

THE VOTE.  
MARCH 4, 1927.

## THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER.

# THE VOTE

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

VOL. XXVIII. No. 906.

(Registered at  
the G.P.O.)

ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 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.

MORE ABOUT WOMEN POLICE.  
WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.  
IN PARLIAMENT.  
EQUAL FRANCHISE NOW!

WOMEN AND THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR.  
NOTES FROM THE FOREIGN PRESS.  
DEPUTATION TO S.E. ST. PANCRAS M.P.  
THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER.

## MORE ABOUT WOMEN POLICE.

The Dewsbury Town Council, acting on the report of the Watch Committee, decided not to take action on the Home Office Circular regarding the appointment of policewomen. The chairman of the Watch Committee explained that, while the Watch Committee was not antagonistic to such appointments, the Chief Constable held the opinion that Dewsbury hardly lent itself to such services. He further said that there was a police matron attached to the force whose services the Chief Constable was authorised to use for general work.

In Newport (South Wales) the Watch Committee decided that there was no necessity for women police at Newport other than those they now had.

Cardiff Council considered the Circular from the Home Office as to the advisability of appointing women police. A deputation of representatives of women's organisations to urge the necessity of appointing women police was recently received by Cardiff's Watch Committee. Again the Chief Constable blocked the way. In reply to a question, he said he had no reason to alter the opinion he had expressed in December, 1924, against the appointment of women police, and which had been endorsed by the Watch Committee. It was decided that the Chief Constable should report as to the number of women police employed in other cities, and as to the opinions of the police chiefs of their work.

In a letter sent by the Women Police Movement Committee in Liverpool, signed by W. O. Hunter Rodwell (Chairman) and Winifred Rathbone (Hon. Secretary), and sent to the Liverpool Press, the writers say:—

1. "To those who are inclined to remain satisfied with the devoted services of the small band of women patrols, we would urge the following considerations:—

"That eight patrols are not sufficient for the size of the city; a Home Office grant is available for women police which would enable more than double the number to be appointed with no increase to the rates. The population of Liverpool is over 800,000. In 1925 the number of policemen employed was 1,732. In the same year the number of juveniles proceeded against in the courts was 829, in addition to the 545 children dealt with by police caution. This does not include the large number of women brought as offenders before the courts, and the still larger number appearing as witnesses, in cases often connected with serious offences against morality. 2. The position of these eight patrols is insecure, as they are under the direction of a voluntary

committee, and are dependent upon a yearly grant renewable by the City Council. 3. Certain important branches of police work which have been shown to be specially suitable for trained women cannot at present be touched by the patrols.

"In conclusion, we would earnestly beg that this question be considered on the broadest possible basis of right and reason; that no consideration of Party politics should be allowed to deter those who believe in women police from joining forces to promote their appointment in Liverpool."

In Exeter, Councillors Mrs. Browne and Miss Splatt are doing their utmost to get women police appointed. At a meeting of the Exeter City Council, on February 21st, when a resolution was moved to adopt the report of the Watch Committee, who stated that they were of opinion there was no necessity for the employment of women in the police force, Mrs. Browne said she considered that the report did not do justice to the subject. She thought the members came to the meeting of the Watch Committee with their minds made up. She hoped the matter would be introduced some time in the future. Miss Splatt maintained that the fact there were only thirteen prosecutions for a certain class of offence during five years proved the need for women police. However sympathetic men were, they could not deal with a frightened woman so well as a woman. At present the police had to take too much care of cars, and did not have sufficient time to deal with crime. Welfare work was police work.

