

THE VOTE,
FEB. 27, 1925.

THE EQUAL SUFFRAGE BILL.

THE VOTE

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

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1925

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 AND THE COUNTY COUNCILS.

The Women's Freedom League sends its heartiest good wishes to all women in London and the Provinces who are standing next week for election to their various County Councils. We are specially pleased that three of our own members, Miss Alix M. Clark, Miss Jessie Stephen and Lady Smith, J.P., have entered the contest—the first for Montgomery, the second for St. George's, Westminster, and Lady Smith for the Holborn Division of the London County Council; and we urge all our members and friends residing in, or anywhere near, their districts to render them all the help they possibly can. Miss Clark has a fine record of progressive work during her three years as a Poor Law Guardian. She has insisted with all the vigour at her command upon clean administration and humane conditions for those who are old, and sick, and poor. For many years she has been the local Hon. Secretary for the Church of England Waifs and Strays; Hon. Secretary for the North Wales Association for Friendless Girls and a member of the Women's Unemployment Committee. Miss Clark is also one of the oldest members of the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League and Hon. Sec. of our Montgomery Boroughs Branch, and from her past experience in public life she can be confidently relied upon to pursue a progressive and energetic policy on the County Council.

Miss Jessie Stephen, who is standing for the Westminster Division of the London County Council, is also a member of our Executive Committee and has many years of public service to her credit. She is a champion for better conditions for domestic servants; has served on the Bermondsey Borough Council; she went to Canada on a lecturing tour last year and returned only just in time to put up as a Parliamentary Candidate for Portsmouth, her second Parliamentary contest in that town.

Lady Smith, who is putting up such a gallant fight in Holborn, is a J.P. for the County of London; Poor Law Guardian; a member of the Holborn Borough Council; and Trustee of the Royal Institute of Public Health. It is of interest to record that among her proposers for nomination are Dame Millicent Fawcett and our Hon.-Treasurer, Dr. Elizabeth Knight. She also has had wide experience in public work and is willing to use all her experience in assisting to solve the many problems dealt with by the London County Council.

These three women should be strongly supported by all members of the Women's Freedom League, because

we know they are sound on the following questions which we are putting to all men and women who are standing for the County Council elections:

(1). Will you do all in your power to secure that women and men employed by the County Council shall have equal treatment in regard to opportunities and payment?

(2). Will you work actively against the policy of dismissing women employed by the Council solely on account of their marriage, or requiring them to resign on marriage?

The lists of women standing for the Councils are not yet complete, but we offer our warm thanks to the Women's Local Government Society, the Conservative and Unionist Association, the London Progressive Association, and the London Labour Party, for so kindly providing us with the following List:—

London County Council:—*Battersea*: Mrs. C. S. Ganley, *Lab.*; *Bermondsey*: Mrs. E. M. Lowe, *Lab.*, Mrs. Edith Neville, *P.*; *Camberwell*: Miss Agnes Dawson, *Lab.*, and Mrs. Hugh Dalton, *Lab.*; *Chelsea*: Mrs. Dora Russell, *Lab.*, and Mrs. A. L. Walton, *Lab.*; *Fulham*: Dame Beatrice Lyall, D.B.E., J.P., *M.R.*, Mrs. Douglas, *Lab.*, Miss Joan Howson, *Lab.*; *Greenwich*: Miss M. Hill, J.P., *M.R.*; *Hackney*: Miss Adler, J.P., *P.*, Mrs. Emmet, *M.R.*, Mrs. Salter, *Lab.*, Mrs. Merrifield, *Lab.*; *Hammersmith*: Mrs. Worsthorpe, *M.R.*, Mrs. Barbara Drake, *Lab.*; *Holborn*: Lady Smith, J.P., *Ind.*; *Islington*: Miss Rosamund Smith, *M.R.*, Miss Thelma Cazalet, *M.R.*, Mrs. Miall Smith, *Lab.*, Mrs. M. Coleman, *Lab.*, Miss E. Richards, *Lab.*; *Kensington*: Lady Trustram Eve, *M.R.*; *Lambeth*: Miss Edith Neville, *P.*, Mrs. Dunn Gardner, J.P., *M.R.*, Miss. Sayle, *Lab.*; *Limehouse*: Mrs. C. B. Lankaster, J.P., *M.R.*, Miss Hill, *P.*, Mrs. Mathews, *Lab.*; *St. Marylebone*: Dr. Adeline Roberts, *M.R.*, Miss Naomi Jacob, *Lab.*; *Poplar*: Miss Susan Lawrence, *Lab.*, Miss Nesta Macbeth, *M.R.*; *St. Pancras*: Mrs. Elliott, *M.R.*, Mrs. E. Hopkins, *M.R.*, Mrs. Baker, *P.*, Mrs. Alliston, *P.*, Mrs. Harrison Bell, *Lab.*; *Shoreditch*: Miss Goff, *M.R.*; *Southwark*: Dr. Stella Churchill, *Lab.*; *Stepney*, Mile End: Mrs. Scurr, *Lab.*; *Whitechapel*: Miss Sturgess, *M.R.*, Miss Ida Samuel, *P.*; *Wandsworth*: Mrs. Cock, *Lab.*; *Westminster*: Mrs. Mark Starr, *Lab.*, Miss Jessie Stephen, *Lab.*; *Woolwich*: The Countess of Limerick.

Other County Councils for which women are standing are:—*Berkshire*: Lady Mount, J.P., and Mrs.

