

THE VOTE.
APRIL 22, 1927.

GOVERNMENT BILL PROMISED!

THE VOTE

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

VOL. XXVIII. No. 913. (Registered at
the G.P.O.)

ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 1927

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

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

A POOR MAN'S LAWYER.

THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN.

WOMEN ON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCILS.

GOVERNMENT BILL PROMISED.

MARRIED WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT.

THE LAST PRE-RAPHAELITE.

IN PARLIAMENT.

FREE STATE AND WOMEN JURORS.

A POOR MAN'S LAWYER.

MISS BERTHEN.

Educated at Birkenhead (Higher Tranmere High School) and Lausanne, entering the teaching profession, Miss Berthen found the big interest of her life in social reform, in working among those poor in this world's goods, among those who so often suffer because they are ignorant of possible ways by which their suffering may be avoided, and among the oppressed and the unhappy. Her earliest work was undertaken with the St. Paul's Girls' Social Union in Mile End, and it was while endeavouring to help the poor people of that neighbourhood that the thought came to her, how useful it would be to have legal knowledge to assist them in their difficulties, and not only legal knowledge, but legal power to act. In such matters as maintenance orders and many other situations when the law may be quite clear, the citizen loses much of its benefit through ignorance, perhaps, of the meaning of a judgment, perhaps of the scope of its power, perhaps of his or her own power as a citizen to claim some right or relief. And so, towards middle age, Miss Berthen the teacher became Miss Berthen the lawyer. Not for any love of the law, but to add to the good she wished to do, when the doors of the legal profession swung open to admit women, she took the first chance she had, and in September, 1920, started to enter those open doors. She had a university degree, having read Philosophy, so had only three years to serve her articles, at the end of which time she set up on her own, among her own beloved poor people, in the Mile End Road. Miss Berthen has a deeply-felt dislike to publicity, having successfully evaded both willing and unwilling photography; but, speak to her of her work, and one feels the real person, giving her life in generous service to others, but with a practical intelligence, not too common among social workers. Just as she saw that a legal training and legal experience would help her in the soundest direction of being able to show those in difficulties how best they could help themselves, so she could see that she was of better value as a practising lawyer than as a semi-amateur. She put up her plate and took all cases that came, devoting only three evenings a week to being a "Poor Man's Lawyer." Intensely disliking even the mildest public appearance in Court, she nevertheless went through with her cases.

Now, however, she has a partner, and on to him go as many Court cases as she can put there, while she takes on conveyancing and other non-Court work. All the time she was entering and since, while she has been establishing herself in her new profession, there has continued the social work, which is her real absorbing interest. How many friends has she made, how many stories could be told of this little, quiet woman, quick in eye and movement, brown-coloured, who, to watch, brings to mind Jenny Wren! Her mind, disciplined by training, clarified and strengthened by knowledge, is able to clear up difficulties, to show the way to relief to countless of her neighbours who are in unhappy circumstances. Looking at her, one feels that the heart which so felt for poor people in her early youth has now found that peace which only comes from success, from finding some effective means of relieving the distress which wounds it.

As to whether the legal profession is one into which girls should be encouraged to enter, Miss Berthen sees nothing in it which either man or woman should, as man or as woman, find peculiarly suitable. Instead, she feels that it is a distinct type of mind which is required to make a good lawyer, a type to be found among women as often as among men. It is rather with parents, and more particularly with fathers, that Miss Berthen sees difficulties. Parents are still few, and fathers most rare, who are prepared to take risks with their daughters, or, rather, to risk their own money on their daughters. And entry into the legal profession is costly, and the period between entry and the securing of a livelihood may be long and requires bridging with hard cash. This initial financial difficulty surmounted, Miss Berthen sees no reason why the right type of woman should not succeed, as the right type of man lawyer. She must have plenty of grip, be able to hold on, and to go on holding on; she must face being exposed still, and for some years to come, to the relentless light that beats upon the pioneer; she must steadfastly maintain that super-standard of intelligence and conduct demanded of all pioneers. In return, she will find an intense human interest in her work, will find herself tackling problems of humanity, the solving of which more than repays the pain suffered in preparation.

THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN.

Dame Rachel Crowdy, D.B.E., Chief of the Social Section of the Secretariat of the League of Nations and Secretary of the Special Body of Experts on the Traffic in Women and Children, addressed a meeting in the Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, on April 7th.

Dealing with the Report, Part I of which has now been published, she said the experts found the traffic a cold-blooded money affair, run for profit and profit alone. The Report therefore treated it as a business, a market ruled by demand and supply. In this, she thought, lay the strength of the Report. The League's work had stimulated public opinion. This Report had established a League record; 5,000 copies had been sold in the last two weeks, and the 5th edition was being printed. Japan had been making the most rapid progress; in 1924, they sent to all their Consuls to repatriate every Japanese prostitute at the Government's expense, and a few days before she had received a copy of a draft law, to be submitted to the Japanese Government this year, to abolish all State regulation and registration in Japan by 1933. In France, in 1904, an Extra-Parliamentary Committee was appointed by the Government; it consisted of 59 men and one woman (Mme. Avril de Sainte-Croix) in the Chair. Their Report after four years' hard work condemned Regulation. A Bill had been drafted to close licensed houses within three years. Japan was raising its marriage age for girls to 16, and Turkey to 15.

The men and women who investigated the Traffic for the Inquiry took their lives in their hands, and she thought that the danger would last through their lives.

The remedy for the Traffic lay chiefly in an enlightened public opinion. She wanted "the smoke-screen of mystery blown away." Not only older people, but our young people must be educated and told these facts, and shown the foul and hideous degradation of women to which the thoughtless and reckless larkiness of immorality by young men and women leads. Questions were often asked as to how many girls went abroad alone with passports, but to abolish the Traffic "we should educate the young men, rather than restrict too much the freedom of the young women."

