for service in His Majesty's Forces, yet served as members of the voluntary aid detachments at military rates of pay, with a view to placing them on the same footing, in respect of their war service, as those men teachers who rendered similar service? Mr. TREVELYAN replied that the war service of women teachers had been

treated, for salary purposes, as on the same footing as that of those men teachers who did not serve as embodied members of His Majesty's Forces. Their position had been fully considered at a very recent date, when Circular 1318 was under preparation, and he regretted he was not in a position to extend the arrangements made in the Board's Circulars 1227 and 1318 to women members of voluntary aid detachments.

### Trained Teachers (Unemployed).

MR. PERCY HARRIS (Bethnal Green) asked the President of the Board of Education what provision could be made for teachers who had passed out of training colleges and had qualified, but could not get employment; and whether, if work could not be found for them at their profession, as they were outside the provision of the Unemployment Insurance Act, an emergency grant could be given to Local Education Authorities to meet their immediate needs? Mr. TREVELYAN replied that he was greatly concerned at the unemployment of trained teachers, but he hoped that by the reduction in the number of abnormally large classes, which in co-operation with the Local Education Authorities he hoped to secure, and by careful restriction of the employment of the less qualified classes of teachers, a closer adjustment between demand and supply might be attained. He was afraid that the system of grants to Local Education Authorities in aid of their educational expenditure did not permit of such a grant as the hon. Member suggested.

### Hong Kong.

LADY ASTOR asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he would cause to be laid before the House the correspondence which had taken place between his Department and the Government of Hong Kong on the subject of the *mui tsai* and of prostitution in that Colony? Mr. THOMAS said that, in view of the full statements which had already been made to the House on the subject of *mui tsai*, and of the steps which were decided upon for the abolition of the system, he hoped it would not be thought necessary to lay the correspondence before the House. A report on prostitution in Hong Kong was received last year, and, should there be any general desire on the part of the House, he would consider placing it in the Library. He felt sure that, by associating the two subjects in her question, the noble Lady did not intend to lend support to a misconception, and to convey an aspersion on the character of *mui tsai*. LADY ASTOR asked how many *maisons tolérées* were recognised by the Government of Hong Kong in that Colony? Mr. THOMAS said that the total number of registered brothels in 1923 was 296.

### Widows' and Mothers' Pensions.

MAJOR HORE-BELISHA (Devonport) asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the general feeling in favour of the provision of pensions for necessitous widows and mothers, he would consider the immediate appointment of a Select Committee, in order that full consideration might be given to every aspect of that important matter? Mr. CLYNES (Deputy Leader of the House of Commons) said he would be much obliged if the hon. Member would repeat that question in a fortnight's time.

### Women Franchise.

MR. FOOT (Bodmin) asked the Prime Minister if it was the intention of the Government to introduce a measure during the present Session to secure to women the franchise upon conditions similar in all respects to those of men? The PRIME MINISTER replied that the Government had not yet had an opportunity of considering whether it would be possible to take any action in regard to this matter in the present Session. *Women will consider it a gross betrayal of their interests if the Government takes no action in this matter.* F. A. U.

## THE VOTE.

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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 a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed, but the Editor cannot be responsible in case of loss.

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

On January 18th, before the fall of the late Government, Mr. C. G. Ammon, the present Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, introduced in the House of Commons the Children, Young Persons, etc., Bill, the text of which was published early last week. This is a very comprehensive Children's Charter, and proposes to consolidate, extend, and amend the Children Acts, 1908-21, and other enactments relating to young persons. Many of the provisions of this Bill are admirable, but some of them require amendment, and all its clauses should be thoroughly discussed by Members inside the House of Commons, and by women's organisations outside. The clauses of this Bill, however, number 184, the pages 149, and its net cost is 6s.!

Mr. Ammon's Bill proposes to extend the law of homicide to the protection of children who are not completely born; but a mother charged with concealing the birth of her own child may be dealt with summarily, if she is not charged with any other person.

At present, the earliest age for marriage is 14 in the case of a male, and 12 for females; but this is subject in England and Wales to the consent of parents or guardians. Mr. Ammon's Bill proposes to prohibit any person under the age of 16 from marrying.