Bramwell Davis; *Cambridgeshire*: Mrs. Mellish Clark, Miss Constance Cochrane, *Ind.*, Miss Ellen Briscoe, Mrs. Anderson Scott, Mrs. Bowes; *Cardiganshire*: Mrs. Jones; *Cornwall*: Mrs. Blackwood; *Essex*: Miss Courtauld, *Ind.*, Miss Isabella Browne, *Ind.*, Miss Frances Wilde, *Ind.*; *Hertfordshire*: Mrs. Harold Attenborough, Miss Minna Blount, *Ind.*, Miss E. Bradford, J.P., *Ind.*, Mrs. Mellor, Miss K. Talbot; *Herefordshire*: Mrs. Dymond; *Huntingdonshire*: Mrs. Allen; *Kent*: Miss Wigan, *Ind.*; *Lincolnshire (Lindsay)*: Mrs. Croft Baker; *Merionethshire*: Mrs. Morgan; *Middlesex*: Mrs. Barnes, J.P., Mrs. Dorothy Stott, B.A.; *Monmouthshire*: Mrs. Gower, *Con.*; *Montgomeryshire*: Miss Alix M. Clark and Mrs. Lea-Jones; *Norfolk*: The Dowager Lady Suffield, J.P.; *Northamptonshire*: Miss B. Cartwright, J.P., *Ind.*; *Oxfordshire*: Mrs. Gillett; *Shropshire*: Mrs. M. J. Rotton; *Staffordshire*: Mrs. Meakin, Miss F. Thorneycroft; *Surrey*: Miss Hoole, *Con.*, Mrs. Le Personne, *Ind.*, Mrs. Skeats, *Ind.*; *Sussex*: Mrs. Meads, *Ind.*, Miss Scovell, Miss Payne; *Warwickshire*: Mrs. Dykes, O.B.E., *Ind.*, Mrs. Hoskins, Mrs. Melville; *Wiltshire*: Miss Stephenson, J.P.; *Worcestershire*: Miss C. F. Severn Burrow; *Yorkshire (East Riding)*: Mrs. Wright, J.P., *C.*; *West Riding*: The Lady Mabel Smith, *Lab.*

WOMEN AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

As reported a few weeks ago in THE VOTE, the text of the Orders in Council for the Constitutions of the Islands of Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia, in the West Indies, has recently been issued. These Islands have each a Legislative Council consisting of a Governor, *ex officio* Members, Nominated Members, and Elected Members. It is interesting to note that "No person shall be capable of being elected a Member of the Council, or having been elected, shall sit or vote in the Council who—(1) Is the holder of any office of emolument under the Crown, or under a Municipal Corporation within the Island; or (2) Is a Minister of religion; or (3) Is the returning officer of the district for which the election is held; or (4) Is not a male person; or (5) Is not entitled to vote at the election of a Member of the Council."

Every person shall be entitled to be registered as a voter for any one electoral district, and, when registered, to vote at the election of a Member of the Council for such district who is qualified as follows:—(1) Being a man, has attained the age of twenty-one years, or, being a woman, has attained the age of thirty years; (2) Is under no legal incapacity; (3) Is a British subject; (4) Has resided in the Island for two years, at least, previous to the date of registration, or is domiciled in it, and is resident therein at the date of such registration, and, in either case, possesses some one of the following qualifications:—(a) has a net income of at least thirty pounds per annum; (b) is the owner of real property within the Island of the value of at least one hundred and fifty pounds above all charges and encumbrances affecting the same; (c) is paying rent in respect of real property situate within the Island at the rate of at least twelve pounds per annum.

In the House of Commons, last week, MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what were the grounds for prohibiting the election of women to the legislative Councils of St. Vincent and Grenada? MR. AMERY replied that the provision excluding women from election to the Legislative Councils of Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent was adopted on the recommendation of the local committees, representatives of both official and unofficial opinion, which considered and reported on the details of the new Constitutions of those Islands. The settlement of all but a few essential points was left to local opinion. MR. PETHICK-LAWRENCE then asked if the right hon. Gentleman did not think it might be left to the electors to decide those matters in each individual case? MR. AMERY replied that he thought the opinion of the Committee which went very fully into that question was that by which they would naturally be guided.

"THE CHILD AND THE COURT."

Like the previous Government's Guardianship of Infants Bill the present Government's Bill, introduced into the House of Commons by Sir William Joynson-Hicks, seems to have as its chief object the making of the child a ward of the Court, whether it be the High Court, the County Court, or a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. It does not say, as Mrs. Wintringham's Bill said, that "the mother of every legitimate infant shall have the guardianship and custody of such infant jointly with the father, and have equal authority, rights and responsibilities with regard to such infant"; but it provides that, if there is any dispute between the father and the mother in regard to the upbringing of the child, the welfare of the infant shall be the first and paramount consideration, and that the mother and father shall have like powers to apply to the Court for settlement of the dispute. The Bill provides that the mother and father shall have equal rights in the appointment of guardians for their children; and that, if there is any dispute among them in regard to the children, the matter can be taken into Court to be settled. Orders regarding the custody and maintenance of children may be granted to the mother while residing with the father; but they are not enforceable while she resides with him. Moreover, if the parents or guardians refuse consent to the marriage of a minor, this minor may apply to the Court for consent to the marriage, and the consent of the Court, if it is given, shall have the same effect as if it had been given by the person whose consent was refused. We do not think that this Bill can be considered a progressive measure, and we do not believe that it will be welcomed by British parents who, whatever their personal differences, will be the last to desire that their children shall become "wards of the Court." Disputes can always be settled in Court, but what British mothers want are equal rights and responsibilities in respect to their children in the home, and not merely an equal access with men to Courts of law in regard to disputes concerning their children.

THE BASTARDY BILL.