LEAGUE OF NATIONS COMMITTEE ON INFANT WELFARE.

At a meeting of the Council for the Representation of Women in the League of Nations, held at Women's Service House, Westminster, on April 8th, Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon warmly welcomed Dame Janet Campbell, D.B.E., M.D., M.S., the British Representative on the League of Nations Committee on Infant Welfare, who had come to speak on the work of that Committee. Mrs. Gordon said it was impossible to praise too highly Dame Janet's gift of lucid exposition, her great organising ability, or her fine statesmanship in dealing with human problems.

Dame Janet said that the Committee on Infant Welfare met in Geneva, and decided upon an Inquiry from an international point of view, this Inquiry to be divided into three branches: (1) Immunisation against measles, scarlet fever, and diphtheria. This, she thought, would be dealt with by the Health Committee of the League; (2) the education of the doctor, medical students, health visitors, etc., in regard to child welfare. Each member agreed to explore the position in his own country; (3) an Inquiry into Infant Mortality in different European countries. Infant mortality had decreased in every country since 1900, and especially among older babies during the last months of their first year. We are still faced with the problem of the high mortality during the first weeks after birth, in which there has not yet been much reduction. The Committee has set itself to find out, as far as possible, the precise causes of death during the first year of life, and particularly why so many babies still die in their first month. Death certificates of "debility," or "wasting," or "prematurity," were often unreliable, because indefinite. Each member agreed to make arrange-

ments for an investigation in his own country into all cases of deaths of infants occurring during a period of 12 months in certain selected districts, two urban and two rural, and including districts of high and low infant death-rate. A uniform questionnaire would be used in the different countries.

The Inquiry had already started in our own country, and in France, Holland and Austria. This month it was starting in Germany. The organisation was somewhat difficult in certain countries; our well-established sanitary service made it comparatively easy here, and the Health Authorities would do all they could, helped by hospitals, doctors, nurses, and health visitors and workers. The Inquiry was being taken up very seriously by the various authorities, and great pains would be taken to find what actually caused every baby's death.

At the end of the 12 months she thought that, by comparing the figures arrived at in town and rural districts in the various countries, some really useful facts might be established on which to base suggestions and plans for further progress in infant welfare.

EQUAL FRANCHISE.

The following statement has been issued to the Press, signed by the Hon. Treasurer and the Secretary of the Women's Freedom League:—

April 13th, 1927.

Prime Minister's Franchise Statement.

The Women's Freedom League congratulates the Prime Minister on his decision to introduce a Bill in the next Session to equalise the franchise at the age of 21. We strongly press him, however, to bring in this Bill and to pass it into law as speedily as possible, so that not even by a possible "unexpected catastrophe" can women be prevented from voting at the same age and on the same terms as men at the next General Election. We can assure Mr. Baldwin that organised women throughout the country will give every support to his determination to place upon the Statute Book this measure of justice, so long overdue.

EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE.

Prime Minister's Statement.

We welcome the statement made by the Prime Minister, that he will bring in a Bill next Session to give women Equal Franchise at 21, and we understand that this will be a simple measure, not complicated with other electoral matters. We urge, however, that this Bill shall be brought in and passed into law at the earliest possible moment, in order to prevent any danger of women not being on the next Annual Register in the event of an early General Election.

(Hon. Sec.) D. D. SOLOMON.

SCHOOLMASTERS IN CONFERENCE.

The National Association of Schoolmasters is evidently the shallow, last ditch of the anti-feminist. They are only eight years old, and the speech made by their President at the recent annual meeting was suited to their years. This Association dislikes the competition of women for the headships of mixed schools, and, conscious of the advancing tide of public opinion in favour of equal opportunity to men and women for these much-coveted posts, retires to its little ditch, and from there throws empty abuse to stem the advance. The President's remarks are not worth quoting, but one must regret that there are so many schoolmasters who think as he does, and that all of them are influencing boys and girls of the nation. Bad in every way as it is, that men holding the views of womanhood given expression to by the President of this National Association of Schoolmasters, should day after day be empowered to impress these views on young boys, what words can adequately describe the insult added to the injury by also placing them in charge of young girls!

WOMEN ON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCILS.

Last week we gave the names of 169 Urban District Councils in England and Wales which possess women members; to these, we have to add eight:—

BRAINTREE.—Mrs. E. L. Mabbs.
DESBOROUGH.—Mrs. Melinda Bosworth.
EARSDON.—Mrs. E. Veitch.
HOLLINGWORTH (Derbyshire).—Councillor Lena Graham.
LEATHERHEAD (Surrey).—*Mrs. K. S. Limming.
MEXBOROUGH (Yorks).—Mrs. Marie Singleton.
MILTON REGIS (Kent).—Mrs. S. Maundrell, J.P.
SEVENOAKS.—Mrs. B. Daws.

So far, we have heard from 489 Councils which are without a single woman member. These are:—

ABERCARN, Abergele and Pensarn, Abertillery, Abram, Adlington, Adwick-le-Street, Alderley Edge, Alford, Alfreton, Alsager, Altofts, Alton, Altrincham, Amble, Amblecote, Amptill, Ardsley, East and West, Arnold, Ashbourne, Ashburton, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Ashby Woulds, Ashington, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Ashton-upon-Mersey, Aspatria, Audenshaw, Audley, Awre, Axminster.