Devon Standing Joint Committee, at a recent meeting at the Castle of Exeter, decided by eight votes to seven not to approve of a recommendation, passed by its own sub-committee, to employ two policewomen for the county. Major Gibbs asked the Chief Constable how many women were employed as matrons? The Chief Constable said there were 48. Major Gibbs asked if they were trained women? The Chief Constable's answer was "No; but they have the assistance of their husbands." Earl Fortescue said he was one of the majority of the Sub-Committee that made the recommendation. During the past four years there had been 73 cases of assaults on women and girls in Devonshire, and there were six cases of attempted or actual defilement of girls under 16 and under 13. Possibly the lives of these girls had been ruined thereby. Figures showed that only four-fifths of the offenders were proceeded against and about one-half convicted. He

thought if they could do something to reduce the number of these cases they would be quite justified in the expenditure involved. Major Strode asked how, if women police were appointed, they could stop any of these crimes being committed? Two women for the whole county seemed to him to be perfectly ridiculous. Earl Fortescue replied that what checks crime is detection and punishment, and his belief was that women police would help to detect these crimes and get the offenders punished.

#### WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

##### Mrs. Philipson's New Appointment.

Mrs. Hilton Philipson, M.P., has been appointed to the Committee to inquire into D.O.R.A.

##### Women Members of Anglican Synod.

Women members are to be admitted to the Anglican Synod of British Columbia, provided that at least 50 per cent. of the elected representatives of each parish consists of male communicants.

##### Scottish Women Loyalists.

A new organisation has been formed in Scotland "to uphold the tenets of Christianity, loyalty to the King, and love of Country; to oppose Socialism, and to eliminate class hatred by establishing a patriotic fellowship including all classes of society." The founders are careful to say they are not Fascists.

##### Woman Director of Wireless School.

Miss Texanna Loomis runs a wireless school in Washington. Painter, musician and singer, she joined the Red Cross during the war and has since given all her attention to wireless, and has one peculiarity—she excludes women students from the school.

##### Jewish Women and Equal Franchise.

At the Annual Meeting of the Union of Jewish Women the following resolution was carried by a large majority: "That the Union, of Jewish Women calls upon the Government to introduce legislation as soon as possible to give the franchise to women on the same terms as it is given to men."

##### Men to play Women's Parts.

The *Apollo* in Berlin has decided to exclude women from their stage. Men are to take over women's parts.

##### Women and the Legion of Honour.

Mademoiselle Amieux, head of the school at Sèvres, has the "rosette d'officier"; Madame Blanche-Schweig, President of the Union of Women Accountants, Vice-President of the Departmental Labour Commission, etc., etc., has the "croix." Mademoiselle Limonat, Head of the Edgar Quinet school, Madame Gabrielle Réval, writer; Madame Aurore Lauth-Sand, writer, and granddaughter of George Sand, these three are "chevaliers" of the French Legion of Honour.

##### Woman State Treasurer.

Indiana has made its first election of a woman to a state executive position. Mrs. Grace B. Urbahn has been elected State Treasurer, in which office she succeeds her husband.

##### Rumanian Women.

The National Council of Rumanian Women has recently held its Annual Meeting at which Madame Calypso Botez presided and Princess Cantacuzene, president of the foreign section, told of the international activity of the Council and its relations with the League of Nations.

#### WOMEN JUSTICES OF THE PEACE IN NEW ZEALAND.

Under the original legislation for the appointment of Justices of the Peace in New Zealand, the phrase "any reputable person" was held not to include women. A special statute has now been passed by which women are included, and they are now eligible to serve. The Minister of Justice in making the first appointments has chosen women already serving as associate members of Children's Courts, and women prominent in social or local organisations. Eighteen women Justices of the Peace have been appointed.

#### JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COUNCIL.

This month will see a series of three lectures arranged by the Joint Parliamentary Advisory Council. On Thursday March 10th, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson will speak on "An Actor's View of Shakespeare," at the Governor's House, Royal Hospital, Chelsea, Lord Ernle in the Chair; on Thursday, March 17th, Dr. Montague James, Provost of Eton, will speak on "Some Minor Excellencies of Dickens," at 40, Upper Grosvenor Street, Lord Darling in the Chair; on Wednesday, March 23rd, Sir Henry Hadow, Vice-Chancellor Sheffield University, will speak on "Musical England," at 25, Park Lane, the Duchess of Atholl in the Chair. Tickets for the three lectures, all of which begin at 3 p.m., are £1 1s., single tickets 10/6, to be obtained from the Council at 7, Hobart Place, S.W.1.