Captain Bowyer's Bill to amend the Bastardy Laws, and to make further and better provision with regard to illegitimate children, provides that if a single woman is expecting a child and she applies for a summons under the Bastardy Laws Amendment Act, 1872, the Justice shall forthwith issue his summons to the alleged father to appear at a petty session to be held on the earliest possible day within the four months preceding the time when the woman expects the child to be born. At the hearing of such summons, provided the alleged father admits paternity, the Justices may adjudge the alleged father to be the putative father, and may also if they think fit, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, make an order for the payment to the woman of such weekly sums towards her support and for the expenses of her confinement as may seem reasonably necessary; or they may adjourn the hearing until after the birth of the child. On any hearing or adjourned hearing, the Justices may make an order upon the putative father for the payment to the mother of a still-born illegitimate child of the expenses incidental to the birth of such child. It also provides that if the mother of an illegitimate child dies, or is of unsound mind, the guardian of the child, or the Guardians of the parish or poor law union acting for the child, may secure the appearance of the alleged father at the petty sessional Court, and if he is adjudged to be the putative father, he may have an order made on him for the payment of a weekly sum for the maintenance and education of the said child.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Education (Leaving Age).

MR. AMMON (Lab., Camberwell, N.) asked the President of the Board of Education what local authorities had raised the age of compulsory attendance at school to 15 years, and what authorities had this matter under consideration? LORD EUSTACE PERCY replied that, with regard to the first part of the question, the authorities were those of Carnarvonshire and East Suffolk; with regard to the second part, he believed that the Bath and Lowestoft authorities had the matter under active consideration.

House of Commons (Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms).

Last week it was ordered "That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the department of the Sergeant-at-Arms attending this House." The Committee appointed consists of seventeen Members, two of whom are women—Mrs. Philipson and Miss Wilkinson. This Committee has power to send for persons, papers, and records, and it has been ordered "That Three be the Quorum."

Women (Domestic Service).

MR. HAYES (Lab., Edge Hill) asked the Minister of Labour the number of female applicants whose claims for unemployment pay had been rejected in the Liverpool area during the months of August, September, October, November, and December, 1924, and January, 1925, respectively, on the grounds that they declined domestic service? SIR ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND replied that he was endeavouring to obtain this information and would communicate it to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Benefit (Unmarried Mothers).

MAJOR GEORGE DAVIES (U., Yeovil) asked the Minister of Labour if he could see his way to extend dependents' unemployment benefit in the case of unmarried mothers wholly or mainly maintained by a son whose father had deserted his mother, and of whom all trace had been lost? SIR ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND replied that the extension of benefit which the hon. and gallant Member had in mind would require fresh legislation. He could not give any pledge in the matter, but he had noted the point for consideration if, and when, it became necessary to propose fresh legislation in connection with Unemployment Insurance.

Mentally and Physically Defective Children.

COLONEL DAY (Lab., Central Southwark) asked the President of the Board of Education what was the number of mentally deficient and the number of physically defective children in public elementary schools, and the number in each group for whom provision was made in special schools? LORD HENRY CAVENDISH-BENTINCK (U., Nottingham, S) inquired if it was part of the Government's policy to remove these children from ordinary schools? To the latter question LORD EUSTACE PERCY said that the answer was in the affirmative, as soon as provision was made for them. To COLONEL DAY'S question he replied that, according to the returns from local education authorities for 1923, it would appear that there were in England and Wales about 30,000 educable mentally defective children, and about 106,000 physically defective children, among whom were included about 49,000 classed as "delicate," and that of those children about 11,000 mentally defective, and about 67,000 physically defective children (including about 36,500 children classed as "delicate") were attending public elementary schools. At the present time there was accommodation in special schools for 16,565 mentally defective children, and for 16,608 physically defective children.

Milk.

MR. CECIL WILSON (Lab., Attercliffe) asked the Minister of Health if he was aware that milk dealers in Paris were compelled to put coloured labels on receptacles in use indicating what quality of milk the receptacles contained; and if he would favourably consider providing similar safeguards in this country? SIR KINGSLEY WOOD (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health) replied that his right hon. Friend was aware of the practice to which the hon. Member referred, and would consider the question of the use of coloured labels in connection with any revision of the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1923.

MR. C. EDWARDS (Lab., Bedwelty) asked the Minister of Agriculture if he was aware that, in Monmouthshire last year, 196 samples of milk were taken, out of which 16 were deficient in fat, the deficiency ranging from 4 per cent. to as high as 36 per cent., there being no evidence of added water; that under the law as it stood it was difficult to secure a conviction, and that consequently that form of adulteration was increasing, and would he take steps to alter the law in relation to prosecutions for selling milk deficient in fat? MR. E. F. L. WOOD (Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries) replied that his attention had not previously been directed to those figures, but if there was no evidence of added water they could not necessarily be regarded as proof of adulteration. He was not aware of any evidence for the suggestion that defects in the existing law were leading to an increase in the practice of adulterating milk, and he could not undertake to introduce legislation on the subject.

Juveniles (Unemployment).

MR. HANNON (U., Moseley) asked the President of the Board of Education the number of young persons between the ages of 14 and 16 who were unemployed on the 31st December, 1924, and on the corresponding day in 1923? SIR ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND, who had been asked to reply, said that the number of young persons between the ages of 14 and 18 on the registers of Employment Exchanges and Juvenile Education Bureaux was 65,444 at 29th December, 1924, compared with 71,792 at 31st December, 1923. Statistics of the numbers between the ages of 14 and 16 were not available.

Smoke Abatement.

MR. SCRYMGEOUR (Ind., Dundee) asked the Minister of Health if he intended introducing a Bill for amending and consolidating the laws relating to smoke abatement? MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN replied that the Government contemplated the introduction of an amending Bill when a convenient opportunity arose, but he feared it could not be introduced during the present year.

F. A. U.

HOW M.P.s VOTED ON EQUAL FRANCHISE.