Penalties for sexual offences against girls are increased, the maximum penalty for a full offence against a girl under 14 being 10 years' penal servitude. "Procuration," or the attempted "procuration," of a girl under 16 is made felony punishable with penal servitude for 10 years; anyone having the charge or care of a girl under 16, and living on the earnings of her prostitution, is liable to five years' penal servitude; and anyone abducting a girl under 16 with immoral intent is also liable to five years' penal servitude.

Protection is also to be afforded to boys from women; but in this connection it is expressly stated that "boy" means a male person under the age of 18, and that "woman" means a female person of or over the age of 16 years! Therefore, under Clause 8, if a "woman" of 16 is convicted of seducing a "boy" under 18, she is liable to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for two years. If she induces him to commit any act of gross indecency, in public or in private, she is also liable upon conviction to a maximum term of imprisonment of two years. This clause will certainly not pass without opposition. There should, of course, be protection for boys from older women, but the age of protection for both boys and girls should be the same—18 in each case. We also think this clause will open the way to a good deal of blackmail.

Mr. Ammon's Bill provides that the maximum penalty for cruelty to children shall be five years' penal servitude, instead of £100 fine and two years' hard labour; penalties are also to be imposed on anyone exposing a child under 10 years of age, or mentally defective children, to the risk of burning or scalding through unprotected fire-grates.

No child under 16 is to be sent abroad for purposes of performing, singing, or being exhibited for gain;

and anyone allowing or causing a child to beg will be liable to a term of imprisonment.

Under this Bill, the young offender comes in for a good deal of attention. The present reformatory schools are to be renamed Senior Industrial Schools, and the present industrial schools are to be called Junior Industrial Schools. Every certified school is to have a visit from the Chief Inspector or one of his assistants every three months, the inspectors to be appointed by the Home Secretary. We very strongly urge that women be appointed in equal numbers with men as inspectors of these schools, and also as "visitors," who are to visit institutions which shelter poor children, and the homes in which such children are kept for payment.

Mr. Ammon's Bill would raise the age of competence to commit a crime from seven to 10 years; and would make it an offence to publish in any newspaper the name and address of any child or young person charged with, or convicted of, any offence except alleged murder or intent to do bodily harm, or to publish any sketch or any information calculated to lead to his identification, unless such publication is expressly authorised by the Court.

The Street Betting Act, 1906, is strengthened in the case of persons under 16.

The existing prohibition on persons under 14 being in the bar of licensed premises is extended to persons of 14 and 15; and it will be illegal for anyone to sell or deliver to any person under 16 any intoxicating liquor for consumption by any person, whether on or off the premises, or for anyone to send a person under that age to fetch such liquor for consumption. When considering these matters, we hope that some proposals will be made to prevent the exposure of children outside public-houses, especially in bitter or inclement weather, while their parents or guardians are inside! The age under which it is illegal to give intoxicating liquor to children, except under medical directions, is raised from five to 10. Anyone who is discovered to be drunk when in charge of children under 10, or any mentally defective children or young persons, is liable to be imprisoned.

The juvenile smoker does not escape attention. Anyone who sells, or attempts to sell, cigarettes to any person apparently under 16 years will be liable to a fine of £5; and if any constable or park-keeper in uniform sees any cigarettes in the possession of a person apparently under 16 who is smoking in a street or public place, he shall at once seize those cigarettes, and shall be authorised to search any boy so found smoking, but not a girl, who is only to be searched by a constable or park-keeper if such constable or park-keeper is a woman—which is clearly another argument for more women police!

Mr. Ammon hopes that the Government will take up this Bill, and that it may become law by January 1st, 1925. In view of its important provisions and far-reaching possibilities, we trust that Members of Parliament, women's organisations, and the general public will first put forward some necessary amendments.\*

## LEGAL STATUS OF MOTHERS.

Last Monday, Mrs. Winttingham asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the fact that legislation to provide for mothers equal rights and responsibilities with fathers, with regard to their infant children, had been before Parliament three successive Sessions, and that this reform had a place on the manifestoes of the Labour and Liberal Parties, and had, moreover, the support of women's organisations all over the country, the Government proposed to introduce legislation on this subject during the present Session? The Prime Minister replied that the Government had this matter under consideration, and were willing to confer with the promoters of the Bill now before Parliament, and with others interested, with a view to seeing whether agreement could be reached as to the main provisions to be included in any measure on the subject.