#### THE OPEN DOOR COUNCIL.

The Open Door Council was formed in 1926, and now begins to come before the public. It cuts out a multiplicity of aims and has one clearly defined object: equal opportunities and conditions for all adult women workers, professional or industrial, married or unmarried; and equal chances of training and entry into all the professions and trades. The arrival of this live new organisation is particularly welcome to aid other feminist bodies in stemming the rising tide of so-called protective legislation for the industrial woman worker. The Open Door Council demands equal rights for women and men in industry, is opposed to all legislation which imposes a differential sex restriction on the work of women, and believes that the only real protection for any class of women is that of equal status, equal pay, equal opportunity.

#### SEX-DISQUALIFICATION IN BURMA.

In 1922, Burmese women were granted the vote for the Legislative Assembly at the age of 18 and on equal terms with men. Early last month a resolution was moved at the Burma Legislative Council recommending to the Government that Burmese women should become eligible to the Council. This resolution was opposed on the grounds that Burma was never known to have representative institutions on Western lines, and women not being versed in Western institutions of this kind the resolution was premature; and that women should wait for the Statutory Commission, and then place their view before the Commission. The resolution was pressed to a division, and lost by 46 votes to 31. The loss of this resolution is all the more regrettable in view of the fact that Burma is a land where women have played a very prominent part in the life of the community; but we can trust the women of Burma to organise for the retrieval of this position at the earliest possible date.

#### YOUNG PEOPLE AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

The Committee on Juvenile Delinquency appointed by the Home Office in January, 1925, with Sir Evelyn Cecil as Chairman, has made a unanimous recommendation that the age at which a person may suffer capital punishment should be raised from 16 to 18 years. In the last 30 years no one under the age of 18 has been executed in this country, but it will be remembered that Henry Jacoby, the pantry boy, aged 18, who murdered Lady White in a London hotel, was hanged in 1922.

#### RECITAL.

IRISH FOLK-SONGS AND BALLADS.

By MISS FLORENCE MARKS (Irish Disense).

Will be held on

Thursday, March 10th, 8.15 p.m., at

THE MINERVA CLUB, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.

Tickets 2/- each, can be obtained from the Secretary, Minerva Club.

## IN PARLIAMENT.

#### International Labour Conference.

MR. MACKENZIE LIVINGSTONE (Lib., Western Isles) asked the Prime Minister whether it is the intention of the Government to send a woman as a fully accredited delegate to the International Labour Conference next May, and also women as technical advisers? MR. BETTERTON (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour): I have been asked to reply. As at present advised, the Government do not propose to send a woman delegate to the International Labour Conference in May next, but it is anticipated that one of the technical advisers will be a woman. VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Sutton, Plymouth): Would it not be fair, seeing that many of the questions which have to be dealt with at Geneva relate entirely to women, to send a woman, with full powers? MR. BETTERTON: No; this is not a sex question at all. In our view it is a question of the most suitable representative of the Government at this Conference, and on this occasion it happens to be a man.

#### Prisoners (Girls and Young Women).

MISS BONDFIELD (Lab., Wallsend) asked the Home Secretary what number of girls are at present in prison apart from the Borstal Institution, from 16 to 21 years of age and from 21 to 25 years of age, respectively? SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS: Apart from a few on remand there are 23 of ages from 16 to 21, and 79 of ages from 21 to 25 in prison in England and Wales.