The votes recorded last Friday in the House of Commons for Mr. Whiteley's Bill were 153, the votes for the Government Amendment being 220. Lady Astor both spoke and voted for Mr. Whiteley's Bill, other Unionists who voted with her being Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck (S. Nottingham); Col. Buxton (Sudbury); Mr. J. H. Cunliffe (Bolton); Mr. A. C. Dixey (Penrith and Cocker mouth); Mr. Percy Gates (Kensington, N.); Col. V. G. Henderson (Bootele); Mr. A. R. Kennedy (Preston); Sir Robert Newman (Exeter); Mr. E. A. Radford (S. Salford); and Capt. W. W. Shaw (Westbury, Wilts). Others who voted for Mr. Whiteley's Bill included fifteen Liberals; one Constitutionalist; one Independent; one Communist; four Co-operatives; and one hundred and twenty members of the Labour Party.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27th, 1925.

THE EQUAL FRANCHISE BILL.

Mr. Whiteley's Representation of the People Bill, which dealt simply and solely with the equal enfranchisement of women and men, was defeated in the House of Commons, last Friday afternoon, by 220 votes to 153, the following Amendment proposed by the Government being carried in its stead:—"That this House declines in the early stages of a new Parliament to accord a Second Reading to a Franchise Bill, involving as it would a General Election with the consequent interruption of important legislative and administrative work, and records its opinion that a considered scheme of franchise reform should be brought before the House at a suitable opportunity within the lifetime of the present Parliament."

The Women's Freedom League views with profound dissatisfaction the rejection of Mr. Whiteley's Bill. Clause 6 stated that "This Act shall come into operation on such date as His Majesty may fix by Order in Council, and His Majesty may by such Order alter, in connection with the first register to be prepared under this Act, any registration dates, and direct that this Act shall have effect as so altered." With this proviso, or even without it, it was surely not outside the powers of the Government and the Law Officers of the Crown to devise means by which Mr. Whiteley's Bill, if passed into law, should not become operative until the next General Election; and we can only see in the Government's Amendment a fresh pretext for delay, a favourite device of all Governments since 1919, when the first equal franchise Bill after the partial enfranchisement of British women was introduced. Sir William Joynson-Hicks promised on behalf of the Government to arrange a Conference of all Parties to consider this question in 1926. He had no doubt that the present Parliament would last until 1929, so that the deliberations of this Conference may be condensed into some form of legislation which will come before Parliament before its life is ended. Conferences are not part of the British Constitution, the country being governed by Acts of Parliament and not by Committee Meetings; and whatever "agreement" is arrived at in a Conference, it is not binding upon either House of Parliament.

This shilly-shallying with the principle of equal franchise, indulged in by successive Governments since 1919, is undermining all stable government in this country. When the time arrives for each Government to take its departure organised women find themselves perforce anti-Government in their outlook, and the Government's opponents number not only a large proportion of the membership of women's societies but a very much larger number of women and men outside, chiefly amongst those unattached to political Parties, whom that membership can influence. It may be safely said that at the last General Election the Labour Party lost as many votes through its failure while in office to satisfy women's demand for equality as it lost by its Russian policy; and the Liberal Party, although having no office and only reflected power, lost heavily in abstentions among women because it failed to mention the subject of women's equality in its election manifesto. If an equal franchise measure fails to reach the Statute Book during the life of this Parliament, the outgoing Government will find itself faced with the whole weight of women's organised opposition. Nothing less than equality in the matter of the franchise will satisfy women, and the Women's Freedom League keenly regrets that this Government has secured a Pyrrhic victory in the matter of delaying political justice to women.

BRITISH WOMEN'S NATIONALITY.

We warmly congratulate Major Harvey, the Unionist Member for Totnes, for securing a general agreement in the House of Commons to the following Resolution:—"That, in the opinion of this House, a British woman should not lose, or be deemed to lose, her nationality by the mere act of marriage with an alien, but that it should be open to her to make a declaration of alienage." He pointed out that until 1870 a British woman retained her nationality if she married an alien; but as the law now stood she lost her nationality if she married an alien; she lost her right to vote; she lost her right to employment in the Civil Service; and, if she was a teacher, she lost immediately the right to her teacher's superannuation. She also lost her right to the protection to which she was entitled by birth as a subject of the State, and finally, under the Treaty of Versailles, if it was in time of war and the husband she had married became an enemy alien, she was liable to have her property confiscated. Major Harvey stated that in 1923 Belgium gave the right to women subjects who married aliens to retain their nationality if they so desired. In 1924, Sweden gave a similar right to the women of that country, providing they were living in Sweden or in any country except that of their husbands; and that Norway and Denmark were legislating on the same lines. Not long ago an Act was passed in Canada which gave the right to a Canadian woman to retain her nationality if she married an alien; but this had to be repealed because it was afterwards found that it was not in accordance with the agreement which had been made between the Home Government and the Dominions. In the United States the Cable Act had been passed, which enacted that a foreign woman who married an American should not become an American unless she so desired, and that before doing so she had to reside in the United States for one year; and further, that an American woman marrying an alien should retain her nationality, unless she desired or actually made a renunciation of nationality; and Major Harvey submitted that that was a very fair and reasonable basis for an alteration of our laws in this respect. Lady Astor ably seconded the Motion. Mr. Locker-Lampson (Under-Secretary, Home Office), at the end of a lengthy speech, said that all changes in our nationality law required the consent of the self-governing Dominions. Unless they agreed to this change it was practically impossible to deal with the question on the lines suggested. Having regard to the recent Imperial Conference and their decision to maintain existing law, and having regard to the exhaustive consideration of the question by a Joint Committee of both Houses, he did not think it would be right to reopen the whole of the question and do anything in the way of legislation. The Government did not want to resist the Motion, and if the House desired that it should be carried, let it be carried. He would like to say that it was quite impossible until they had the assent of the self-governing Dominions to engage in legislation. Directly they got their replies, if they were practically unanimous, they could then pass legislation on the subject. Miss Wilkinson said she was sure the House would be sorry to hear the concluding remarks of the Under-Secretary for the Home Department. It was a little hard for British women to be told that the Colonies were to be the deciding factor in regard to this question. She did not think the question should be made a kind of shuttlecock between our own Parliament and the Dominions. Someone must take the lead, and surely it was for the Mother of Parliaments and the head of the Empire to take the lead in this matter, and ask the Colonies to follow her. Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, Mr. Rennie Smith (Lab., Penistone), and Mr. Dixey (U., Penrith and Cocker-mouth) also strongly supported the Motion, which was carried without a Division.