## THE NEW GOVERNMENT & EDUCATION.

Mr. C. P. Trevelyan, the new President of the Board of Education, is evidently more fortunate than his predecessors in that office in the matter of having a freer hand in the expenditure of his Department. It would now seem that the short-sighted policy of niggardly "economies" imposed by the anti-waste panic-mongers is to be scrapped, and a policy pursued which is more in keeping with the needs and aspirations of a vigorous democracy. We welcome Mr. Trevelyan's statement that his efforts are being directed in the first place to the elimination of classes of 60 and over in our public elementary schools, and that as soon as practicable he will secure the reduction of the number of classes which have over 50 children. This matter is complicated by the arrangement of school buildings and the size of classrooms, but the President is asking Local Education Authorities to co-operate with him in remedying the admitted evil on well-considered lines. He points out that it is the duty of Local Education Authorities to provide sufficient school accommodation, and he promises to encourage them to perform their duty in this as in other matters. Since the war, thousands of children have been unable to obtain education in the secondary schools, owing to lack of accommodation, and Mr. Trevelyan has announced that proposals for the provision of new schools and the extension of existing schools will have his very sympathetic consideration, and that he hopes to receive from the Local Education Authorities, in the near future, programmes of expansion, the execution of which will substantially contribute to the removal of this defect in our public system of education.

With regard to the provision of meals for necessitous children, the new President does not propose to retain a specific limit on the expenditure of Local Education Authorities on the provision of meals for school children for the calculation of the grant. At the same time, he relies upon Local Education Authorities to exercise due economy in the administration of this service.

Last year the late Government ceased to provide State Scholarships to the Universities for students coming from State-aided schools, but Mr. Trevelyan proposes to renew these scholarships to the same extent as formerly, and he hopes very shortly to address a communication to the schools and the examining bodies, with reference to the award of scholarships in the coming financial year. Mr. Trevelyan also stated that these scholarships would be open to children from all counties.

## FINES, PRISON, AND TREADMILL.

MR. THURTLÉ (Shoreditch) asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention had been called to the fact, in the Report of H.M. Prison Commissioners for the year ending March 31st last, that out of some 15,000 persons committed to prison for the non-payment of fines, more than 12,000 were not allowed time to pay; and if, in view of the fact that a fine was intended to be an alternative to imprisonment, he would cause instructions to be issued to magistrates that in all cases where persons were fined, reasonable time should be given for the payment of the fine? MR. RHYS DAVIES replied that the Home Secretary could not issue instructions to magistrates in a matter of this kind, but he was sending his hon. Friend a copy of a circular which was sent to all Benches from the Home Office in May, 1922, calling attention to the desirability of allowing time for the payment of fines in all proper cases. He did not think any further circular was called for at present. There were many cases in which, for various reasons, time could not be allowed, and he would point out that the figure of 12,000 persons who were not allowed time and went to prison compared with 400,000 persons who were fined and had paid their fines.

MR. DAVIES, replying to a question by MR. GILBERT (Southwark, Central), said that nine prisons had been wholly closed, and the female wing of eight others, since November, 1918. A Borstal institution had been added, and one local prison reopened. The staff had been absorbed in the establishments of other prisons, except those who were of pensionable age and who retired on pension. The question whether any more prisons were to be closed depended on whether there was such further decrease in the prison population as would justify such a step.

Readers of THE VOTE will be interested in the following paragraph under the House of Commons report from *The Observer*, February 15th, 1924:—

"Treadmill. Sir F. Burdett presented a petition from Mr. M. Stapylton, one of the Justices of Yorkshire, complaining that he had, in his official capacity, in vain remonstrated against the practice of sending prisoners before trial to the degrading and laborious punishment of the treadmill—a practice which Sir F. said ought not for a moment to be suffered to exist."

