

THE VOTE

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

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1926

OBJECT: To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the powers already obtained to elect women in Parliament, and upon other public bodies, for the purpose of establishing equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.

By EUNICE G. MURRAY.

In Glasgow, prominence has been given to the question whether or not women should be allowed to enter the Ministry. The United Free Church Presbytery maintained the time was not ripe, and "that women were not called." It is difficult to believe that in the year 1926 a body of learned men could have been found within the Presbyterian Church (a church that does not believe in the sacredness of priesthood) to have come to such an out-of-date conclusion.

Quakers have always placed women upon an equality with men; and in the Congregational Church we have to-day women occupying the same place in the ministry as men. So it should be.

To the Founder of Christianity women, in common with any class of the oppressed, are under deep obligations—to Christianity, as an organised society, they owe little. If the Church continues to refuse woman her rightful place within the Church, it is the Church that will suffer. All must often ask to-day: Is the Church holding its own? The answer is in the negative. Should the official representation of all that pertains to the highest phase of human life not occupy the highest position in the love and esteem of mankind? Does it? Universities and schools, which teach men physical science to perfect the life of this world, are forging ahead, and hold high rank in human respect and esteem. The Church, which should prepare humanity for something far beyond and more important than anything in this life, has sunk to such a low ebb that its enemies scarce deem it

worth a kick. Gone are the days when men and women were willing to die to keep the faith of the churches alive. Why?

Men and women are the same, but the inspiration of the Church has faded—faded, not died. Women cannot be blamed for the dead level of inertia into which the Church has sunk. That is the fault of the

men ordained to teach the Gospel of Christ—the Gospel which was given not to one class, one race, or one sex, but to the world.

Ministers are the first to acknowledge the influence woman has upon human life. Why should this power not be extended to the larger home, the church of mankind? But no, the same ministers who uphold the influence that women possess are the first to fight tooth and nail against the extension of that influence.

Within the Church we need a great spiritual upheaval. There are, no doubt, strong spiritual powers at work to-day; material powers there are also, but the spiritual power is a superior power. It is surging up, and will not be denied. The Spirit will speak to whom it listeth and without regard to sex, even when it causes annoyance to the ordained ministers of the Church.

When the voice is heard sufficiently strong the respondent will give forth the message, even if she be a woman. If the churches continue to refuse woman official opportunity of transmitting her message, the opportunity will arise otherwise. Any attempts of men (compelled by motives which would require very honest sifting for their right to such motives) to keep women back from giving the



MISS EUNICE G. MURRAY

help she can give to her generation can only be likened to an effort to restrain a rising tide with a teaspoon.

Was it not to a woman that the Master gave the first message after the resurrection—"Go tell My brethren"? The Church, to-day, if it wants to keep alive to the needs of the hour, must not turn a deaf ear to the demand of women to enter into the Church, where Christ meant them to occupy an equal place with men. St. Peter told us that in his day, "The Lord giveth the word, and the women that publish the tidings are a great host" (R.V.). Rise then, ye women that be sane, claim your place in Church and State! We must, to-day, try and catch at least a breath of the inspiration of the seers and prophets of old. We must open the windows of our minds and let the sunlight of inspiration come flooding in. Not blenched by passion or prejudice, or the circumstances, or by the desire of self-protection, but with spirits tuned to understand. This is the spirit which men must bring to bear upon the question: Shall women enter the ministry? They must cast aside prejudice, the desire to use women as workers and to refuse them responsible positions.

In the pre-Christian days women were despised; it was Christ who taught that one soul was of the same value as the other. Humanity needs to-day not a man-preached Gospel, but a Gospel of love preached from the point of view of the human race. It will be a thousand pities if the Church refuses the help and inspiration that could be got from women.

NOTES FROM THE FOREIGN PRESS.

We learn from *L'International Féminin* that the final electoral lists for Brussels have recently been issued. These show that in District I, there are 46,047 Parliamentary electors, of whom only 170 are women. The local government register for this district includes 102,778 voters, of whom 56,939 are women. In District II, 18,483 men and 76 women are on the Parliamentary Roll, and the local government voters include 17,893 men and 20,231 women.

Temperance workers in England will be interested to learn of the special effort that is being initiated in Switzerland to combat the increasing consumption of spirits among the population. A great meeting was held in Bern on February 6th, presided over by Dr. Martz, of Basel, who, in his opening remarks, emphasised the need for taxation in order to raise the price, which for brandy was now as low as 1 fr. to 1.50 fr. per litre. The proposed legislation in 1923 had been defeated by the votes of the peasants, and the increased fruit production had led to lower prices and a much larger consumption.

One of the speakers, a school doctor from Geneva, drew the meeting's attention to the disastrous and hereditary effect which alcohol had on the race, and, to endorse this, gave statistics of 761 families, which showed that 608 of the descendants were addicted to drink and liable to nervous illnesses; the mortality rate among the children, too, was much higher than was usual. Thirty million francs was paid annually for the treatment of tuberculosis, and this should be met by a tax on alcohol.