BAILDON, Bakewell, Baldock, Bampton, Barking, Barmouth, Barnard Castle, Barnoldswick, Barrowford, Barton-upon-Humber, Baslow and Bubnell, Battle, Beckenham, Bedlingtonshire, Bedwas and Machen, Bedwelty, Belper, Belston, Benfieldside, Bentley-with-Arksey, Bethesda, Biddulph, Billinge, Billingham, Bingley, Birkenshaw, Birstall, Bishop's Stortford, Blackrod, Blaenavon, Bolsover, Bolton-upon-Dearne, Bonsall, Bradford-on-Avon, Brampton and Walton, Brandon and Byshottles, Brentford and Chiswick, Brentwood, Brierfield, Brigg, Brixham, Bromyard, Brownhills, Buckfastleigh, Buckhurst Hill, Buckley, Buglawton, Builth Wells, Bulkington, Bungay, Burnham-on-Crouch, Burnham-on-Sea, Burley-in-Wharfedale, Bury Port, Burton Latimer, Bushey, Biggleswade.

CALLINGTON, Calverley, Cannock, Carlton, Castleford, Caterham, Chadderton, Chatteris, Cheadle and Gatley, Chepstow, Cheriton, Chesham, Cheshunt, Chester-le-Street, Chorleywood, Church, Cirencester, Clay Cross, Clayton, Clayton-le-Moors, Cleethorpes, Coalville, Cockermouth, Coleford, Connah's Quay, Consett, Coseley, Cottingham, Cowes, Cramlington, Crewkerne, Crompton, Crook, Croston, Cudworth, Cwmaman.

DARFIELD, Dartford, Darton, Denby and Cumberworth, Denholme, Denton, Dereham, Diss, Dolgelly, Downham Market, Drighlington.

EARBY, East Barnet Valley, East Cowes, East Grinstead, East and West Molesey, Eastleigh and Bishopstoke, Eastwood, Ebbw Vale, Egham, Elland, Ellesmere, Emley, Esar and The Dittons, Exmouth.

FAILSWORTH, Fareham, Farsley, Featherstone, Felixstowe, Felling, Feltham, Festiniog, Filey, Fleet, Fleetwood, Flockton, Formby, Friern Barnet, Frome, Fulwood.

GARFORTH, Gildersome, Glemsford, Glyncoirwg, Golborne, Golcar, Goodwick, Goole, Gosforth, Grange, Greasborough, Great Driffield, Guisborough, Guiseley, Gunthwaite and Ingbirchworth.

HADLEIGH, Hale, Halesowen, Halesworth, Halstead, Hampton, Hampton Wick, Harpenden, Harrington, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Haverhill, Hay, Hayle, Hayward's Heath, Haworth, Hazel Grove and Bramhall, Heckmondwike, Herne Bay, Hesse, Heston and Isleworth, Hexham, Heysham, Highbridge, Hinckley, Hinderwell, Hindley, Hipperholme, Hitchin, Hoddesdon, Holbeach, Holme Cultram, Holmfirth, Holsworthy, Holywell, Honley, Hoole, Horbury, Horncastle, Hornsea, Horsforth, Horwich, Hoyland, Hoyland Swaine, Hucknall, Hunsworth, Huthwaite.

ILFRACOME, Ilkley, Ilminster, Ince-in-Makerfield. KENILWORTH, Keswick, Kettering, Kirby Lonsdale, Kildgrove, Kingsbridge, Kingsbury, Kingswood,

Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Kirkham, Kirkheaton, Kirklington-cum-Upsland, Knottingley.

LATHOM AND BURSCOUGH, Leadgate, Leek, Leighton Buzzard, Linslade, Linthwaite, Litherland, Littleborough, Little Crosby, Little Hulton, Llandrindod Wells, Llandudno, Llanfairfechan, Llanfrecfa Upper, Llantarnam, Llanwrytyd Wells, Loftus, Long Eaton, Longbenton, Loos, Loughton, Luddenden Foot, Ludgvan, Lye and Wollescote.

MABLETHORPE AND SUTTON, Machynlleth, Madron, Mallwyd, Malton, March, Market Drayton, Market Harborough, Marlow, Marsden, Maryport, Middlewich, Midsomer Norton, Milnrow, Mirfield, Mottram-in-Longdendale, Mountain Ash, Mynyddislwyn, Mytholmroyd.

NAILSWORTH, Nantwich, Narberth, Nestin and Parkgate, New Mill (Yorks), New Mills, Newbiggin, Newnham, Newport (Salop), Newport Pagnell, Newton Abbot, Northallerton, North Bromsgrove, North Darley, North Walsham, Northwich, Norton.

OADBY, Oakengates, Oakham, Oakworth, Ormskirk, Otley, Oundle, Oxenhope.

PADIHAM, Padstow, Paignton, Paul, Penge, Penistone, Penrith, Perry Barr, Phillack, Pocklington, Pontypool, Pontypridd, Portishead, Portland, Portmadoc, Preesall, Prescott, Prestatyn, Presteign.

QUARRY BANK, Queensbury, Quorn.

RADCLIFFE, Radstock, Rainford, Ramsbottom, Ramsey, Raunds, Rawdon, Rawmarsh, Redditch, Redruth, Rhyl, Rhymney, Rickmansworth, Risca, Rishworth, Romford, Rothwell (Northants), Rothwell (Yorks), Rowley Regis, Roxby-cum-Risby, Royston, Rugby, Rugeley, Runcorn, Rushden, Ryton.