#### Manchester Prison.

MR. MERRIMAN (U., Rusholme), asked the Home Secretary whether his attention has been called to a recent resolution of the Manchester City Justices endorsing the opinion of the Visiting Committee of Manchester Prison and urging the necessity of providing premises in that prison to which adults and children may be remanded; and whether he proposes to take action in the matter? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: Yes, sir, that resolution has been brought to my notice. The question of providing remand homes for untried prisoners is a difficult and important one, which so far as it relates to young persons has been brought prominently before the Departmental Committee which is about to report on the treatment of young offenders generally, and my consideration of the matter must await the Report of that Committee. I would, however, point out to my hon. Friend that under the provisions of Section 97 of the Children Act, 1908, a child under 14 cannot in any case be remanded to prison, nor can a young person between 14 and 16, unless he is certified to be of a depraved or unruly character.

#### Health Visitors.

MR. G. HURST (U., Moss Side) asked the Minister of Health whether any association of nurses was consulted before the issue of the Regulations of February, 1925, as to the position of health visitors employed by local authorities; if he is aware of the shortage of candidates under such Regulations, and the difficulties of nurses in complying therewith; and if he has considered the desirability of revising them? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. I am aware that there are not yet so many candidates under training for the position of health visitor as is desirable, but my attention has not been called to any particular difficulties in complying with the present Regulations. It is not proposed at present to revise the Regulations which have been in operation only since April, 1925.

#### Public Health Nurses (Salaries).

MR. G. HURST asked the Minister of Health whether he is aware of the low salaries now paid to trained nurses employed by local authorities; and if he will consider the desirability of establishing a reasonable minimum wage in the public health service? MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am aware that in certain areas the salaries paid to nurses engaged in some of the public health services are not commensurate with the import-

ance and character of the duties performed; and in such cases as come within my jurisdiction, representations are made to the local authorities concerned with a view to a reconsideration of the salaries offered. These officers are, of course, appointed and paid by the local authorities, and the varying local conditions and the divergent views as to remuneration taken by them in the exercise of their discretion render difficult the introduction of a minimum wage or greater uniformity in the terms of service.

#### Colonial Soldiers (Maintenance Orders).

MR. SNELL (Lab., E. Woolwich), asked the Home Secretary (1) whether he will consider the possibility of introducing legislation with a view to bringing the law of divorce in England and Wales into line with that of Scotland, which allows divorce for malicious desertion of four years, in order to give relief to the wives of Colonials; (2) Whether he is aware that there are living in this country a considerable number of British-born women who, during the war, married soldiers from the Colonies; that many of these husbands returned to their homes leaving their wives and children behind them unprovided for and dependent upon relatives or public funds; that, although these women are actually deserted and bound to absconders who may have remarried in their own countries, they are unable to prove misconduct, and that the High Commissioners of the Colonies are unable to take any action in the matter; and will he have the whole matter considered, with a view to seeing whether there is any way of assisting women and children in this position? SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS: I do not see my way at the present time to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to divorce. The Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Act, 1920, allows deserted wives to obtain maintenance orders against their husbands residing in those parts of the Dominions that have passed reciprocal legislation, and the orders, after confirmation in an Oversea Court, are enforceable overseas. MR. H. WILLIAMS (U., Reading): Will the Home Secretary consider the question of introducing legislation to make it possible for such women to sue in the English Courts, which they are debarred at the present time from doing on the ground that they are deemed to be domiciled overseas? SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS: They can sue in the English Courts, and, if they obtain Orders, they are enforceable. I see that my hon. Friend shakes his head—MR. WILLIAMS: They cannot sue in respect of divorce. SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS: No, but these questions relate to Maintenance Orders.

#### Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act (1925) Amendment Bill.

This Bill "to amend the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925," has been presented by Commander Kenworthy.