The Canton of Wallis has made a regulation by which, in future, all student teachers will take an additional course of 2½ months at the close of their four years' training. In the case of men, the time will be spent in the Agricultural School at Châteauneuf, and the women teachers will take a Domestic Economy course at one of the usual schools.

A Hospitality Club has been founded in Vienna on the lines of the clubs already opened in many of the important towns in England and France. The object of these clubs is to give an opportunity to foreigners visiting the country to meet people, and to come into contact with those who are anxious to improve international relationships. MARIAN BERRY.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Women and the Locarno Spirit.

A gesture of generosity by German women has been afforded recently in a visit to Arras paid by Frauen Heymann and Perlen, and Fräulein Baer, of the Women's International League, who offered to furnish the town with the trees it lacked. Their original intention was to erect a building, but as they had not the necessary resources they conceived the idea of supplying the town with trees. They left with the Mayor 13,000 francs for the purchase of trees, which sum had been realised by the sale of jewels belonging to the members of the League.

Woman Lecturer's Versatility.

Miss Clare Gaudet, the well-known lecturer on Archaeology at the British Museum, was an artist before she became an archaeologist, and has exhibited at the Academy and the Salon, whilst some of her stained glass and mosaic work is to be seen in Westminster Cathedral. Miss Gaudet has lectured not only in Bloomsbury, but at South Kensington, on University Extension lines.

Women Athletes in Turkey.

The first appearance of Turkish women as athletes on the public running track has just occurred in Constantinople. A large crowd gathered to watch the sportswomen of the new Turkey make their official debut. Twenty women turned up, but only five were eventually induced to go out in running costume to the start. One of the winners owed her athletic development to her training at the Constantinople school for girls.

Woman's Unique Honour.

Miss Gertrude Maybury, of Frimley, Surrey, is to receive a gold badge, specially created, of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, in recognition of her work for the Society. For over 25 years she has been secretary of the local branch of the Mission, and by personal appeals has raised £6,200. The Society of Poor and Distressed Ladies, who are widows of officers, has also received large sums as the result of Miss Maybury's endeavours.

Suzanne and the Legion of Honour.

It is expected that Mlle. Suzanne Lenglen will soon receive the Cross of the Legion of Honour. The suggestion was made some time ago, and numerous newspapers to-day urge the authorities to confer the honour. A list of promotions connected with the Olympic Games is now under consideration, and it is hoped that Suzanne's name will appear there.

OUR SPRING SALE.

DR. OCTAVIA LEWIN

"AT HOME"

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ON FRIDAY, MARCH 19TH.

At 25, WIMPOLE STREET, W.1.

The Sale will be opened at 3 p.m. by

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Underclothing, Fancy Articles, Cakes, Sweets, Preserves,
Beads.

TEA. 3.30 TO 5.30.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Girl Clerks (Age Limit).

MR. COWAN (Lib., Scottish Universities) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury the grounds on which the limit of age for girl candidates for admission to the clerical staff of the Civil Service has been reduced from 16½—17½ years to 16—17 years; whether he is aware that such reduction of age is detrimental to the interests of secondary education in Scotland for the reason that intending candidates for the Civil Service are compelled to leave school before completing the course for the group leaving certificate, and whether he will take steps to have the former age limit restored? MR. R. MCNEILL: The age limits for girl candidates for admission to the clerical grade were altered to 16—17 to conform with those prescribed for male candidates in pursuance of the Resolutions of the House of Commons of the 5th August, 1921, which, after approving certain temporary Regulations, directed that, after a provisional period of three years, women should be admitted to the Civil Service in the United Kingdom under the same Regulations, present and future, as provide for and prescribe the mode of admission of men.

Women Police and Warders.

SIR C. CAYZER (U., Chester) asked the Home Secretary whether, in connection with his announcement that the police force is to be increased by 5 per cent., he will consider the appointment of further women police? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: My hon. Friend is under a misapprehension. Steps have been taken to fill vacancies on the authorised strength, but no increase has been decided upon. The establishment of women police was specially increased at the end of 1924. (*Readers of THE VOTE will remember that the total number of women police throughout the whole country is now 137—including London, which has 50!*)

SIR C. CAYZER asked the Home Secretary whether the Home Office has considered the suggestion that women warders should be raised to the status of constables, and should be specially trained to take statements of witnesses of their own sex, or of the very young; and have they calculated whether this innovation would entail much additional outlay? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: No, Sir. I have had no suggestion before me for giving the status of constable to police matrons to whom, I presume, my hon. Friend refers. Their duties do not include the taking of statements from women and girls. The provision already made for the taking of such statements by women constables, or other trained women, is summarised on pages 31 and 32 of the recent Report of the Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences against Young Persons. I am considering, in connection with that Report, whether any further action is necessary.