SADDLEWORTH, St. Austell, St. Helens, Salcombe, Sale, Sandbach, Scalby, Scammonden, Seaford, Seaton, Seaton Delaval, Sedgley, Seghill, Shanklin, Shap, Shelf, Shelley, Shepley, Shepshed, Shepton Mallet, Sherborne, Shildon and East Thicket, Shipley, Shobury, Shoreham-by-Sea, Sidmouth, Silsden, Skelmanthorpe, Skelmersdale, Skelton and Brotton, Skipton, Slaithwaite, Sleaford, Slough, South Crosland, South Darley, Southowram, Southwick, Spalding, Spennborough, Spennymoor, Springhead, Staines, Stainland, Standish-with-Langtree, Stanhope, Stevenage, Stocksbridge, Stone, Stourport, Stow-on-the-Wold, Street, Stroud, Sunbury-on-Thames, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Sutton Bridge, Swadlincote, Swaffham, Swanage.

TARPORLEY, Tavistock, Tetbury, Tettenhall, Thame, The Matlocks, Thornton, Tickhill, Tilbury, Tipton, Tooting, Towyn, Tring, Trowbridge, Thurstonland and Farnley Tyas, Thurlstone, Turton, Tyldesley.

UCKFIELD, Upholland, Usk, Uttoxeter, Uxbridge.

WADEBRIDGE, Walton-le-Dale, Walton-on-the-Naze, Wanstead, Warblington, Wardle, Ware, Warminster, Warsop, Watchet, Waterloo-with-Seaford, Wath-upon-Dearne, Wednesfield, Weetslade, Wellingborough, Wem, Wembley, West Bridgford, Westbury-on-Severn, Weybridge, Whickham, Whitby, Whitefield, Whittlesey, Whitwood, Whitworth, Wigston Magna, Wigton, Willenhall, Wilverscote, Wimborne Minster, Windlesham, Winsford, Wicksworth, Withernsea, Withnell, Witrey, Woodbridge, Wolverton, Wombwell, Woodford, Woodhall Spa, Worksop, Worsborough, Wrotham.

YEADON, Yeadley-cum-Whaley, Yiewsley.

W.F.L. PAMPHLETS, ETC.

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THE VOTE.

Proprietors: THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
Offices: 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
FRIDAY, APRIL 22nd, 1927.

Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."
Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

EDITORIAL.

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

GOVERNMENT BILL PROMISED.

21 AND EQUALITY.

The women's cause has had another triumph in this country. Equal Franchise for women with men is not yet won, but, for the first time in the history of our suffrage movement, the Government has definitely promised to introduce an Equal Franchise Bill, granting the Parliamentary vote to women at 21 years and on the same terms as men. We warmly congratulate Mr. Baldwin on making this promise on behalf of the Government, and we rely upon him to see that the Bill is put through all its stages into law next Session, so that the women voters shall not be prevented, through any political "unexpected catastrophe," from being put on the Register in time to vote at the next General Election, whenever it may come. This Franchise Bill should take priority of all other Bills, in order to make sure of the Prime Minister's and the Home Secretary's pledges—that women shall have equal voting rights with men at the next election—being redeemed. Women themselves must give every support to Mr. Baldwin in his efforts to get this measure on the Statute Book at the earliest possible moment. In every constituency public opinion must be aroused in favour of it, and, until Equal Franchise is the law of the land, women and men suffragists must leave no stone unturned to hasten its passage through both Houses of Parliament. Indeed, all those who believe in our cause must now work as they have never worked before, in order to bring Equal Franchise, which is now in sight, really within women's grasp well before the next General Election takes place. Every Member of Parliament, no matter to which Party he or she belongs, must be made to understand that their constituents expect them, first of all, to press the Government for an early introduction of this Equal Franchise Bill, then to support it through all its stages into law, and to protest vigorously against any attempt to delay its progress. We believe that this work in every constituency is absolutely necessary to convince all members of the Government that this Bill has behind it the overwhelming weight of public opinion. To get this measure on the Statute Book will make a whole world of difference to the position and outlook of British women. Not only will it give the Parliamentary vote to 2,000,000 new women voters over the age of 30, and nearly 3,000,000 between the ages of 21 and 30, but the removal of the political inferiority of women will inevitably raise the status of every woman in the land. Once women have secured political equality with men, it will be so much easier to secure their economic equality. Moreover, the promised Government measure, when it reaches the Statute Book, will place British women on an equal political footing with women in the Dominions, in India, in Burma, in America, in Germany, in the Scandinavian countries, in Iceland, in Russia, and in Czechoslovakia, in all of which countries women have equal voting rights with their countrymen, the vote being given to men and women in Burma on the same terms at the age of 18! The equal enfranchisement of women and men in this country is a measure of justice now long overdue. It is a political question of first-class importance among a people who believe in democratic government. We want to see it settled once for all in the only way it can be settled—

by a simple Equal Franchise Bill on the Statute Book—at the earliest possible date; and we confidently call upon all our members and friends to help us to arouse public opinion in favour of Equal Franchise in every constituency throughout the country.

MARRIED WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT.

Next Friday (April 20th), Sir Robert Newman's Married Women's (Employment) Bill comes up for its Second Reading in the House of Commons. The object of this Bill is to prevent the refusal to employ women in the public service by reason only of their being married, and it has the heartiest support of the Women's Freedom League. Last week, the London County Council adopted a recommendation of the General Purposes Committee to oppose the Bill on the ground that the discretion of local authorities in the matter of the conditions to the appointments made by them should remain unfettered, one of the members claiming that the Council had the right to make its own mistakes! We strongly protest against the discretion of any Council being used to penalise its women employees, or its right to make mistakes being upheld at the expense of women. The business of the London County Council, as well as that of other local governing authorities, is to see that the ratepayers' money is spent to the best advantage, and not wasted because of old-fashioned and out-of-date prejudices. If a man or a woman proves inefficient in his or her work, it is the duty of the Council to dismiss that employee and to find someone who can do the work properly, but it is not the duty of any Council to prejudice the case of a woman employee and to dismiss her when she marries, without any proof that her work is less valuable after than before marriage. Before marriage, in her work for the Council, she has gained considerable experience, which is of advantage to her work. To dismiss her, thereby wasting her experience, and to give her post to someone less experienced, is simply to waste the money of the ratepayers. Such a policy in the case of a woman teacher is neither honest nor just to the teacher herself or to the ratepayers, and is a distinct disadvantage to the children whom she teaches. We sincerely hope that Sir Robert Newman's Bill will get a Second Reading.