WOMEN POLICE.

BY COMMANDANT MARY ALLEN.

The Committee, appointed some months ago by Mr. Arthur Henderson to review the experience of authorities on the question of the value of police-women, issued its report last August. On studying the minutes of evidence, it is noticeable that information has been drawn from those who have gone carefully into the subject and have dealt with it, as it should be dealt with, as an important question. It is interesting to note that there is a great divergence of opinion as to the usefulness of women employed as police. This should not be considered at all disheartening, as the movement is a comparatively new one, not having been heard of as a practical possibility until August, 1914.

Undoubtedly the strong weight of opinion is in favour of the usefulness of policewomen and the recommendations issued by the Committee, after a careful sifting of the evidence, are illuminating.

The first recommendation, namely, "That every police authority shall provide, as far as possible, for the statements of women and children, when sexual crimes are in question, being taken by policewomen," is one with which all men and women will agree. This recommendation is likely, however, unless agitated for, to become just a pious resolution. In the action taken by the Chief Constable of Southport last week in keeping all women out of court during the giving of evidence in a case of child assault, one is forced to the conclusion that some suggestion of Departmental disagreement with such action is necessary.

We have at present a Home Secretary who appears to be in sympathy with the movement for the employment of Women Police, but this sympathy will require strength of purpose to back it if anything is to be done. No one will expect that undue pressure can be brought to bear on local authorities by the Home Office, but all recognise the undoubted power and influence this Department has in all police matters.

There are several reasons for the present reactionary attitude taken by many local bodies in refusing to appoint women as police, and though they do not appear to us as good reasons, they must nevertheless be taken into account. Every new undertaking, dependent upon individual initiative, is bound to awaken a certain amount, not only of mistrust, but of resentment and opposition. From the outset the women police movement has been hampered in its natural development by engrained prejudice; yet the history of the movement is not only the best proof—if proof were still required—of the pressing need for the service of women, but also of the adequate way in which that need has been met.

This prejudice is being largely overcome by the propaganda which is carried on all over the country by women's organisations, and by representative meetings of men and women keen to know the truth about the whole subject, but much still remains to be done.

A reason often given by authorities is that voiced by the witnesses of the Police Federation to the Committee, who based their opposition to the employment of women police on the grounds that "the very nature of the duties of a police constable are contrary to all that is finest and best in woman." This is, of course, an extraordinary platform to take in these days. Everyone who has had anything at all to do with police courts and the work of the streets, realises that, in the majority of cases, what affects the man affects the woman also, and that therefore "all that is finest and best in woman" is needed to deal with these problems, and to get the fullest co-operation between men and women on the questions which both are interested in helping.

There also seems to be some slight fear in the minds of many men that policewomen would be

appointed as substitutes for men, and that where reduction has been made in the male forces the strength shall be brought up by substituting women. I would most emphatically state that this would not only be contrary to all that has been advocated by those who have been leading the movement for so long, but would also be contrary to the best interests of the police. A policewoman has definitely specialised duties, and must always be considered as an addition to any force and not as a substitute for a man.

Another reason is sometimes given which has obviously no vestige of truth in it. This is, that should women in uniform be employed in any town, it would imply that the condition of that particular town was such as to necessitate their presence for purposes of morality. This, it is stated, would make intending visitors to well-known watering-places forego the pleasure of a visit and go elsewhere. It is, of course, a ridiculous conclusion, but it is none the less a very real difficulty to many, and can only be met by constant reiteration of the fact that women police undertake all duties connected with women and children, and therefore greatly add to the safety and general security of visitors and inhabitants.

No opportunity should be neglected in pointing out that women police are to be employed as an addition to the force, and not in any sense as a criticism on the way men police have carried out their duties.

There are also occasions when owing to unsuitable women being chosen, or through lack of understanding on both sides, it is claimed that women as police have proved failures. It must not, however, be thought for a moment that women are not as liable to make mistakes as men, and because, in some cases, policewomen appointed have not been all that has been hoped for, it does not mean that the principle is wrong. It has always been hoped that the standard of women chosen for police work will be kept high, and to this end we advocate that only the best type of woman be appointed. No question of class should arise, but very special qualifications should be insisted upon.

I would advise all those interested in this reform to work hard in their different localities to convince authorities of the urgent need for women police, and I would also suggest that resolutions continue to be sent to the Home Secretary asking him to bring all the pressure possible for him on local chief constables. Because the whole question has now become one in which all are interested, no relaxing of effort should be considered—it is just at this moment that mistakes can be made, and the whole movement lose the ground it has gained.

WOMEN AND THE BIRKENHEAD CORONER.

The following letter has been sent to the Birkenhead Coroner by the Birkenhead and District Women Citizens' Association:—

20th February, 1925.

DEAR SIR,—We have purposely refrained from writing to you in connection with the Rockferry Inquest until the inquest itself was over, as we did not wish in any way to add to your difficulties in the matter.

We desire, however, to place on record our view that where the nature of the case in any way is such that it is undesirable that it should be heard in public, *all sections* of the public should be excluded, and not women alone, as the encouragement of morbid curiosity is no more desirable in men than it is in women.