Imperial Conference.

SIR H. BRITAIN (U., Acton) asked the Prime Minister whether he has any statement to make with regard to the proposed Imperial Conference; and whether it is to take place during the current year? THE PRIME MINISTER: I am glad to announce that a meeting of the Imperial Conference has been arranged for October of this year. I hope that all the Dominion Prime Ministers will be present, as well as representatives of India. (*Will any women take part in its proceedings?*)

Lunacy Commission Report.

COL. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark) asked the Minister of Health when the Royal Commission on Lunacy Reform is likely to make its Report? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: I have been asked to reply. I understand that the Royal Commission hope to be able to present their Report this summer, but it is not possible at present to give the precise date.

House of Lords Reform.

COL. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark) asked the Prime Minister when Viscount Cave's Committee on the Reform of the House of Lords is likely to make its Report? THE PRIME MINISTER: This is a Cabinet Committee, and I cannot give any information in regard to it, beyond stating that the whole question is being carefully explored by the Government, whose proposals will be presented some time before the end of the present Parliament.

Legitimacy Bill.

MR. T. THOMSON (Lib., Middlesbrough, W.) asked the Prime Minister when and where the Legitimacy Bill will be introduced this Session? THE PRIME MINISTER: This Bill will be introduced in another place as soon as possible.

Economy Bill.

SIR FREDERICK WISE (U., Ilford) asked the Prime Minister when he proposes introducing the Economy Bill? THE PRIME MINISTER: It is hoped to introduce this Bill on the 11th March.

Municipal Franchise (Limited Liability Companies)

MR. FORREST (Lib., Batley and Morley) asked the Minister of Health whether he has received suggestions that, in view of the considerable proportion of local rates paid by limited liability companies, the municipal franchise should be extended to them, and whether he will consider such a proposal? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS (Home Secretary): I have been asked to reply. I have received a number of suggestions on the subject. I see that a Bill has been introduced which I hope will afford an opportunity for the House to discuss the matter.

Women and Youths (Two Shifts Day).

MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE (Lab., Leicester, W.) asked the Home Secretary how many Orders have been issued to firms allowing women and youths to work on a system of two shifts in the day; and, in view of the fact that such Orders were originated in war time as an emergency action, what is the policy of the Home Office in the matter? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: The number of Orders issued is 537. The Orders are granted under the temporary powers conferred by the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act, 1920, and so long as these powers are continued in force I propose to exercise them in all proper cases. (*Whatever the merits or demerits of the issue of these Orders, we again most strongly protest against women being put into the same category as Youths, or Young Persons and Children, for the purpose of legislation imposing restrictions upon women's work which are not also imposed on men's work. There can be no real equality of opportunity and reward for women and men in industry so long as legislation interferes with the equal chances of women and men workers. An adult woman should be allowed to take the same risks as an adult man. She herself ought to be considered the best judge of what she can or cannot do.*)

Equalisation of the Franchise Bill.

The text of this Bill "to confer the franchise on women on the same terms as those on which it is exercised by men," has been issued. It was presented by Capt. Wedgwood Benn, and its Second Reading is to take place April 30th.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 5th, 1926.

EDITORIAL.

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

EQUAL CITIZENSHIP.

We congratulate the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship on its admirable and well-attended annual council meetings held last week, and on the great success of its Equal Franchise mass meeting which took place at the Central Hall, Westminster. At the request of the National Union, Viscount Cecil of Chelwood asked the Prime Minister whether he had made any decision as to the date on which he would set up the proposed Conference to deal with Equal Franchise, and in a letter read at the mass meeting Lord Cecil wrote: "I have seen the Prime Minister, and he tells me that in the existing state of public business it is impossible for him to make any statement as to the exact date on which the Conference to which you refer can meet. It is, however, evident that it must meet early enough to enable the Government to deal, in the present Parliament, with any legislation which it may decide to propose as a consequence of deliberations of the Conference. In the meantime, Departments of the Government are being instructed to make such preliminary investigations as may be necessary for the purposes of the Conference."

We do not think there is much comfort to be extracted from the above statement. Women did not ask for a Conference; what they continue to demand is an Equal Franchise Measure on the Statute Book. The proposed Conference which torpedoed Mr. Whiteley's Equal Franchise Bill last year is entirely the Government's concern and responsibility; the Women's Freedom League has no interest in such a Conference, and we certainly do not ask for it. If the Government is honest in its desire to pass into law an Equal Franchise measure the proposed Conference will be used as a cumbersome means of producing this measure; if the Government is not honest in this intention, the proposed Conference will prove a convenient method by which the Government once again will dish the women. In that case the Government will not be able to say to us, "You asked for this Conference; and we kept our pledge to you to set it up!" We have always stressed the fact that such a Conference is wholly unnecessary. Everything that can be said by Members of Parliament on the question of Equal Franchise has been said *ad nauseam*. Women have no desire to read their further speeches about it—our firm demand is that an Equal Franchise measure shall be on the Statute Book during the life of this Parliament.