THE LAST PRE-RAPHAELITE.

We very greatly regret to record the death, on Good Friday, April 15th, at his residence, 18, Chesterford Gardens, Hampstead, in his 88th year, of Henry Holiday, after several weeks' illness.

With wide interests in art and beauty in every form, in reform, co-operation, peace, liberty and progress, Mr. Holiday was keenly interested in the suffrage movement. As an old friend of Mrs. Despard, he was an early and enthusiastic member of the Women's Freedom League, and a very welcome member, beautiful with silver hair and velvet coat, of our gatherings. He designed a charming cover for THE VOTE, and took the keenest interest in its welfare.

Entering the Royal Academy Art Schools at 15½, and at 19 seeing his first picture, "Durleston Bay," hung on the line, he followed it up by his "Burgess of Calais" (now at the Guildhall Gallery), the "Meeting of Dante and Beatrice," and many others.

He also executed drawings for stained glass, political cartoons for social reform and Home Rule, etc. (it was one of these of 1888 that he kindly gave us for reproduction in THE VOTE in 1922, when the Irish Free State was established), mural paintings, stained glass, and mosaic work, discovering the secret of the old blue enamel, and sculpture; he was also interested in science, and could read Greek, Latin, Arabic, French, German, and Norse. Mrs. Holiday, celebrated for embroidery and a skilled pianist, died in 1924. To Miss Winifred Holiday, our member for some years, we offer our deep sympathy.

Mr. Holiday will be especially remembered by our Hampstead Branch for the many occasions of its delightful summer parties at his beautiful home.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Women's Franchise.

Last Tuesday, in dealing with the business of the House, MR. CLYNES (Lab., Platting) asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Commander Eyres-Monsell) if he, on behalf of the Prime Minister, could say anything regarding the Prime Minister's assurance that he would endeavour to make a statement before the House rose on Thursday with regard to proposals to extend the franchise? COM. EYRES-MONSELL: I am not in a position to say when the Prime Minister will make a statement, but the right hon. Gentleman can rest assured that the statement will be made. MR. MACQUISTEN: Has my right hon. Friend observed the statement of the Solicitor-General (Sir Thomas Inskip) that, if a woman was capable of being a mother and bringing up her children, she should have the franchise? HON. MEMBERS: Order!

Women Franchise (Government Decision).

On Wednesday, MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE (Lab., W. Leicester) asked the Prime Minister whether he can now state the intentions of the Government with regard to the enfranchisement of women? THE PRIME MINISTER: The Government has given this matter its most careful consideration, and it has decided to introduce a Bill during the next Session for extending the Parliamentary franchise to women of 21 years of age and upwards on the same terms as men. MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE: In thanking the Prime Minister for his reply, may I take it that the Government intend to carry the Bill into law sufficiently early next Session so as to allow time for the new voters to be put on the next summer Register of the year 1928? THE PRIME MINISTER: Yes, but that is rather a difficult matter, technically. I would reply in this way: that, should the life of this Parliament last its normal length, there will be no difficulty in the new voters being able to vote. The only case in which the new voters would not be able to vote would be in the event of any unexpected, shall I say, catastrophe, bringing the life of this Parliament to an end. MR. CLYNES: Is there any intention to include in the Bill other features of the franchise than the one named? THE PRIME MINISTER: I am afraid I cannot give any further answer than I have given. The Bill will take some time to prepare. It will not be prepared before the next Session. MR. T. WILLIAMS (Lab., Don Valley): When the right hon. Gentleman refers to the next Session, does he mean the next autumn Session, or the Session of 1928? THE PRIME MINISTER: If the hon. Member reflects a moment, it will be present to his mind that I hope to bring this Session to an end at the end of July, and the new Session would begin in sufficient time to enable one or two principal measures of the next Session to be given a Second Reading before Christmas. VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Plymouth): Is it not true that when the Prime Minister received a deputation, he stated that it would be possible, even if this Parliament did not last its full time, to bring in a Bill and put these voters on the Register, so that they could vote in 1928? SIR ROBERT SANDERS (U., Wells): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in framing the Bill, he will take into consideration the question of redrafting the scale of election expenses? THE PRIME MINISTER: It is very early to enter upon the consideration of these points, but I think that is a perfectly fair question, and it is one which I should certainly desire should be discussed. VICE-ADMIRAL SIR REGINALD HALL: May I ask whether this increase of voters will entail redistribution? THE PRIME MINISTER: No, sir. CAPT. GARRO-JONES (Lib., South Hackney): May I ask the Prime Minister whether he remembers that the Home Secretary has given a specific pledge that these new voters will be added to the Register before the next election, and, therefore, if he advises a dissolution before that time, it will be tantamount to breaking the pledge of the Home Secretary?

Fishergirls (Travelling).