We have certainly travelled some distance in prison practices since 1824.

## WOMEN ROTARIANS.

The Soroptimist Club of Greater London, which held its installation Banquet at the Criterion Restaurant last week, is the first of its kind in this country. Seven similar Clubs flourish in the United States, and one is shortly to be opened in Paris. Mr. Stuart Morrow, the founder and organiser of the scheme, has had a good deal of experience in the Rotary Club movement. An Irishman by birth, he founded the present Rotary Clubs of Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Birmingham, and London. It was this experience which led him to inaugurate the present scheme.

On his return to his home in California, two or three years ago, a little group of business women from Oakland, who had been watching the success of the Rotary Clubs all over the world, asked Mr. Morrow to start a Club for professional women on the same lines. So the first Soroptimist Club was founded in Oakland in 1921, and was followed in the following year by three more, one at San Francisco, one at Los Angeles, and one in Washington. Last year two more were organised, in Sacramento and at New York. The word "Soroptimist" was coined by Mr. Morrow from "sorority," a familiar term in connection with American University women.

Membership in a Soroptimist Club is strictly limited

to one woman from each distinct line of professional or commercial activity, but business partners working with members may join as associate members. The London Soroptimist Club has started with 113 members, the professional representation of whom covers a wide area, and includes not only the well-known professions, viz., medicine, dentistry, law, accountancy, architecture, surveying, sculpture, etc., but less usual careers, such as that of tea taster, colour consultant, fuel consultant, merchandise critic, etc. The President, Viscountess Falmouth, represents horticulture, as Chairman of Swanley Horticultural College for Women, and the Vice-President, Mrs. Lionel Fox-Pitt, is a well-known horse breeder.

The *raison d'être* of a Soroptimist Club is to develop efficiency, and the success to be derived therefrom; the interchange of ideas and business methods as a means of increasing the efficiency and usefulness of Soroptimism; the recognition of the worthiness of all legitimate occupations; and the dignifying of the occupation of each Soroptimist, as affording her an opportunity for service. Its secondary aim is to combat any inequalities still existing between the sexes, not only in professional occupations and careers, but also in civic life. Women's political rights in the London Soroptimist Club will be championed by Mrs. Hilton Philipson, M.P.

## POLYGAMY IN TURKEY.

According to this week's *Observer*, quite an animated discussion has broken out in the Turkish Press on the question of polygamy. The question has arisen out of the so-called Family Rights Bill, which is soon to come up for discussion in the Grand Assembly. Whether polygamy will be abolished or not seems at present to be very doubtful. The Turkish women of the educated classes are almost solid against the continuance of the practice, and meetings to urge the abolition of polygamy have been held not only in Constantinople but in various other towns, such as Brusa.

Opinions among the men appear to be more divided, though it is not necessary to take too seriously all the suggestions which have been published during the last few days. One of the great arguments adduced by advocates of polygamy is that it diminishes prostitution, but even this is denied by their adversaries, who declare that, if need and poverty are the main causes driving women into immorality, it would be better to find such women work rather than increase by polygamy the number of those women who live upon somebody else, and thus consume without doing any useful work in exchange.

The desire to increase the population of this country is doubtless at the back of much of the support of this practice, which, in fact, has been discontinued by many of the more liberal-minded Turks for many years past. The probability, however, of achieving even this object is challenged by many writers, who advocate rather that greater attention should be paid to the very high infant mortality and generally to the public health.

The debates on the Bill, when it comes up for discussion, should furnish a further indication how far the country has advanced towards a parity with the civilised nations of Europe.