#### India Legislative Assembly (Women).

MR. LANSBURY (Lab., Bow and Bromley) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly, on 1st September, 1926, favouring the removal of the sex-disqualification clause from rules relating to membership of the Legislative Assembly and to the consequent alteration of the rules, the Government of India propose to include women among the nominated members of the present Legislative Assembly? EARL WINTERTON: So far as I am aware, the persons selected by the Governor-General to fill the 14 seats available to nominated non-officials include no women, but I have not yet seen the official intimation of the selection for all these 14 seats.

EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN.

#### PUBLIC MEETING

FOLLOWING DEPUTATION TO PRIME MINISTER.

TUESDAY, MARCH 8TH, AT 8 P.M.

MINERVA CLUB, 56 HUNTER STREET, BRUNSWICK SQUARE.

## THE VOTE.

Proprietors: THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.  
Offices: 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

FRIDAY, MARCH 4th, 1927.

### EDITORIAL.

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

### EQUAL FRANCHISE NOW!

For the first time since 1918, when some women over thirty years of age in this country secured the Parliamentary vote, the Prime Minister has consented to receive a deputation of women's societies to discuss with him the necessity for the equal enfranchisement of men and women; and his secretary has asked the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee (to which the Women's Freedom League is affiliated) to organise a deputation consisting of representatives of important women's societies to meet Mr. Baldwin next Tuesday. It is hoped that Lady Astor will introduce this deputation, and she will be followed by Lady Rhondda, the Chairman of the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, after whom a representative from the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, an under-thirty member of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, representatives of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations, the Women's Freedom League, the National Council of Women and the National Union of Women Teachers will address the Prime Minister on the equal enfranchisement of men and women. Between twenty and thirty women's organisations will be represented on this deputation which is supported by many other organisations who probably cannot be directly represented because the number of people to be received by Mr. Baldwin is limited. All these organisations are united in their demand for a simple equal franchise measure which will confer the Parliamentary vote on women at the age of 21 and on the same terms as men. They are also united in their belief that any further delay in the matter is extremely dangerous, and that if the Prime Minister's pledge that women will have equal voting rights with men at the next General Election is to be redeemed, the Government must at once make itself responsible for the introduction of an equal franchise measure and carry it through all its stages into law during the present Session. This Parliament is now no longer young; its life is in the ordinary course of things drawing to a close; there are rumours of a General Election in the air, and women still remember with some bitterness that the last Government by its unaccountable delays in connection with Mr. Adamson's Equal Franchise Bill was forced to appeal to the country before this Bill reached the Statute Book, so that for the fourth time since their partial enfranchisement women had to vote at a General Election at unequal ages and on unequal terms with men. We are glad that the Prime Minister has consented to hear from the women themselves the case of equal franchise, and that women will have the opportunity of hearing from Mr. Baldwin what the Government's intentions are in regard to this subject. The Press and politicians have been very busy lately telling us what those intentions are, but we did not imagine that the Prime Minister had taken them all into his confidence; nor are we now under any illusion that all is over, save the shouting. Those who have worked many years for the cause of woman suffrage know that we can feel no security about the matter until an equal franchise measure is actually on the Statute Book, and only when such a measure has received the Royal Assent will the women's organisations now working for equal suffrage cease from their intensive campaign throughout the country to secure political equality for women and men.