We are sending a copy of this letter to the local press.

Yours faithfully,

LUCY E. ABRAHAM,
Hon. Org. Sec.

OUR SPRING SALE.

Members and friends will be pleased to learn that Mrs. Wintringham has consented to open the Spring Sale which is being held on Friday, March 13th, at 2.45 p.m., at 25, Wimpole Street, W., by kind invitation of Dr. Lewin. As this is the first time that Mrs. Wintringham has spoken for the Women's Freedom League, it is expected that all members and all friends, who can possibly do so, will take this opportunity of hearing a speaker who has done such good work for women both inside the House of Commons and outside it.

At 5 o'clock, Dr. Lewin will speak on "The Two Urgent Needs in Education," these being the need for the teaching of Citizenship and for the teaching of Personal Hygiene.

A good programme of music, recitations and songs is being arranged and there will be competitions, character reading, etc. Admission to the Sale is free, and dainty little Shilling teas will be served until 5.30 p.m.

We appeal to all members and friends to help make this Sale a success. The fate of the Representation of the People Bill shows that there is still work for the Women's Freedom League to do, and for this we must have funds.

Promises of goods for the Stalls will be much appreciated, and the following are especially needed:—

Pound Stall. Pounds of rice, tea, sugar, jam, sweets, biscuits, etc.

White Elephant Stall. Anything!

Household Stall. Dusters, soap, scrubbing brushes, etc.

Flower Stall. Flowers, bulbs in pots.

White Stall. Camisoles, blouses, etc.

For the Competitions. Small articles suitable for prizes.

Parcels may be sent at any time to the Women's Freedom League Offices, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

(Sgd.) A. M. PIEROTTI,
Hon. Sec. of Sales Committee.

WHY RESERVED RAILWAY CARRIAGES FOR WOMEN ARE NEEDED.

The following is taken from the *Birkenhead News* of Feb. 14th:—

OFFENCE IN A RAILWAY CARRIAGE.

Joseph Kemp, aged 17 years, of West Kirby, pleaded not guilty at the County Police Court on Monday—before Sir Charles Morton (in the chair) and Messrs. J. E. C. Grant and J. A. Shone—to a charge of indecently exposing himself in a railway carriage on January 27th.

A young girl resident at West Kirby said that on Jan. 27th she boarded the 9.23 p.m. train from Hoylake to West Kirby. Just as the train started the prisoner got in the carriage. As the train left the station the prisoner crossed the carriage and sat opposite to her, and later sat next to her and committed the offence complained of. As soon as witness saw what the defendant was doing she hit him in the face, and said, "I will pull the cord," meaning the communication cord. The prisoner replied, "If you do, I will go through the window." As the train entered West Kirby Station the prisoner jumped out and ran along the platform through the gates. Witness followed him and made a complaint to the ticket collector. Sergeant Hunt said that he received information of the offence on Feb. 1st, and saw the defendant on Feb. 3rd at his place of employment, Grange-road, West Kirby. The prisoner admitted the offence, and when charged said "I am very sorry." Supt. Ennion said that the prisoner was before the Court on a similar charge on Feb. 11th, 1924, when he was bound over for twelve months. Kemp was sent to prison for three months.

OUR TREASURY.

NATIONAL FUND.

Amount previously acknowledged, October, 1907, to December, 1923, £40,474 16s. 2d. £ s. d.

Previously acknowledged	1,353	17	1
Branch Funds, 1924:—			
Hampstead	27	15	7
Mid London	12	14	8
Minerva Club	10	15	6
Thames Valley	5	14	7
Ashford	5	15	8
Bexhill	8	11	11
Glasgow	32	13	7
Hastings	5	16	9
Hull	12	13	6
Portsmouth	17	14	8
Edinburgh	4	16	8
Montgomery Boroughs	40	0	0
Swansea	20	17	3
	£1,559	17	5

1925.

Special Emergency War Fund:—			
A Friend	5	0	0
Green, White, and Gold Fair:—			
Swansea Branch	8	0	0
Miss Helen Fryer	5	0	0
Mrs. Juson Kerr	2	6	10
Miss Howard	2	2	0
Miss C. Nina Boyle (Coroner's Court Protest, Liverpool)	1	1	0
Mrs. M. Sargent Florence	1	1	0
Dr. Alice Vickery	1	1	0
"E. & G."	1	0	0
Mrs. Mustard	15	0	0
Mrs. Unna	13	6	
Mrs. C. Bryant	10	6	
The Misses Mardon	10	0	
Dr. Morris	10	0	
Mrs. Cobden Sanderson	10	0	
Mrs. A. Stewart	10	0	
Mrs. Ethel Timmer	10	0	
Miss Harriet Grant	7	0	
Mrs. Budd	5	0	
Mrs. K. Hardy	5	0	
Misses Nora & Phyllis Mustard	5	0	
Miss K. Neal	5	0	
Miss M. H. Saunders	5	0	
Miss M. I. Saunders	5	0	
Dr. G. Miall-Smith	5	0	
Misses E. L., F. E., and G. M. Hodgson	4	6	
Mrs. Gallop	4	0	
Miss E. H. Brouneau	3	6	
Miss A. Wadley	3	6	
Miss Bergman	3	0	
Mrs. Gresswell	3	0	
Mrs. Marshall	3	0	
Miss Lila Clunas	2	9	
Miss E. K. Cope	2	6	
Mrs. Hutchinson	2	6	
Miss Adelaide Jones	2	6	
Per Miss Lenton (subscription)	2	6	
Mrs. McGrouther	2	6	
Miss Amy G. Pearson	2	6	
Miss Mabel Turner	2	6	
Miss Vellenoweth	2	6	
Miss E. Woodall	2	6	
Miss Barrow	2	0	
Mr. G. W. Gill	2	0	
Miss J. Holford	2	0	
Mrs. J. T. King	2	0	
Mrs. E. M. Moore	2	0	
Miss Ada E. Pearson	2	0	
Mrs. E. Schurr	2	0	
Mrs. E. J. Stockwell	2	0	
Mrs. Fox Strangways	2	0	
Miss Louie Turner	2	0	
Miss T. R. Taylor	1	6	
Miss Meredith	1	6	
Miss Elsie M. Adams	1	0	
Mrs. C. Mary Allen	1	0	
Mrs. Bloomhill	1	0	
Miss Candlin	1	0	
Mrs. Ellis	1	0	
Mrs. Lucas	1	0	
Miss S. Marshall	1	0	
Mrs. Metge	1	0	
Mrs. McKeurtan, M.B.E.	1	0	
Mrs. Puzey	1	0	
Mrs. Samuel	1	0	
Miss Mary E. Tapping	1	0	
Sundries	5	16	0
" per Minerva Café	11	17	9
" Literature Department	5	0	0
Office Sales	7	1	
Branches—Capitation Fees—			
Middlesbrough	10	0	
Minerva Club	15	0	
	£61	13	5

