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# The Women's Election Committee

**OBJECTS:** (1) To assist or run Women Parliamentary Candidates of all the recognised Political Parties in Parliament and suitable women standing independently, provided that all candidates thus assisted (a) Stand for the equality of men and women in the State. (b) Have a reasonable amount of support in the constituencies they desire to represent.  
(2) To promote the election of women to all public bodies and to all bodies appealing for public support.

## SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT 1927



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## MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

At date of Annual Meeting  
27th March, 1928.

### OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE.

<i>President:</i>	Dr. CHRISTINE M. MURRELL.
<i>Founders &amp; Vice-Presidents:</i>	{ Miss C. NINA BOYLE. Mrs. E. HOW MARTYN, M.Sc. Miss MARIE LAWSON.
<i>Hon. Treasurer:</i>	Miss CICELY HAMILTON.
<i>Hon. Secretary:</i>	Miss CATHERINE JACK.

### MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE.

Miss M. E. ALLWORK.  
Mrs. HELEN ARCHDALE.  
Mrs. F. EARENGEY, J.P.  
Mrs. GASK.  
Miss CICELY B. HALE.

### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

Miss MARY S. ALLEN, O.B.E.,  
Miss LILIAN BARKER, C.B.E., J.P.  
Professor WINIFRED CULLIS, O.B.E., D.Sc.  
Miss A. GERTRUDE HEWITT, LL.A.,

## CONSTITUTION.

### The Committee.

The Committee shall consist of not more than 15 members. One-third of the Committee, or the number nearest to one-third, shall retire at each General Meeting and be eligible for re-election. The members shall retire in order of seniority, but, as between persons who became members on the same day, those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot.

### Officers.

The Officers of the Committee shall be appointed annually by the Committee, namely; a Chairman and a Treasurer, who shall be unpaid, and a Secretary, who may be paid.

The Committee may also appoint such other Officers as may be deemed necessary for carrying on its work.

### General Meetings.

A General Meeting of Subscribers will be convened at least once in each year:

- (a) To consider the report of the Committee on the previous year's work;
- (b) To consider the audited accounts to be submitted by the Committee; and
- (c) To elect members of the Committee in place of those retiring by rotation.

Every person who has subscribed 10s. or more during the preceding twelve months shall be entitled to be present and vote.



## SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

This Report covers the year ended 31st December, 1927.

### Committee.

The Committee holding office since the last Annual General Meeting, held in March, 1927, includes the following members:—

Dr. Christine Murrell, <i>President</i> .		
Miss C. Nina Boyle,	} <i>Founders and</i>	
Mrs. E. How Martyn, M.Sc.		} <i>Vice-Presidents.</i>
Miss Marie Lawson,		
Miss Cicely Hamilton, <i>Hon. Treasurer</i> .		
Miss M. E. Allwork, <i>Hon. Financial Secretary</i> .		
Mrs. Helen Archdale.		
Miss Barry.		
Mrs. F. Earengy, J.P.		
Mrs. Gask.		
Miss Cicely B. Hale.		
Miss Catherine Jack.		
Mrs. Whittam.		

Miss Jack and Mrs. Florence Earengy retire in accordance with the constitution and are eligible for re-election.

### Resignations.

The Committee records with regret the resignation in October of Miss Barry, who was in charge of the poster

stamps and literature up to that time. In addition Miss Barry did much valuable office work, for which the Committee take this opportunity of expressing their thanks.

The Committee also accepted with regret the resignation of Mrs. Whittam, whose interest in the work has been shown on several occasions since her resignation.

### Officers.

Dr. Christine Murrell continues to hold office as President, and Miss Cicely Hamilton as Hon. Treasurer. Miss M. E. Allwork resigned the office of Hon. Financial Secretary owing to pressure of work in May. Miss Allwork has filled this office for three years and the warmest thanks of the Committee are accorded her for her work both before her resignation and since.

Miss Catherine Jack kindly consented to become Hon. Financial Secretary on Miss Allwork's resignation. In June Miss Jack was unanimously elected Hon. Secretary at the termination of Miss Kerr's services as Secretary and agreed to be in charge of the office each afternoon from 2 o'clock. The Committee takes this opportunity of expressing its appreciation of Miss Jack's untiring efforts on behalf of the Committee in both capacities.

### Voluntary Workers.

Meetings for office work have been held in the afternoons, and without this valuable help the Committee could not have carried through its work. Offers of such assistance are always most welcome.

Valuable voluntary assistance was given for two months by Miss Wales as shorthand typist until January of this year when she left to take up a good appointment. Other active voluntary workers in the office and outside include Miss Graham, Miss Kerr, Miss Tremain and Mrs. Singer. Sincere thanks are due to Miss Mildred Anson for her most generous secretarial assist



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### Parliamentary Elections.

The present Parliament, as elected in October, 1924, had four women members out of a total membership of 615. Fortunately this number was during 1926 increased to six by the successes of Miss Susan Lawrence and Miss Margaret Bondfield at bye-elections. The number has been again increased during the year to eight by the successes of Lady Iveagh and Mrs. Runciman at bye-elections. Lady Iveagh stood as Conservative Candidate for Southend in December 1927 and polled 21,221 votes, her majority being 9,309. Lady Iveagh wrote to the Committee. "I think my views regarding the equality of men and women are fairly well known and I am in hearty accord with the Government's intention to extend to women complete equality with men in the matter of the franchise."