SIR ROBERT HAMILTON (Lib., Orkney and Shetland) asked the President of the Board of Trade if there are any special rules regarding the provision of proper accommodation for fishergirls travelling by ship to fishing centres during the season? SIR BURTON CHADWICK (Parliamentary Secretary, Board of Trade): There are no special rules applying to the accommodation of fishergirls, but every vessel which carries girls is required to hold a passenger certificate, which has to be renewed every year, and to comply with all the Regulations applicable to such certificates. When this question was the subject of a special inquiry by Board of Trade officers and a lady inspector of the Home Office in 1924, the Board of Trade were satisfied that the owners were doing all they could to meet the needs of this traffic, in addition to complying with the official Regulations. SIR R. HAMILTON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that conditions are not at all satisfactory at present, and will he be prepared to make further inquiry? SIR B. CHADWICK: I know the hon. Gentleman feels strongly on this subject, and, although we have examined it as recently as 1924, if he will send me any information he has, I will have it looked into again. MR. BARR (Lab., Motherwell): Will the Minister again submit to these shipping and railway companies a proposal to send the girls in relays, so that there will not be overcrowding at any particular time and at any particular place? That, I think, was considered before. MR. MACQUISTEN (U., Argyllshire): When the hon. Gentleman is making a further inspection, will he secure that lady or other inspectors travel on the boat with the girls in a stormy sea? They will see whether it is satisfactory or not. SIR B. CHADWICK: I have promised the hon. Member a further inquiry into the matter. No doubt the points brought up by hon. Members will be dealt with at the inquiry and given consideration. I think the hon. Member behind me (Mr. Macquisten) is wrong in suggesting that inspectors do not travel. I believe they do. COL. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark): May I suggest that some hon. Members should travel on the boats to see what they are like? MR. MACQUISTEN: May I say I am speaking from personal experience?

Ministry of Labour.

MR. GERALD HURST (U., Moss Side) asked the Minister of Labour whether there are any redundant male executive officers in the Ministry of Labour, and, if so, how many; whether any women have been appointed recently to this grade, or whether such appointments have been held up pending the absorption of the redundant men; whether any vacancies in this grade have recently been notified; and, if so, whether the posts are to be filled by men or women? MR. BETTERTON (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour): There are, at the present time, no redundant male junior executive officers in the Ministry of Labour. Since the 1st November, 1924, seven appointments of women officers have been made to this grade (three by promotion, and four by examination). Two vacancies for male junior executive officers have recently been announced.

Unemployment (Home Training Centres).

Replying to MISS BONDFIELD (Lab., Wallsend), MR. BETTERTON said that 740 women have received training at the South Shields Home Training Centre since 1923. Reports on seven courses held during 1925-26 show that an average of 72 per cent. of the women obtained work, and a special inquiry, carried out by the Superintendent, in respect of women trained from 1923 to April, 1926, showed that 47 per cent. were still in domestic work, and 58 per cent. in employment.

333 juveniles, from 16-18 years of age, have received training at the Chatham Home Training Centre since 1923, ten courses having been held. 98 per cent. of the girls trained obtained work on completion of train-

ing, and, from a special inquiry made by the Juvenile Employment Officer, covering a period of three years, 81 per cent. of the girls trained were shown to be still in domestic work, and 86 per cent. in employment. The eleventh course is now in operation, providing accommodation for 30 girls.

246 women received training at the Portsmouth Home Training Centre from 1923 to April, 1926, of whom 90 per cent. are known to have obtained domestic employment on completion of training. From a special inquiry made by the Superintendent in February, 1926, over a period of three years from 1923, information is available to show that 74 per cent. of the women trained during that period had already held positions in domestic employment for periods varying from six months to two years and upwards, the maximum period possible at the time of inquiry.

Traffic in Women (Report).

In reply to MR. CECIL WILSON (Lab., Attercliffe) and COL. DAY (Lab., Southwark, Central), MR. GODFREY LOCKER-LAMPSON (Under-Secretary, Foreign Office), said that it was impossible to forecast the action of foreign Governments regarding Part II of the Report, but he hoped the Council of the League would be able to take a decision at its next meeting in June.

Education.

Replying to SIR J. POWER (U., Wimbledon), and COM. BELLAIRS (U., Maidstone), LORD EUSTACE PERCY (President, Board of Education) said that in 1925-26 the number of children leaving elementary schools was 710,058. Pupils entering and leaving secondary schools on the Grant List were 86,908 and 78,209 respectively. In France, school attendance was obligatory from 6 to 13; in Holland, from 7 to 13; in Italy and Belgium, from 6 to 14; and in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, from 7 to 14.

Unemployment.

On the Motion for the Adjournment (Easter), a Debate on Unemployment took place. MISS SUSAN LAWRENCE (Lab., East Ham, W.) urged that more should be spent on training of unemployed women and young people. Last year's £292,000 was this year £261,000. Last year £70,000 was voted to train and equip women; this year £52,000, chiefly through the Central Committee for the Training of Unemployed Women. Last year's grant was £60,000; this year's only £45,000, and its most excellent and hopeful work was going to ruin. Its chief work was home training schemes for domestic service; 34,000 women, by the end of 1926, had been trained, and of these, 24,000 had done well in domestic service, instead of standing now outside the Employment Exchanges. Training in higher clerical work and nursery nursing was also given; 702, out of 787 trained, by the end of 1926 were known to be in good work. All this is ended. Nearly 3,000 women applied for these specialised courses. Domestic servants trained were 6,300 in 1925, 3,400 in 1926, and will be only 2,500 this year, though the demand continues.

MISS BONDFIELD (Lab., Wallsend) pleaded earnestly for the women's training centres. The Central Committee to-day found itself in a dire position; it was non-Party and composed of distinguished, loyal, and devoted women, and it had built up since 1915 a network of affiliated centres, of which only 25 remained. It was most difficult to work without any idea of continuity. They wanted the Ministry of Labour to recognise that training schemes would have to be a permanent, integral part of the Ministry's work. The narrowing of training to domestic service only had been a grave mistake, but this training was very popular and successful; yet now supplies were cut down, and many plans ended, though 100,000 women and 60,000 young people are on the Unemployment Register. Girls entered the classes shabby, draggled, starved-looking and hopeless, therefore unemployable; six weeks later, in the clean, new uniforms made by themselves, after good, hot food cooked by themselves, they

faced the world with courage and confidence to win success. The greatest wastefulness was to waste health, energy, and courage in compulsory idleness. It was less expensive to have the training schemes than to give them up.