Women's political inferiority to men is at the basis of the scant consideration shown to them and their interests in every department of life. To take only two matters—the Premier of Victoria stated this week that the Australian representatives at the forthcoming Imperial Conference will endeavour to secure that no British woman shall lose her nationality by marriage with an alien. If British women had had the same political power that men had, is it likely that the present arrangement would ever have been made? The Government has set up many Committees. The latest is one to inquire into the desirability of legislation with regard to the registration of nursing homes—a matter of pre-eminent interest to women. This Committee consists of nine men, but only *two women*! A real equality of citizenship is only possible on the basis of Equal Franchise.

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.

Last week an unmarried girl of nineteen was sentenced to death at Winchester Assizes for the murder of her ten months' old child by drowning it in Basingstoke Canal the previous Sunday morning. According to the Press reports, the girl and the baby lived in two rooms together with her father, mother, and brothers. For some days the child had been fretful, and the girl was distracted by constant recriminations by her father and brothers, who complained of its fretfulness, and told her to take it to the workhouse. The girl's mother in Court stated that her husband told her daughter "to clear out and go back to the Union." The girl, when charged, on her arrest, said:

"I did it. They were always grumbling at me. All the morning they upset me, so I threw the baby in the water, and when I saw its face I tried to get it out with a stick, but could not, and ran away."

The jury, which included two women, added a strong recommendation to mercy. The Judge (Mr. Justice Avory) said it would be forwarded to the proper quarter.

This act could only have been committed in a moment of desperation, when the girl's mind must have been more or less unbalanced by prolonged mental and physical strain. In our view, she should not have been the only one in the dock on this charge. Nothing was heard of the child's father, who, if there was any real justice in the land for girls in such circumstances, would have been cross-examined in Court as to what he had contributed towards the support of his child, and made to realise that he was equally responsible with the mother for the welfare of that child. The whole trend of domestic legislation in recent years has been to make the interests and welfare of the child of paramount importance; and this should apply equally to legitimate and illegitimate children. It has been recognised that the interests of legitimate children can only be properly safeguarded when both parents have equal rights and responsibilities; and we maintain that the interests of children born out of wedlock can only be properly safeguarded when the father is equally responsible with the mother in the eyes of the law for the welfare of his children. Every child at birth establishes a moral claim upon its father. Public opinion and the law must carry it out.

UNEQUAL PAY AGAIN!

Unequal pay for men and women seems to be a general practice in all countries—prevailing in the Rubber Plantations of the Straits Settlements as well as in the Civil Service, the teaching profession, and in industry in this country.

Last week, MR. SCURR (Lab., Mile End) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what were the wages paid to the male and female workers in the rubber plantations in the Straits Settlements. MR. AMERY replied that, in 1924, the general rates of wages of Indian labourers on estates in Singapore were as follows:—Tappers, *male*, 50 cents, *female*, 40 cents; weeders, *male*, 45 cents, *female*, 35 cents; factory coolies, *male*, 60 cents a day. Javanese and Chinese were usually employed on contract with rates ranging from 15 to 24 cents a katty. COL. WEDGWOOD (Lab., Newcastle-under-Lyme) inquired if the wages were less than 1s. a day English money; but MR. AMERY said he was not quite sure exactly how many cents went to the shilling. MR. HARDIE (Lab., Springburn) expressed the opinion that Ministers should in their replies give the equivalent in English money. MR. SPEAKER fancied that the exchange altered from time to time. MR. WARDLAW-MILNE (U., Kidderminster) suggested that only Members who understood the currency should ask these questions; and MR. McLEAN (Lab., Govan) asked if only Ministers who understood the currency would reply?

Among all this doubt and confusion, one thing remains clear—the female workers receive less wages than the male workers.

IS DEMOCRACY A FAILURE?

Miss Cecily Hamilton and Miss Nina Boyle debated the question "Is Democracy a Failure?" at a crowded meeting in Caxton Hall on Tuesday, February 23rd, Miss Dorothy Woodman, B.A., being in the Chair.

Miss Hamilton opened the debate by asserting that there are certain spheres in which democratic principles never have counted and never will count. In the fields of art and literature, for instance, to work for the greatest number is to prove unworthy of one's art. In her opinion, all forms of government are evil, but the more democratic an institution is, the more inefficient it becomes. Democracy is inefficient because it produces irresponsibility. A despot has a moral responsibility, but it is impossible to get this in a mass of electors whose representatives are chosen by "that last word of irresponsibility"—the secret ballot. If a despot worked only for his own aggrandisement, he could be assassinated, but there is no way of punishing electors for voting foolishly.