Mrs. Runciman who stood for St. Ives as a Liberal Candidate polled 10,241 votes and was returned with a majority of 763. She is the only woman Liberal member at present in the House.

### Propaganda.

During the year three dinners have been arranged under the auspices of the Committee.

On February 24th, 1928, a Complimentary Dinner to Peeresses in their own right was given at the Restaurant Frascati. The dinner was in support of Lord Astor's Bill to make peeresses in their own right eligible for seats in the House of Lords. The peeresses in their own right who accepted the invitation of the W.E.C. were Viscountess Rhondda, Baroness Beaumont, Baroness Lucas and Baroness Ravensdale, who responded to the toast of "Our Guests." Speeches were delivered by Her Grace the Duchess of Atholl, D.B.E., M.P. (Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education) The Rt. Hon. The Viscount Astor, Miss Lydia Grier, M.A. (Principal of the Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford) and Miss Lilian Baylis, M.A. (Oxon.), Hon.

Miss Marie Lawson (a Founder and Vice-President of the W.E.C.) was in the Chair.

The dinner was very well attended and a great success. Lord Astor and the Peeresses present expressed themselves in appreciative terms of such a function at that time, as being immensely valuable with regard to the Bill. The dinner received wide publicity in the press.

At the dinner held at Craig's Court Restaurant on March 24th, Dr. Murrell, who presided, spoke of the urgent need for more women M.P.'s and the necessity for raising a large fund to support their candidature.

Mrs. Edith How Martyn, M.Sc., stressed the need of a greater recognition among women voters that their politics must be paid for and also suggested the advisability of more women standing as candidates for local and municipal bodies, with a view to gaining experience.

A House dinner preceded the Extraordinary General Meeting of the W.E.C. on July 18th at the Chantecler Restaurant to pass the following resolution "That the constitution of the W.E.C. be extended to include a second object, namely, to promote the election of women to all public bodies and all bodies appealing for public support." The chair was taken by Mrs. Earengy, J.P., who expressed the hope that the W.E.C. would decide to work for women on local and other bodies especially those controlling the welfare of women. Mrs. Archdale, Mrs. Dewar Robertson, J.P., and Miss Ada Moore spoke in support, and the resolution was carried unanimously.

A very successful and well attended Drawing-Room meeting was held at Hampstead by kind permission of Mrs. Wales at her house in October, the speaker was the Lady Balfour of Burleigh, Dr. Christine Murrell in the Chair. Mrs. Wales kindly entertained the audience to tea.

In order to raise funds a Folk Dance Party was held in November at St. Mary Abbot's Hall. It was well attended, Dr. Christine Murrell acting as hostess. An



enjoyable evening was spent, and the grateful thanks of the Committee are due to Mrs. Hannes, Miss Eggar, and Miss Fife whose interest and assistance were invaluable, and also to Miss Helen Mitchell and the chorus she led in folk songs. Miss Jack worked very hard to make the party a success.

#### **Other Organisations.**

The Women's Election Committee has continued to co-operate whenever possible with kindred societies.

Mrs. Archdale has during the year attended the Consultative Committee meetings on behalf of the Women's Election Committee and the Committee thanks her for this work in particular. Mrs. Archdale can always be relied upon to uphold the principle of equality for which the Women's Election Committee stands.

#### **Extension of the Franchise.**

Dr. Christine Murrell as President of the W.E.C. was one of the signatories to the Petition promoted by the Equal Political Rights Committee demanding that reference to the proposed measure for the extension of the Franchise to women on the same terms as men, be included in the King's speech and Mrs. Archdale attended the deputation to the Prime Minister on this subject on behalf of the W.E.C. The Bill which is due for its second reading on March 29th, 1928, was introduced by the Home Secretary as a Government Measure and the Women's Election Committee hopes shortly to announce a suitable celebration of the attainment of another milestone in the struggle for equality.

#### **Future.**

The Women's Election Committee is in touch with many of the prospective women candidates and is endeavouring to ascertain their views with regard to the equality of men and women in the state.

So far as the Committee can ascertain, the number of adopted women candidates will undoubtedly exceed that of the last general election.

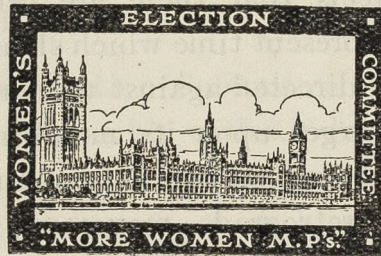
#### **Final.**

In spite of the progress recorded in many directions the Committee feels that there are certain reactionary tendencies at the present time which should not be ignored, particularly those directed against women in remunerative occupations and urges upon its members and supporters the necessity of being prepared to rebut promptly and effectively every retrograde movement directed against women.

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36, GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

# See How They Grow!

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**F**OUR General Elections have occurred since women became legally qualified to stand as Parliamentary Candidates. In these elections 124 women appealed to the electorate. In addition, 4 women have been returned since the General Election of 1924.

## The Women Candidates

Polled an average of	3462	in	1918
”	”	”	6934 in 1922
”	”	”	8345 in 1923
”	”	”	9750 in 1924
”	”	”	14833 in 1926
”	”	”	15731 in 1927-8

Success at the Polls depends largely on Organisation. Organisation depends upon Money.

**The Women's Election Committee**  
depends on Your Donations.

*Address:-*

**WOMEN'S ELECTION COMMITTEE**  
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