MR. BETTERTON (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour) explained that cuts had to be made somewhere, so a cut was made in this vote. The Central Committee had been asked to work with the Overseas Settlement Department in training women for domestic service in Australia; 40 women would be in residence at a time for a 10 weeks' course. The cost, £7,500 for this year, would be provided by the Australian Government and by the Colonial Office under the Empire Settlement Act.

Adjournment.

The House adjourned until Tuesday, April 26th.

FREE STATE AND WOMEN JURORS.

The Free State Senate has passed the Juries Bill through the Committee stage, and adjourned until the 21st inst. The Bill, as passed by the Dail, exempts women from jury service, but gives women who wish to act as jurors the right to have their names placed on the Register. The Senate, by 19 votes against 10, passed an amendment placing women on exactly the same footing as men so far as jury service is concerned. Consideration of another amendment, which would give women the right to have it recorded in the jury lists that they are exempt from service, was adjourned until the Report stage. The Minister for Justice said that he would not recommend the Dail to accept the Senate's amendment concerning the exemption of women.

The effect of this defeat for the Government in the Senate will probably be that, after the Report stage, the Bill will be held up, the Senate having this power of veto on measures passed by the Lower House. The Bill may be held up for a period of nine months. In the meantime, a General Election (probably taking place in June) will have taken place, and upon the result will largely depend the eligibility of women for jury service.

The view expressed by eminent constitutional lawyers like Senator Brown, K.C., is that it is a breach of the Free State Constitution to exclude women from jury service, as, under Clause 3 of the Constitution, women are given equal rights and duties with men. It is largely owing to this opinion that the Senate turned down the Bill. Three of the women members of the Senate (Senators Mrs. Wyse Power, Mrs. Alice Stopford Green, the distinguished historian, and Mrs. Costello) voted and spoke against the proposed exclusion of women. The Countess of Desart (an anti-suffragist of the old days) alone voted for women's exclusion.

One male Senator (Labour), Mr. O'Farrell, feared the presence of women on juries because, he alleged, their short skirts would prove a distraction to men!

The women's societies, which threw their united weight against the measure and did much successful lobbying and propaganda to prevent this proposed curtailment of women's rights, are very well pleased with the result of their efforts.

In the recent Debate on the Committee stage in the Lower House, Mr. O'Higgins (Minister of Justice), in pressing for the exclusion of women from juries, again declared that jury service for women in Great Britain was a "farce," and that a document was issued there, "imploping women to claim exemption" on the grounds of physical disabilities, a fact which rendered the service of women merely nominal. He also cited the recent defeat of the Jury Bill in New York in support of this view, omitting, however, to state that in 20 States of the Union women have equal jury rights with men.

H. S. S.

WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, April 22nd, at 3 p.m.
 Hampstead Branch. Members' Meeting at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3 (by the kindness of Dr. Knight).
 Monday, April 25th, at 6.15 p.m.
 Mid-London Branch. Members' Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1, to discuss and vote on Conference Resolutions. All Members urged to be present.
 Wednesday, April 27th, at 3.30 p.m.
 The Women's Freedom League Settlement. American Tea at Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Friday, April 29th, at 2.30 p.m.
 National Executive Committee, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
 Saturday, April 30th, at 10 a.m.
 Annual Conference of the Women's Freedom League, at Caxton Hall, Westminster.
 Sunday, May 1st, 3.30—5.30 p.m.
 Reception to Conference Delegates. Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square W.C.1. Short speeches by Delegates, tea, songs, music. All friends invited.
 Friday, May 6th, at 2 p.m.
 The Women's Freedom League Jumble Sale, to be held (by kind permission of Miss Cole) at The Women's Freedom League Settlement, 2, Currie Street, Nine Elms, S.W. Send your parcels from now onwards to 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

PROVINCES.

Friday, April 29th, at 3.30 p.m.
 Ashford Branch. Branch Meeting at Hempsted Street Hall. Conference business, etc.
 Saturday, April 30th.
 Wallasey, Jumble Sale in St. Mary's Girls' Schoolroom, Liscard Road.
 Saturday, May 7th.
 Portsmouth. Jumble Sale.

SCOTLAND.

Friday, April 22nd, at 7.30 p.m.
 Glasgow. McLellan Galleries. Miss Anna Munro will speak. Miss Eunice Murray will preside.
 Monday, April 25th, at 7.30 p.m.
 Rothesay. Palace Cinema. Miss Anna Munro will speak. Councillor Miss Arroll will preside.
 Tuesday, April 26th, at 7.30 p.m.
 Dunoon. Borough Hall. Miss Anna Munro will speak.
 Thursday, April 28th, at 7.45 p.m.
 Edinburgh. Philosophical Institute, 4, Queen Street. Miss Anna Munro will speak on "The Right of the Married Woman to Work—for Pay!" Dan Easson, Esq., will preside.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Sunday, April 24th, at 3.30 p.m.
 At the Guildhouse, Eccleston Square. Tenth course of addresses: "Ancient Civilisations," Arthur Bernard Cook, Litt.D., on "Civilisation in the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Ages." Slides.
 Wednesday, April 27th, at 3 p.m.
 Meeting of East Finchley Liberal Association. Speaker: Miss Marian Reeves, on "Equal Franchise."
 Friday, April 29th, 7 to 9 p.m.
 The Langbourn Club. Community Singing. Conductor: Mr. Gibson Young. Accompanist: Miss Green. 107, Upper Thames Street. Admission free.
 Tuesday, May 10th, at 8 p.m.
 Equal Political Rights Campaign. Public Meeting in Lower Town Hall, Battersea (organised by N.U.W.T.). Speakers: Miss Agnes Dawson, L.C.C., Miss Barclay-Carter, Lic.-ès-L. Chairman: Mrs. Tidswell (N.U.W.T.).