In Germany, since the war, an attempt has been made at democratic government, but no one would take office, because whoever did so would have to do unpopular things, such as levying taxes. The only way to be successful in a democracy is by flattering it, and surely it is preferable to "lick the boots" of one despot rather than of millions.

Miss Hamilton also expressed the opinion that one day the question of the League of Nations and Democracies will have to be fought out; for, if the League of Nations becomes a reality, the control of foreign policy passes out of the hands of the electors.

Miss Hamilton concluded by saying that if, as she expected, the meeting voted against her views, she would console herself with a quotation from Ibsen, "The majority is always in the wrong."

Miss Nina Boyle referred to Miss Hamilton's opinion that most people are foolish, and said that she could see no reason why the absence of intelligence should not entitle people to protect themselves against those with more intelligence and probably less scruple.

People could roughly be divided into two classes: those with morals, and those with intelligence. Some

have both, but these never seem to reach the top rank of government. Under democratic government, the unintelligent are able to protect themselves, and can prevent things which they dislike from being done at their expense. The people have a right to govern the country as they like, since they pay for it. The main object of democratic government is to find a way of keeping your own affairs under your own control.

Reference had been made to the fact that a railway strike cannot be "voted off" by the electors. This was true, but under a democratic government it could not be shot down either, and that is a great advantage.

Referring to the League of Nations, Miss Boyle pointed out that it is a suggestive and not an executive League; and nothing proposed by it is accepted for this country before it is approved by the House of Commons.

Regarding the irresponsibility of voters, Miss Boyle asked why the people should be responsible to anything outside themselves for their own government, and for whom, except themselves, should the government be efficient?

She maintained that democratic government is a satisfactory one because it gives everyone a chance to join with others for their own interest. Autocracies may be successful to a certain degree, but there always comes a time when the people will rise up against an autocrat. The Woman's Movement had grown up because women would not be governed without being consulted. Democracy may be unwieldy and uncouth, but it is the best form of government known, and Miss Boyle urged her listeners to hold fast to it until some better form can be obtained.

A discussion followed, from which the general opinion appeared to be that neither a pure democracy nor autocracy has ever existed. Notwithstanding this, when the question was put to the meeting, it was decided by a large majority that Democracy is not a failure.

The Mid-London Branch is to be congratulated on organising such a successful meeting. A. M. P.

SWEDISH WOMEN AND THE RIGHT TO TRADE.

The following is a translation of an article from a recent number of *Morgonbris*, a Swedish women's paper:—

It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that Swedish women obtained the right to trade. It may be interesting to hear, however, that this question had already come to the front in 1809. There were then two Motions with this object: one by Baron P. Ad. Fock in the Upper House, and one in the Lower House by Messrs. B. H. Santesson and Nicholas Malm.

Baron Fock considered it necessary to grant suitable means of maintaining themselves to the female sex without hindrance from the various guilds, especially in the case of "needy widows and unprovided-for daughters." Women ought to have the opportunity "through industry and attention to business to get a sufficient means of livelihood and thereby escape want and misery."

The Motion in the Lower House pointed out the desirability of "the right being conceded to the female sex to support themselves in any commendable way, such as by trade, in opening shops for haberdashery and provisions, by the making of all kinds of men's and women's clothes, by shoemaking, glovemaking, weaving linen and stockings, making buttons and laces, as well as by baking and confectionery, with several other trades, businesses, and industries suitable to the sex." . . . "By this means would many hands,

which would otherwise be occupied with these callings, be released for agriculture, and secure ways opened for the support and subsistence of a great number of widows and fatherless girl children bereaved by the ravages of war."

The Select Committee appointed recommended that unprovided-for women should be granted the right to carry on the activities in question in the towns, on condition that they applied to the magistrate and paid for the licence to trade. This proposed privilege, however, was not to extend beyond the following Parliament, as "a more complete decision in the matter ought to be taken." Moreover, the Committee recommended that those women pursuing the business enumerated in the Santesson motion "should be strongly exhorted to employ suitable women as their assistants rather than men," as the latter should be employed in such occupations as required "deeper knowledge or greater physical strength."

There was discussion on the question in the Lower House only. Burgermaster Norström considered that women ought not to be allowed "to make use of male help in their work," and that the proposed privilege should only apply to the "very poorest, or persons who were born to it." Burgermaster Norström assumed also the rôle of guardian of morals. "I believe," said he, "that an unlimited right for the female sex to engage in work with men would leave them altogether too

much opportunity for improper behaviour, and thus contribute to the destruction of morality."