## MRS. FAWCETT AND THE OBSERVER.

Readers of last week's VOTE will remember that we quoted a paragraph from the previous Sunday's *Observer*, in which the writer regretted that Mrs. Fawcett's name had not appeared in Mr. Baldwin's latest Honours List. A delightful letter from Mrs. Fawcett appeared in last week's *Observer*. After expressing her warm thanks for the kindly spirit of the paragraph about herself, she stated that she had not the smallest claim on Mr. Baldwin, nor on any other Party leader, for a share in the distribution of Party honours. Mrs. Fawcett continued:—

"I have not belonged to any political Party since I left the Liberal Unionists when they took up Protection (then called Tariff Reform). My work has been wholly outside Party lines to endeavour to influence public opinion, and therefore all Parties, not by force but by reason, experience, and common sense, that the whole country would benefit by raising the political, educational, professional, and industrial status of women. When I was hard at work as President of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, I used to tell my friends that I was specially fitted to fill a non-Party post, for I could not be a Conservative because I was not a Protectionist, nor a Liberal because I was not a Home Ruler, nor a member of the Labour Party because I was not a Socialist. We have had friends and enemies in all Parties, and have had the pleasure of seeing enemies converted into friends, and the dear, staunch friends who helped us from the first as stalwart as ever."

## Miss BONDFIELD as GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN

When Miss Bondfield rose from the Treasury Bench last Monday afternoon, to make her first reply to questions, she was received with cheers from all parts of the House. Later in the day, after a debate on the first Government one-clause Bill to remove the "gap" period in the operation of the Insurance Act brought in by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Shaw), Miss Bondfield replied. *The Times* states that she made a very effective first appearance as a Government "spokesman," and the Second Reading of the Bill was agreed to.

## SPRING SALE OF WORK.

The Spring Sale of Work will be held this year (by kind invitation of Dr. Lewin) at 25, Wimpole Street, W.1, on Friday, February 29th, from 3 to 7.30 p.m. The Sale will be formally opened by the Viscountess Rhondda, J.P., at 3.30 p.m. Councillor Mrs. Schofield Coates, J.P., has promised to preside.

The Stalls arranged are: Household, Pound, Woolies, Underclothing, Fancy Articles, and Toys; also Pottery, Cakes and Sweets, and Welsh Produce. Gifts are needed for all these stalls, and we ask all League members and readers of THE VOTE to send a contribution, however small, for one or other of these stalls. A special feature is being made of the Household Stall, and all articles necessary for spring-cleaning will be especially welcome. Those who have already promised to help with the stalls are Mrs. Whetton, Mrs. Pierotti, Mrs. Abbott, and Miss Underwood. Dr. Lewin has promised to lecture at 6.15 p.m. on Nasal Hygiene, and will also have an interesting hygiene exhibit in one room. There will be character reading by Mrs. Spon, numerology by Miss de Pass, and a good programme of music is being arranged. Among those who have kindly promised to help are Mrs. Cunningham, Mrs. Legge, Mrs. Harvey James, Mrs. Sparrow, Miss Lettice Newman, and Mr. Richmond. Miss Lyndon has undertaken to arrange the tea, with the help of Mrs. Knight. Donations of money for the provision of the tea should be sent to Miss Lyndon, 53, Willow Road, Hampstead, N.W.3, and contributions in kind should be addressed to Miss Lyndon, c/o Dr. Lewin, 25, Wimpole Street, W.1, on the morning of Friday, February 29th.

All members and friends of the League are asked to keep Friday, February 29th, free, to come themselves and bring their friends to visit the Sale.

Gifts for the stalls should be sent to the Hon. Fair Secretary, at the League Office, before Wednesday, February 27th.

## CAUSES BEFORE PARTIES.

The importance of the woman's point of view in Parliament was impressed at the Six Point Group luncheon given last Tuesday at the Hyde Park Hotel, to which were invited all those Members of Parliament who supported the Group's policy at the last election, and whose names figured on its "white list" of those worthy of support. Although it was almost entirely a women's gathering, the only M.P.s who spoke were men, for Lady Astor and Mrs. Wintringham (the women on the "white list") were unable to attend.

Lady Rhondda, who presided, stated that of the 20 Members whose names were on the "white list" at the last election, 18 were returned, and some were in the Cabinet.

Col. Wedgwood (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster) said, 20 years ago few women attended meetings, but now the numbers of the sexes were about equal. To-day, audiences would not respond until the speaker dealt with practical policy and offered sound information on the questions he dealt with. That was due to the influence of women.