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT.

2, CURRIE STREET, S.W.8.

Will all those readers of the VOTE who are interested in our work kindly endeavour to be present on Wednesday, April 27th, from 3.30 to 6 p.m., at an American Tea, at the Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Music, competitions, speeches. Refreshments. Silver collection. Bring a present, and buy a present. R.S.V.P. We need money, of course; we need coats and fittings, we need equipment of all kinds. One helper has just made us a sweet little blue suit from a pattern sent about this time last year. The new patterns will cut out a tiny suit quite nicely, and with children who are staying rather a longer time than usual every new little suit is a great acquisition. So we include gifts of this kind in our requests. Your First-President, and ours, has already kindly headed the list with a cheque, of which we hope to receive many more.

Since last week, Dr. Knight has very kindly promised to take the Chair, and money and gifts are already beginning to come in, but, as we are hoping to bring some of our small guests, we hope friends will come to meet them! They are each very sweet in their own particular way.

BRANCH NOTES.

DARLINGTON.

There was a very lively meeting of the Darlington Branch on Monday, April 11th, in the Palais de Danse, at which it was decided to send a delegate to the Women's Freedom League Annual Conference, Mrs. Ernest S. Ayton, the Treasurer, being appointed. The branch then went through the resolutions, and voted on them, after as much discussion as time allowed.

It was agreed that it would be a good thing to have a public meeting in May. (Organiser) LILIAN LENTON.

PORTSMOUTH.

Our Equal Franchise Meeting was very opportune—it was the night before the Prime Minister made his statement in the House. It was also a very enthusiastic meeting, in spite of mild opposition from three anti's. It was a joint meeting of six organisations:—The Women's Freedom League; the Portsmouth Women Citizens' Association; the N.U.W.T., Portsmouth Branch; the N.U.W.T., Gosport Branch; the Women's Co-operative Guild; and the Women's Liberal Association.

Mrs. Whetton took the Chair, and Miss Wadeson (N.U.W.T., Portsmouth) proposed the resolution, which was seconded by Mrs. Laphorn, who represented the Women Liberals. Mrs. Barton, M.A., of the Women Citizens' Association, in a short speech, supported the resolution.

Miss Froud, General Secretary, N.U.W.T., then made a rousing speech, the audience rising to her points and applauding again and again. She was splendid! After questions, the resolution calling on the Government to introduce and pass into law this Session a simple Franchise Bill, giving the vote to women at the same age and on the same terms as to men, was then put to the meeting and was enthusiastically carried, the aforementioned anti's voting against.

Mrs. Buckle, of the Women's Co-operative Guild, proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Froud, and Miss Barnes, of the Gosport Women Teachers, seconded. A good collection was taken. THE VOTE and literature sold well. Will members please note that the Jumble Sale is postponed until May 28th? A Members' Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 27th, at 2, Kent Road, at 3 o'clock, to instruct the delegate how to vote at the Annual Conference.

(Hon. Sec.) MRS. WHETTON, 89, Festing Grove, Southsea.

PECKHAM WOMEN'S SOCIAL CLUB.

A talk on Equal Franchise and the work of the Women's Freedom League was given by our member, Mrs. Clifford Ewan, on April 7th, at this Club. Taking as her title, "The Awakening of the Spirit of Motherhood," the speaker stated that women wanted votes, not merely for their own advancement, but because they realised that such advancement meant protection for all. She took with her a copy of the picture, "The Militant," long ago reproduced in *The Nation*, which depicts a beautiful woman pressing forward, and behind her a sister woman with face also beautiful, but disfigured by shame. The speaker pointed out that there had been a great change since the day when this picture was first published—women were now persons instead of chattels. She expressed the view that, if such organisations as the Women's Freedom League had at all times been "quiet and ladylike," we should not have had the splendid inquiry of the League of Nations into the White Slave Traffic, for instance.

The members of the Club are keen, intelligent women, who enjoyed the joke about the "flapper" of 29, the mother of nine healthy children, who was more than peeved, as our American cousins say, because she cannot be entrusted with a vote, as can her young brother of 22, who lives at home. Mrs. Ewan recalled a memory of her childhood, when she read in an old album a "poem," written in a manly hand, and entitled "The Rights of Women." The doggerel began something like this:—

"The rights of women, what are they?
 The right to serve, love, and obey,
 The right to wake while others sleep,"
 etc., etc., etc.

This brought thought round to the subject of nightwork for women, and the unfairness of stopping it, when it was really remunerative, was freely discussed. The State was just a big home. Men had nothing to fear from women, even though the latter outnumber them; that would right itself, as, when women possessed more power, there would be a greater care of child-life. Had the average mother ever been greedy? One sometimes could wish she took more for herself. Any hospital nurse, like the speaker, would agree that she would often be the better for doing so.

Hats off to the noble "mothers in Israel," who had borne the brunt of the struggle! The call to-day was, Carry on, till full justice is done, and then still carry on, not for ourselves, but for the good of all. The true spirit of motherhood was bestowed not only on those who had children of their own, but on all who wished to make things better for the coming race.

PRISON COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

The Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons for the year 1925-26 can be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2, price 1s. 6d. net.

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NOTICES.

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FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, April 22nd, 1927. 3.30. Music. Lecture. A. B. Cook, Litt.D. 6.30. Maude Royden.

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