Women's Freedom League.

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

Telephone:—MUSEUM 1429.

Telegrams:—"DESPARD, MUSEUM 1429, LONDON."

Colours—GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD.

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President—Councillor Mrs. SCHOFIELD COATES, J.P.

Hon. Organising Secretary—Mrs. WHETTON.

VOTE Sales Department—Hon. Head: Miss ALIX M. CLARK.

Literature Department—Joint Hon. Heads:

Mrs. PIEROTTI and Miss HARVERSON, LL.B.

General Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

WHERE TO GO.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, February 27th, at 3. **National League for Health, Maternity and Child Welfare, Carnegie House, 117, Piccadilly, W.** Annual General Meeting. Speaker: Lt.-Col. F. E. Fremantle, M.P. Subject: "Parliament and the Public Health."

Monday, March 2nd, at 5. **Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street.** Speaker: Miss Winifred Holtby. Subject: "Widows' Pensions under an Insurance Scheme."

Tuesday, March 3rd, at 6. **Women's Freedom League, Mid-London Branch Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.**

Tuesday, March 3rd, at 5.15. **Six Point Group, 92, Victoria Street.** Speaker: Mr. Middleton Murry. Subject: "The need of a New Psychology."

Wednesday, March 4th, at 3. **Consultative Committee, Council Chamber, 194, Queen's Gate, S.W.** Lecturer: Mrs. Corbett Ashby. Lecture: "Committee Procedure."

Thursday, March 5th, at 5. **Joint Parliamentary Advisory Council, at 40, Upper Grosvenor Street, W.1.** Speaker: Sir Charles Walston, Litt.D., Ph.D. Subject: "Herculeum: Past, Present, and Future," with Lantern Slides. Tickets 10/6, from Miss Harley Bacon, J.P.A.C., 7, Hobart Place, S.W.1.

Thursday, March 5th. **London County Council Elections.**

Saturday, March 7th. **County Council Elections.**

Monday, March 9th, at 3. **Parents' National Education Union, 50, Westbourne Terrace, Hyde Park, W.** (Lancaster Gate Tube). Speaker: Dr. Flora Shepherd. Subject: "Disabilities of the Pre-adolescent Girl."

Thursday, March 12th, at 3. **Alexandra Park Women's Local Government Association Meeting, at Congregational Church Parlour, Alexandra Park Road, N.** Speaker: Mr. W. Clarke Hall.

Friday, March 13th, at 8. **Fabian Society, at Essex Hall, Strand.** Speaker: Geoffrey Whitworth, Esq. Subject: "The Case Against a National Theatre."

Friday, March 13th, at 2.45. **Women's Freedom League, Spring Sale, 25, Wimpole Street, W.** (by kind invitation of Dr. Lewin).

Saturday, March 14th, at 10. **Women's Freedom League, National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.**

Monday, March 23rd, at 3. **Women's Freedom League, Hampstead Branch Meeting at 7, Gainsborough Gardens.**

Friday, April 24th, at 2.30. **Women's Freedom League, National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.**

Saturday, April 25th, at 10. **Women's Freedom League, Annual Conference at Caxton Hall, Westminster.**

Saturday, April 25th, at 8. **Women's Freedom League, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square.** Dinner to Miss Phipps, B.A. Tickets 3s. 6d. each.

PROVINCES.

Friday, February 27th, at 3.30. **Women's Freedom League, Ashford Branch.** Social Tea, followed by a Whist Drive at the **Hempsted Street Hall.** Tickets 1s.

Monday, March 2nd, at 7.30. **Women's Freedom League, Middlesbrough Branch.** Meeting of Members at the Temperance Institute

Wednesday, March 4th, at 4-6. **Women's Freedom League, Bexhill Branch.** Thé Chantant at the **Albany Hotel** (by kind permission of Miss Skinner).

SCOTLAND.

Saturday, March 14, at 7. **Women's Freedom League, Glasgow Branch Whist Drive, at McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street.**

WALES.

Tuesday, March 24th. **Concert for Inmates, Caersws Poor Law Institute, at Victoria Theatre, Newtown.**

DINNER TO MISS EMILY PHIPPS, B.A.,
BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

With the very kind consent of Miss Phipps, and at the special request of some of our members from a distance, we have postponed the dinner previously arranged for March 7th, to Saturday, April 25th, the evening of our Annual Conference. We are all looking forward to doing honour to Miss Phipps that evening, and to the pleasure of congratulating her on being called to the Bar. Application for tickets should be made early to Miss M. Reeves, Minerva Club, 56 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1, where the dinner will be held. Price of tickets, 3s. 6d. each.