Mr. Frank Briant, M.P., thought the women's view, that causes were more important than parties, would gradually make itself felt in the House.

## GIRL VICTIMS OF EXPLOSION.

Last Monday, eleven girls and one man were killed by an explosion and fire at the Slades Green Filling Factory, on the banks of the Thames and adjoining the depot of the Thames Ammunition Works. Most of these girls were under the age of 20, and one girl was only 16. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to their relatives. The occupation of these young people was evidently a highly dangerous one, and we urge that it should be illegal for any young person under 21 years of age to be exposed to such risks as these victims ran.

## Women's Freedom League.

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS W.F.L.  
LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, February 22nd, at 7.30 p.m. **Teddington.** Public Meeting at Holmwood, Waldegrave Road (by kind permission of Mrs. Foster Lumb). Speaker: Miss E. Morton, M.B.E. Subject: "Women in Parliament."

Wednesday, February 27th, at 8 p.m. **Hampstead Branch Meeting** (open to non-members), at the Isis Club, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, N.W.3 (by kind permission of Mrs. Harverson). Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations." Chairman: Mrs. Sadd Brown.

Friday, February 29th, 3-7.30 p.m. **Spring Sale** (by kind permission of Dr. Lewin) at 25, Wimpole Street, W.

Friday, February 29th, at 5 p.m. **Organisation Sub-Committee Meeting**, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Saturday, March 1st, at 10 a.m. **National Executive Committee Meeting**, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Monday, March 17th, at 3 p.m. "Fair" Committee, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Friday, April 4th, at 2.30 p.m. **National Executive Committee Meeting**, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Saturday, April 5th. **Caxton Hall, Westminster.** Women's Freedom League Seventeenth Annual Conference.

## PROVINCES.

Monday, February 25th, at 6.30 p.m. **Middlesbrough.** Meeting at the Suffrage Café, to discuss Conference Agenda.

Monday, February 25th, at 7.30 p.m. **Wallasey.** Whist Drive at the Parisian Café. Tickets 1/6, including refreshments.

Monday, March 3rd, **Middlesbrough.** Meeting at Suffrage Café. Speaker: Miss W. Jones.

Wednesday, March 5th, at 3.15 p.m. **Portsmouth.** Public Meeting at 2, Kent Road. Speaker: Councillor Leonard Blake. Subject: "Housing."

Thursday, March 20th, at 8 p.m. **Wallasey.** Public Meeting at Town Hall. Speaker: Alderman John Airey. Subject: "The Capital Levy." Chair: Mrs. Dr. Dobbin Crawford.

## OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wednesday, February 27th, at 8 p.m. **Women's League of Union, Oak Room, Kingway Hall.** Speaker: Miss Margaret Ottley. Subject: "Amusements—Theatres and Cinemas."

Sunday, March 2nd, at 6.30 p.m. **Kingston Church of Humanity.** 39, Orchard Road, Kingston-on-Thames. Speaker: Mr. William Platt. Subject: "Gluck the Humanist" (with Pianoforte Illustrations). Chair: Miss F. A. Underwood.

Sunday, March 9th, at 6.30 p.m. **Kingston Church of Humanity.** Speaker: Miss Elsie E. Morton, M.B.E. Subject: "Should Married Women have a Career?"

## BRANCH NOTES.

## HAMPSTEAD.

A Business Meeting for members of the Hampstead Branch was held at 53, Willow Road (by kind permission of Miss Lyndon) on Monday, February 11th. Miss Lyndon presided. The Resolutions for the Annual Conference were discussed, and meetings arranged for the spring. Miss Lyndon kindly entertained those present to tea.

Mrs. Northcroft will speak on "Women at Work in the League of Nations," at the Isis Club, 79, Fitzjohn's Avenue, N.W.3 (by kind invitation of Mrs. Harverson), on Wednesday evening, February 27th, at 8 p.m. All readers of THE VOTE, and members and friends of the League, living in and around Hampstead, should make a point of being present to hear Mrs. Northcroft's address. The Isis Club is only three minutes' walk from Hampstead Tube Station and therefore easy of access from any part of London.