Alderman Wasell spoke warmly in support of the motion, "as," said he, "there is now opened for half of the members of our community, who formerly, to put it shortly, were excluded from the liberty to get their own living in the most suitable way for themselves and their dependents, an opportunity for decent and honourable means of livelihood, and the support of the household through diligence and industry. Not only will the male sex derive therefrom the greatest benefit, but will not also the other sex, far from being exposed to the danger of corrupted morals and impropriety, rather gain, through an honourable, secure, and independent existence, a powerful protection against persecution? It is not from the workshops, where the day is occupied in lawful industry, that one generally receives cause for complaint about unpleasing subjects for criminal procedure." It was maintained that night-work in the factories was not suitable for women.

The motion, however, was not without its opponents, but these were in a decided minority, so that the Committee's proposal was adopted without difficulty. The rest of the House gave its assent without a debate, as indicated in the foregoing.

A petition was also laid before the King, in which it was stated that "the question of the necessity of a wider opening to means of gaining a livelihood for needy persons among the female sex has awakened in the estates of the realm the notice and compassion which the needs of this sex demand, and which humanity and justice call for. . . . This sex should not be deprived of the right founded on inherent justice of contributing to its support by the use of its capability for work. There were several trades and callings which in the nature of things were suitable to woman, and should be practised by her with ease and skill."

There it remained, however. Women had to wait for freedom to get their own living for many a long year, although the question in the history of Parliament was at least 115 years old. But woman has in all times learned to wait when it was a question of receiving rights which were due to her as a member of the community.

These voices from the Riksdag, how they echo down to us for more than a century! Truly one may say of men and their ways, "The more they change, the more they are the same thing." (All honour and gratitude, in passing, to Alderman Wasell and his like!) But oh, my sisters, why should we try to get on the grass? Should we not be thankful that they have allowed us to stay on the Earth at all?—A. F.

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BILL.

Last Friday, MR. GALBRAITH (U., East Surrey) moved, and MR. RENTOUL (U., Lowestoft) seconded the Adoption of Children Bill, which provides for the legal adoption of children in this country. Under the Bill the adopter must not be under the age of 25, and not less than 21 years older than the child to be adopted. An adoption order cannot be made, unless under exceptional circumstances, except with the consent of every person who is a parent or guardian of the infant to be adopted, nor upon the application of one of two spouses without the consent of the other spouse; nor in favour of any applicant who is not resident and domiciled in England or Wales; nor in respect of any infant not so domiciled. Various other safeguards are provided for the protection of the adopted child, it being implied throughout the Bill that the welfare of this child is the most important consideration; and adoption orders are to be made by the High Court, or a Court of summary jurisdiction.

In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, which met with a general chorus of approval, Mr. Galbraith said that so long ago as 1920 MR. SHORTT, who was at that time Home Secretary, appointed a Committee, presided over by Sir Alfred Hopkinson, to consider

whether it was desirable to make legal provision for the adoption of children in this country and, if so, what form such provision should take. After numerous sittings and the examination of a large number of witnesses, this Committee issued a Report in 1921, in which it expressed the opinion very clearly that legal adoption was desirable, and that the question was an urgent one. As a result, six private Members' Bills were introduced, some of them securing a Second Reading, but none of them reached the Statute Book. In April, 1924, MR. HENDERSON, who was then Home Secretary, appointed another Committee, presided over by Mr. Justice Tomlin "to examine the problem of child adoption from the point of view of possible legislation, and to report upon the main provisions, which, in their view, should be included in a Bill on the subject." Miss Dorothy Jewson was a member of this Committee, and, later, Mrs. Wilson-Fox was appointed to it. The Tomlin Committee issued two Reports, one in April, 1925, which expressed the view that a case had been made for giving legal effect to the adoption of children in this country, subject to proper safeguards; and the second in July last, in which the Committee recommended a draft Bill dealing with this question. This was the Bill discussed by the House of Commons last Friday.

During the Debate it was pointed out that for many years France has had a system of legal adoption, and that there is some system of legal adoption in nearly all the countries of Europe. America first legalised adoption in 1851; Canada, New Zealand, and Australia have legal adoption; and in India there has been a system of adoption from time immemorial. It was claimed by the speakers that legalised adoption in this country was long overdue.

SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS (Home Secretary) declared himself a whole-hearted supporter of this Bill. There was some difference of opinion among Members as to whether the county courts or the ordinary police courts should make the adoption orders; but the majority, including the Home Secretary, seemed to be in favour of the latter. MR. PALN (Lab., Newcastle, W.) thought that the homes into which children were adopted should be open to inspection, but the general feeling was that when children were adopted, the adopters really stood in the relation of parents to those children, and would naturally resent any inspection by authorities. Should there be cases of cruelty, and there are cases of cruelty by natural parents, the activity of neighbours, the law of the land, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, would be sufficient to deal with those cases. Miss WILKINSON (Lab., E. Middlesbrough) wanted some provision made so that an adoption order should not be irrevocable if it was made under stress of adverse circumstances. She also pointed out the danger of a child being adopted by rather empty-headed women simply because of its attractive blue eyes and fluffy hair, and then when it reached the gawky age failing to retain the interest and affection of its adopter. MRS. PHILIPSON (U., Berwick-on-Tweed), on the other hand, said it was her experience to have met many women who had adopted children for the love of those children, and welcomed the Bill because it would please so many women in the country.