BRANCH NOTES.

HAMPSTEAD.

A members' meeting was held on Wednesday, February 18th, at 53, Willow Road, N.W.3 (by the kindness of Miss Lyndon), Miss Vibert presided. A letter was sent from the meeting to the local Member (Mr. G. Balfour) asking him to be present in the House of Commons on Friday, February 20th, and to vote for Mr. Whiteley's Bill.

It was decided to take no action in regard to the Annual Conference on April 25th.

The subject of Housing in the neighbourhood was discussed, and it was agreed that something ought to be done in the Borough with regard to the provision of working-class houses. It was decided to arrange a meeting on this subject in April. The next members' meeting was fixed for Monday, March 23rd, at 3 p.m., at 7, Gainsborough Gardens.

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

MIDDLESBROUGH.

A very enjoyable evening was spent by members of this Branch, Monday, March 16th, at the Temperance Institute, when Mr. Percy Wearmouth and his party of artists arranged a delightful concert, the proceeds of which were given towards the Branch funds. Mrs. Schofield Coates, our President, took the Chair, and gave a short address on the aims and objects of the Women's Freedom League. She also thanked our entertainers most cordially on behalf of the Branch members, who all hope to have a similar gathering in the near future.

(Hon. Sec.) Mrs. THOMAS, 60, Harford Road.

PORTSMOUTH.

There was a good attendance at the Public Meeting held on Wednesday afternoon at 2 Kent Road. Miss Jessie Stephen made a vigorous plea for Equal Franchise for men and women. She said it had been stated that should the Bill pass 800 out of every 1,000 of the new voters would not support Labour, but this did not detract from her advocacy of the question. Mrs. Whetton proposed a resolution asking the members of Parliament for Portsmouth to be in their places on Friday and support the Bill to confer equal voting powers on the two sexes. This was unanimously carried and was sent to the Portsmouth M.P.s.

Mrs. Juson Kerr, J.P., has very kindly promised to come and speak on "Food Prices," on Tuesday, March 24th, at 7.30 p.m. Place of meeting will be announced later.

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

SWANSEA.

The Whist Drive held at "Caledon," Newton, on February 12th, proved a very successful one. In spite of gloomy forebodings, the weather was kind, and the bus landed us safe and dry almost on Miss Kirkland's doorstep. We congratulate Miss Cole and Miss Terrill on winning the first prizes for the lady and gentleman respectively. At the close of the evening Mr. Kirkland paid a tribute to the splendid work done by Miss Phipps in the women's cause. Miss Neal expressed the thanks of those present to the host and hostesses for a most enjoyable evening.

(Hon. Sec.) Miss C. M. JELLEY, 14, Carlton Terrace.

GLASGOW.

That funds may be raised for the revived Glasgow Branch of the Women's Freedom League, a Whist Drive will be held in the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, on Saturday, March 14th, at 7 p.m. Tickets 2/6 each (including refreshments) may be obtained from the undersigned at the address given. The necessary food is being provided by certain of the members, and all arrangements in connection with the refreshments are being undertaken by Mrs. Brown, who will have six ladies to assist her. Our sincere thanks are due to all who are helping in this manner, and also to Miss McClelland, who is attending to everything necessary for the Whist Drive itself.

(Organiser) LILIAN LENTON,
11, Lochside Street, Crossmyloof, Glasgow.

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FRIDAY,
FEB. 27,
1925.

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

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

MINERVA CLUB, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Open to non-residents. Restaurant. Smoking Room. Papers. Library. Bedrooms available at holiday times. Membership, £1 1s. Entrance Fee suspended during present year. All particulars from the **SECRETARY**. Telephone: Museum 4791.

PIONEER CLUB, 12, Cavendish Place, Oxford Circus, W.1. Bedrooms. Debates. Concerts. Town Membership, £5 5s.; Professional and Country, £4 4s.

ATTRACTIVE, Old-fashioned House, now a residential Hotel. Winter, 2½ guineas.—**MISS BUTTERWORTH**, Jesmond Cottage, Church Square, Shepperton-on-Thames.

NOTICES.

WORKING HOUSEKEEPER, to manage household of Widow at business. Sleep in or out. References essential. 'Phone Hampstead 6062; or by letter to "D.Z.," THE VOTE Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

A PROFITABLE CAREER for Women. Restoring Antique China and Glass. Practical Postal Instruction. Free pamphlet.—**CRAFTSMANS**, 19, King Street, Watford.

HAND-MADE Lingerie; Silk Stockings for hard wear, 12/6; Gourel Slippers, 5/-.—Write **Mrs. LESSER**, 67, Romney Street, S.W.1.

INCOME TAX RECOVERED AND ADJUSTED. Consult **Miss H. M. BAKER**, 275, High Holborn, W.C.1. Income Tax Returns, Repayment Claims of all Descriptions. Telephone: Holborn 377.

REST AND HOLIDAYS.

BRIGHTON.—"Sea View," Victoria Road. Midday dinner. Gas fires in Bedrooms. Wireless. Vegetarians catered for.—**Hostess: MISS TURNER**.

RUISLIP.—Lady can receive two **PAYING GUESTS**. Sunny bedroom. Excellent train service.—**VOTE Office**, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

NOTICES.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, February 29th. 3.30. Music. Lecture. **Alec Miller, Esq.** 6.30. **Miss Maude Royden**.

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VACANCY occurs for two or three young ladies, willing share large bedroom (single beds). Bath, piano, central position, every comfort and freedom. Moderate terms—**MISS HURRELL**, 29A, Sinclair Gardens, W.14.

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Please enrol me as a Member of the Women's Freedom League.

Name

Address

I enclose £ : s. d. as my first Annual Subscription.

Minimum Annual Subscription, 1s.