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

## PORTSMOUTH.

The monthly Public Meeting on Tuesday, February 12th, at 2, Kent Road, was well attended. Mr. Lacey gave a lucid exposition of the Capital Levy, and was followed very attentively by an appreciative audience. At the close of his address, Mr. Lacey was literally bombarded with questions, which he very ably answered. Mrs. Whetton, who presided, proposed the usual vote of thanks, which was carried with acclamation.

The speaker at the next meeting, on Wednesday afternoon, March 5th, will be Councillor Leonard Blake, and his subject will be "Housing." Councillor Blake is an authority on this subject. (Hon. Sec.) Mrs. WHETTON, 89, Festing Grove, Southsea.

## BEXHILL.

A very enjoyable and instructive evening was spent at the Victoria Hall last Monday, when Miss Elsie Morton explained the principles of Proportional Representation. The speech was followed by an Election, when the following candidates appeared:—Miss Thornton (Labour), Mrs. Felton Smith (Liberal), Mrs. Osborne (Conservative), Mrs. Barker (Co-operative), Miss Morton (Independent). Miss Thornton, Mrs. Felton Smith, and Miss Morton were elected.

(Organiser) Miss M. L. WHITE, 8, Holmesdale Gardens, Hastings.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

## Bradford's Plan for Workless Women.

According to the *Leeds Mercury*, Bradford's workless women are being taught how to make first-class dinners at 3d. or 4d. per head. This is a feature of a training scheme for unemployed women, which is being inaugurated under the joint auspices of the Bradford Education Authority and the Ministry of Labour. For the present, the enterprise will be limited to a couple of classes of 20 each, and the courses will last for 13 weeks. They have been devised with a view to making participants experts in housewifery. Cooking lessons will be given at a special centre, and after the "students" have been taught how to make meals at the modest prices quoted above, they will be allowed to sample the dishes at cost price. Laundry work and needlework are other subjects in the curricula. A novel feature will be lessons in physical "jerks" and periodical "sing-songs," designed to give the women a pleasant relief from their studies. Each will receive an allowance of 17s. 6d. per week in place of the Employment Exchange dole of 12s.; but this amount will be reduced if there is any slackness in attending "school."

## Factory Workers.

Last week the Bishop of Winchester headed a deputation to the Home Office from 17 Industrial Societies, which was received by Mr. Rhys Davies. The members of this deputation pressed for a new Factory and Workshop Act, and emphasised the need for a 48-hour week, a minimum standard of temperature in the workshops, and an improved standard of lighting. It was pointed out that the weekly hours of factory workers vary from 44 to 48, overtime is rare, and a five-day week and one-day break are common; but inspectors are constantly informed of young girls working 12 hours a day. Better washing accommodation was also desirable, one speaker stating that she had worked in places where 15 girls had to use one washing basin! Mrs. Rackham, herself formerly an inspector, stressed the importance of increasing the inspectorate. The deputation was promised that their case would receive the Home Secretary's sympathetic attention.

## Work for Manchester Women.

At a meeting of the Manchester City Council, recently, Councillor Ellen Wilkinson again urged the necessity for the relief of unemployment amongst women. She moved that a deputation should wait upon the Minister of Labour, asking that some effort should be made to provide relief for the unemployed women, who, in Manchester, represented one quarter of the unemployed of the city. An assurance was given that a deputation from the Committee would visit the Ministry. The Chairman of the Education Committee said that they recently decided to engage 200 additional women cleaners in the schools, and as soon as they had the approval of the Government, the Committee would see that they began work.

## Women Police for Stafford?

The *Staffordshire Sentinel* states that, a strong desire having been expressed for the appointment of at least two women police, one for the north of the county and the other for the south, the Committee of the County of Stafford Police Court Mission reported at the Annual Meeting of the Mission, held at Stafford last week, that they hoped to make a special appeal this year in order to provide the necessary funds.