This Bill was given a Second Reading without a Division and committed to a Standing Committee.

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WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, March 5th, at 3 p.m.
Hampstead Branch. Members' Meeting at 53, Willow Road, N.W.3.

Thursday, March 11th, at 5.30 p.m.
Political Sub-Committee Meeting, at the Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1.

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

DARE TO BE FREE.

Saturday, March 20th, at 10 a.m.
National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

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

Saturday, July 3rd.
Great Combined Equal Political Rights Procession and Hyde Park Demonstration.

PROVINCES.

Friday, March 5th, at 3 p.m.
Ashford Branch. Elocution Class at Hempsted Street Hall, conducted by Mrs. Miles.

Saturday, March 6th, at 3 p.m.
Portsmouth Branch. Jumble Sale at Long's Memorial Hall (Small Hall).

Saturday, March 6th, at 3 p.m.
Deal Branch. Members' Meeting at 35, Victoria Road, to discuss resolutions for Annual Conference.

Friday, March 12th, at 3.15 p.m.
Portsmouth Branch. Public Meeting at Mikado Café, Elm Grove. Speaker: Dr. Mary Scharlieb. Subject: "Conception Control, from a Doctor's point of view."

Friday, March 12th, at 8 p.m.
Deal Branch. Public Meeting at Clarendon Tea Lounge. Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations." Chair: E. T. Chittenden, Esq.

Saturday, March 13th, at 3 p.m.
Upper Walmer Branch. Public Meeting at Upper Walmer Parish Hall. Speaker: Mrs. Northcroft. Subject: "Women at Work in the League of Nations." Chair: Dorrington Boyle, Esq., J.P.

Friday, March 26th, at 3 p.m.
Ashford Branch. Members' Meeting at the Hempsted Street Hall. Monday, March 29th, at 7.30 p.m.

Hastings Branch. Public Meeting at the Grand Hotel. Speaker: Mrs. Muriel Matters Porter. Subject: "Has Woman Creative and Constructive Ability?" Chair: Mrs. Strickland.

SCOTLAND.

Friday, March 5th, at 7.45 p.m.
Glasgow Branch. Public Meeting in the Berkeley Hall, St. Andrew's Halls, Kent Street (see Branch Note).

Monday, March 8th, at 3 p.m.
Rothesay Branch. Members' Meeting in the Norman Stewart Institute. Tea. Collection.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Saturday, March 6th, at 3 p.m.
Saturday Speech Club, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Debate: "That Prohibition is a necessity for this Country."

Opener: Mr. George B. Wilson, B.A. (Political and Literary Secretary of the United Kingdom Alliance). Opposer: Mrs. Whiton (Secretary of the True Temperance Association).

Monday, March 8th, at 7 p.m.
Electrical Association for Women. E.L.M.A. Lighting Service Bureau (top floor), 15, Savoy Street, W.C.2. Subject: "Leading Principles in practice of wiring buildings, recent progress in material accessories, with demonstration of faults, their repair, and the unkeep of electrical apparatus."

Monday, March 8th, at 7.45 p.m.
Fabian Women's Group, 25, Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W.1. Annual Dinner at Stewart's, 50, Bond Street, Piccadilly.

Monday, March 8th, at 8 p.m.
Theosophical Order of Service, 6, Tavistock Square, W.C.1. Speaker: Miss Eaton (Vice-Chairman, Howard League for Penal Reform). Subject: "Children's Courts and Probation." Chair: Dr. Chella Hankin.

Tuesday, March 9th, at 5.30 p.m.
London Society for Women's Service, 35, Marsham Street, Westminster. Speaker: Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, D.Sc., Ph.D., LL.D., F.L.S., J.P. Subject: "The International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1926."

Thursday, March 11th, at 5 p.m.
Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street, S.W. Speaker: Miss Lena Ashwell. Subject: "Drama for the People."

Friday, March 12th, at 6.30 p.m.
Women's Engineering Society, 26, George Street, Hanover Square, W.1. Speaker: Mrs. Shaw Scott, B.Sc. Subject: "Women's Contribution to Metallurgy."

BRANCH NOTES.

ASHFORD.

Mrs. Mustard was warmly welcomed by a well-attended meeting of members last Friday. After the resolutions for the Annual Conference were read and discussed, Mrs. Kither, in a

few well-chosen remarks, introduced the speaker, who gave a convincing speech on the subject of "What Women expect from the Present Government." Mrs. Miles has commenced the elocution classes; they are to be held every fortnight at the Hempsted Street Hall; the second one will be held next Friday at 3 p.m. On the last Friday in March there will be a Branch meeting at 3 o'clock.