### WOMEN AND THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR.

The International Labour Conference, which will be held in Geneva next May, has two items on its agenda which are of special concern to women—Health Insurance, and a Minimum Wage Standard. The question of Health Insurance, especially in regard to Maternity benefits, already figures on the programme of many women's organisations. It also affects, directly, various problems with which women are intimately concerned, such as the industrial position of women, and industrial legislation. With regard to a Minimum Wage Standard, it is well known that the unorganised industries in which wages are exceptionally low are for the most part home industries in which women are numerous employed, and women's organisations in all countries have done much work in the direction of getting improvements in the conditions of such industries. Is it not reasonable, therefore, that the women of this country should expect our Government to consider the sending of a woman as a fully accredited delegate to this Conference as well as women technical advisers? Paragraph 2 of Art. 389 of the International Labour Organisation states:—"Where questions of special interest to women are to be discussed at the Conference, one at least of those appointed as technical advisers should be a woman," and M. Albert Thomas, of the International Labour Organisation, last year reminded Governments and Associations of Employers and Workers that "women are equally eligible with men for nomination as delegates or advisers to Sessions of the International Labour Conference." Yet when a question was asked in the House of Commons last week, Mr. Betterton, speaking on behalf of the Ministry of Labour, said that the Government do not propose to send a woman delegate to this Conference, but it was anticipated that one of the technical advisers would be a woman! To a further question by Lady Astor as to whether it would not be fair to send a woman delegate with full powers because many of the questions to be dealt with at Geneva related entirely to women, Mr. Betterton said, "This is not a sex question at all. It is a question of the most suitable representative of the Government at this Conference, and on this occasion it happens to be a man!" Did any member of the present Ministry of Labour ever think, on any occasion, that the most suitable representative could be anyone but a man? In July, 1925, when the Women's Freedom League wrote to the Minister of Labour asking him, in view of the fact that there were practically as many unemployed girls as unemployed boys in this country, to consider the appointment of suitable and experienced women as well as men to the Juveniles Committee which was being set up "to inquire into and advise upon the public system of Education in England and Wales in relation to the requirements of trade and industry, with the particular reference to the adequacy of the arrangements for enabling young persons to enter and retain suitable employment," we received from the Minister of Labour a nice little homily, saying: "I do not ever think it is right to appoint women on a Committee just because considerations affecting women are to be dealt with, or *vice versa* as regards men. The proper principle, to my mind, is to get hold of the best brains in either case." So he appointed eight men, in addition to two men secretaries, to this particular Committee, and *one woman*. The Report was issued a few weeks ago, an inconclusive and entirely unsatisfactory one, from our point of view, and leading nowhere. "The most suitable representative" and "the best brains" do not always seem to help very much when restricted to men. When will the Ministry of Labour renounce its sex prejudices and give women a fair chance to prove the quality of their brains and the efficiency of their representation? When women have equal voting rights with men, and more women are in Parliament, it will not be possible for Government Departments to treat women so cavalierly.

## NOTES FROM THE FOREIGN PRESS.

By MARIAN BERRY.

In the February number of *Die Frau im Staat* is an article by Lida Gastava Heymann called "We Accuse." It is a review of a girl's diary that at present is receiving a great deal of attention from German psychologists and social workers. Doubt has been expressed as to the authenticity of the book, but the subject is one which will appeal to readers of THE VOTE, and the following extracts are given from the article as far as possible in the writer's own words: "We women accuse the State and its Institutions. A book has been published, 'Killed by Life'—the Diary of a Child. Edited by M. J. Breme, Freiburg i. B., Herder & Co.

"It is a true story that occurred in Bremen, and one suffers mental anguish in reading the account of this young child, beautiful and gifted, who was practically murdered in early life. One can only protest in anger and sorrow.

"'Killed by Life'! No, this title is quite deceptive. The Diary reveals the child's spirit—it was happy, gay and transparent as a mountain stream: 'I wanted to learn all, to know all, and to do good to all people.' It was not Life that destroyed this child, but Society, the State brothel and hospital, against which women of all lands have fought since the days of Josephine Butler.

"We demand the abolition of State Regulation of Vice: we demand that only women doctors should examine women and girls; we demand that wherever children and growing girls come into contact with

the police, they should be dealt with by women police officials. Here and there our demands have been realised, but by no means in all places, and least of all in Bremen, where the disclosures in regard to its institutions cry aloud to Heaven for rectification."