## His Proudest Boast!

Speaking last week at the inaugural banquet, at the Criterion Restaurant, of the Soroptimist Club for Greater London, Lord Birkenhead said: "I spent many years of my life in attempting to prevent any woman getting into the House of Commons, and if I could drive them out to-day I should certainly do it. I am entitled to say that I, and I alone, have kept them out of the House of Lords."

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

## WOMEN POLICE.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance has arranged a Public Meeting on "Why we want Women Police," to be held at St. Anne's Settlement Hall, Harleyford Road, Vauxhall, on Monday, March 3rd, at 8 p.m. Inspector Mrs. H. More-Nisbett is to be the principal speaker, and the Chair will be taken by The Very Rev. Mgr. Provost Brown, Bishop-Elect of Pella.

## WEALTH FROM WASTE.

The Women's Local Government Society are having a Lantern Lecture on Tuesday, March 4th, at 3 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, by Mr. J. Jackson, Superintendent, City of Birmingham Salvage Department, on "Wealth from Waste." The Chair will be taken by Alderman Miss Smeed, J.P. Tickets, 1s. each, from the Secretary, W.L.G.S., 19, Tothill Street, S.W.1.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE N.U.W.I.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to the National Union of Women Teachers on the outstanding success of their Reception to the women M.P.s at the University of London, February 15th. More than 2,000 women were present to greet the new women M.P.s.

## POSTER PARADE AROUND THE HOUSE.

Volunteers for poster parading round the House of Commons, Friday, February 29th, from 12.30 p.m., during debate on Equal Franchise Bill, are urged to communicate at once with the Secretary of the Women's Freedom League.

FRIDAY,  
FEB. 22,  
1924.

# THE VOTE

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**THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY.** A correspondence course in Biology, Psychology, and Religion has been arranged under the title "The Ladder of Life." It is hoped that the course will help students to co-ordinate the ideas which are contributing to form the new age. Particulars will be forwarded to those sending a stamped and addressed foolscap envelope to—THE PRINCIPAL, Walsham Hall, Walsham-le-Willows, Suffolk.

**L**EARN to write for the CINEMA. Instruction Course, with specimen play, 2/6 post free from "Editor," 75, Princes Street, Edinburgh.

## NOTICES.

**F**ELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1. Sunday, February 24th, 3.30. Music, Poetry, Lecture. Dr. Dearmer. 6.30. Miss Maude Royden. "Dock Strike."

## MISCELLANEOUS.

**B**ARGAIN—list free. Plants, Garden Utensils. Beautiful dwarf roses, named varieties, 6/- dozen, carriage paid.—McELROY, 33, Saville St., South Shields.

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**D**RESSMAKING.—CALISTA, Dress Artist, would like to engage a very clever Bodice hand, who would be ambitious to learn cutting and fitting.—97 Wigmore Street, W. 1.

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**T**O LET.—Hampstead Heath. Beautiful view. Unfurnished rooms, newly decorated, accommodation for cooking, etc.—80, South Hill Park, Hampstead.

**W**ANTED.—Second-hand Clothing, best prices given; parcels sent, valued, and money sent by return. Stamped addressed envelope for reply.—RUSSELL, 100 Raby Street, Byker, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

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## REST AND HOLIDAYS.

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**F**OOD REFORM GUEST HOUSE, 13, Marine Parade, Dover. Excellent cooking. Gas-fires in bedrooms. Specially recommended Eustace Miles. Unequalled excursion centre

**T**HE PIONEER CLUB has reopened at 12, Cavendish Place. Entrance fee in abeyance *pro tem*. Town Members £5 5s.; Country and Professional £4 4s.

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

**F**URNISHED Bungalow, until Easter. 4 rooms, scullery and electric light, 20/- weekly.—MACRAE, Walberswick, Southwold, Suffolk.

**S**Ocial Worker, invalid, ordered to live out of London, wants to rent country cottage, about six rooms, garden, conveniences, under an hour from town. Excellent references—"B.A.," 3, Upper Woburn Place, W.C. 1.

**S**OUTH COAST.—Lady, on Exhibition route, wishes to exchange her four-room London flat for similar accommodation at any South Coast resort for the months of July and August.—Apply No. 40, THE VOTE, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

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