DEAL.

A Branch meeting of members was held on Wednesday, February 17th, in Deal, when the resolutions for the General Conference were read and discussed; but, owing to the subject-matter being so extensive, it was found impossible to fully consider every resolution in the time, so another meeting has been arranged for Saturday, March 6th, when they will be again brought forward for consideration and discussion before returning to Headquarters. We are pleased to be able to report that the meeting was better attended than some others we have had, and we hope this means the beginning of growth both in numbers and interest. We have Miss Lenton with us now, and feel encouraged by her zeal, and are glad of her experience in helping out, at present, quite small Branch to be more firmly established as time goes on. Two public meetings are arranged for March 12th and 13th, one in Deal, the other in Walmer, when Mrs. Northcroft has promised to speak on the subject of "Women at work in the League of Nations." We hope also to arrange a large Equal Franchise meeting in the near future, of which due notice will be given. (Hon. Sec.) MISS ISABEL ORMAN.

HASTINGS.

We had a members' meeting at 1, St. Paul's Place, last Wednesday. Mrs. Darent Harrison presided. The resolutions for the Annual Conference were read and discussed. It was decided to ask Mrs. Prelooker to act as our delegate. A resolution was passed at this Meeting and sent to the local branch of the League of Nations Union: "That the meeting of the Hastings and St. Leonards Branch of the Women's Freedom League pledges itself to support the aims and objects of the League of Nations, and appoints Mrs. Darent Harrison to represent it on the Hastings and St. Leonards Branch of the League of Nations Union." Will members remember that the next public meeting will be held at the Grand Restaurant on Monday, March 29th, at 7.30—Speaker, Mrs. Muriel Matters Porter; Chair, Mrs. Strickland.

GLASGOW.

On Friday, March 5th, a public meeting will be held on "Equal Opportunities" in the Berkeley Hall, St. Andrew's Halls, Kent Street, at 7.45 p.m. Doors open 7.15 p.m. Chair: Miss Melville, J.P., M.A., B.D. Speakers: Miss Eunice Murray (President, Glasgow Branch, Women's Freedom League), Dr. M. Katherine Chapman, Miss Isabel Hamilton, L.L.A., F.E.I.S., the Rev. Henry S. McClelland, B.A., B.D., Mr. John, and others. (Org.) LILIAN LENTON.

ROTHESAY.

A Branch meeting will take place in the Norman Stewart Institute on Monday, March 8th, at 3 p.m. Tea. Collection. Speaker to be announced later. (Org.) LILIAN LENTON.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT.

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

Parcels of clothing and boots are still arriving, so, as the people are not nearly fitted out yet, we are proposing to have another small sale on Tuesday next. A parcel of clothing sent down by the Mayor of Battersea enabled us to gratify the desire of a little fatherless girl for a blue serge "gym" dress, after trying to do so for a whole year; now her small sister wants one as well; a coat for a woman who has been ill and is now recovering. Mrs. Ganley also sent a parcel of clothing, which we have been able to make good use of. We still need a bolster and two pillows for a sick woman, and a mattress cover for a poor widow who wants to keep things nice and finds it very hard. We are arranging a concert on Thursday, March 18th, at Nine Elms Baths, Nine Elms Lane, admission 6d. and 1s., with a few numbered reserved seats at 2s. 6d. The Mayor of Battersea will be in the chair, and music will be rendered by students of Guildhall School of Music and local friends. (Hon. Sec.) MISS A. M. COLE.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL & POLITICAL ALLIANCE

St. Joan's Social & Political Alliance held a most successful meeting at Caxton Hall, on February 25th, to arouse interest in the International Woman Suffrage Alliance Paris Congress. Councillor Mrs. V. M. Crawford presiding. Mme. Malaterre Sellier, President of the Paris Suffrage Society made an eloquent plea for Englishwomen "to come over and help us" to obtain the just rights of citizenship for Frenchwomen. Mrs. Corbett Ashby, President of the International Women Suffrage Alliance, gave a wonderful account of the present position of women throughout the world, and begged her audience to do their utmost to attend the Congress which was to be held in La Sorbonne. The sum of ten guineas was collected in the room, as a contribution from St. Joan's Social & Political Alliance towards the expenses of the Congress.

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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, March 7th. 3.30 p.m. Music. Lecture. Mr. E. Scrymgeour, M.P. 6.30 p.m. Miss Maude Royden: "Forgiveness."

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

MISS LIND-AF-HAGEBY will Lecture on "Spiritualism and the Modern Mind," at the Grotrian Hall, 155, Wigmore Street, W.1, on Thursday, March 11th, at 8 p.m. Chair: Mr. Hannan Swaffer. Tickets 2/6 and 1/6, from Hall, or London Spiritualist Alliance Ltd., 16, Queensberry Place, S.W.7.

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