Reference is made to conditions in Hamburg where the writer has worked and fought for ten years against the treatment of the prostitute. She states that the conditions described in this Diary are fully borne out by her experience of those prevailing in Hamburg. She continues: "In the book the town is called Neuburg, but, as it has already been stated, it is Bremen. Bremen with its world-famed scandalous 'Helenstreet.' All circles of society, married men, police officials of the first rank and doctors are implicated; the conditions in the police hospital are disclosed and call for abandonment. . . And what will happen now? Effort has been made to obtain an inquiry into the conditions prevailing in Bremen, and warm support has been given by the *Bremen Nachrichten*. There is no longer an Inquisition, but the State and Society have other means of concealing what should be disclosed. . . The truth of this book cannot be doubted, and it will arouse thousands of women to demand the abolition of such State institutions. We women accuse and demand, and we women will not remain pacified until our demands are granted. This outcry of a tortured child's soul must be the spark to fan the flame that will force their ultimate removal."

### WOMEN AND THE SCOTTISH CHURCH.

By EUNICE MURRAY.

In THE VOTE of February 11th is an article upon "Women and the Pulpit." It says, "English and Scottish Presbyterians are against admitting women to the Ministry," but, on February 23rd, the Right Rev. Dr. McCallum, Moderator of the Church of Scotland, speaking at Dundee, referred to the splendid work women had done as to teaching. He said he did not know what the future contained for ladies, but he was one of those who, looking at the work they had done and looking at the splendid spiritual qualities which they often evinced, did not doubt that the time was not far distant when the doors of the ministry would not only open to them but would admit them, and he ventured to say it would be a good thing for the Church of Scotland when that took place.

This is an important announcement coming from the source it does and showing the spirit that is moving amongst the clergy themselves.

The expression of feeling contained in the last sentence is especially valuable coming at the present time, and should be warmly acknowledged and welcomed.

### WOMEN JURORS IN THE IRISH FREE STATE.

By DORA MELLONE.

Like every other Government in these troubled days, the Government of the Irish Free State desires to save itself what in its opinion is unnecessary worry. It has had courage to face the drink bogey, and though the concessions made since the introduction of the Liquor Bill have been heavy, still enough remains to render the measure a very valuable contribution to public welfare in Ireland. It is indeed unfortunate that the Minister who stood in such great need of support from women for this Bill should be so singularly blind to his own interest as to attack that "equal citizenship" which is guaranteed by the Constitution. Had Mr. O'Higgins been of the type to take advice anywhere, he might perhaps have learnt something from the example of English Ministers, as the English record during the last two years shows that Governments there are slowly beginning to learn the lesson that women must be considered in legislation. But the Government of the Irish

Free State is not given to taking advice, least of all from England, and now we have the Minister of Justice antagonising women just when their support was so much needed.

It is satisfactory to know that the Irish Women Citizens' and Local Government Association was ready and immediate steps were taken. An energetic Press campaign was started. Every member of the Dail was interviewed. A deputation consisting of Senator Mrs. Wyse Power, Professor Mary Hayden, Professor Mary Mackin, Mrs. Cosgrave (Vice-Chairman, Dublin County Council), Miss Dodd, M.A., and Miss Buchanan waited on the Minister. The interview lasted an hour and a half. Mr. O'Higgins based his action on the ground that only forty women availed themselves of the privilege of jury service, and thus, in his opinion, the results did not justify the considerable expense involved. The usual arguments regarding the unsavoury cases were also brought forward. A writer in the *Irish Statesman* points out with some truth that the political movement, which revolutionised Government in Ireland and placed the present Government in office during its campaign of physical force, placed women in the firing line all the time, and gave them the most dangerous tasks—secret service, for example. This, of course, has been done continuously by the Republican movement. The Irish Women Citizens' Association may be trusted to see to it that the women voters understand the issue. This Association is supporting the candidature of Mrs. Noel Guinness, who will stand for Dublin County in the coming General Election to Dail Eireann. Mrs. Guinness will stand as an Independent, on the woman's platform.

### WOMEN SUFFRAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA?

From the *Cape Times* we learn that the House of Assembly on February 1st last, devoted about 20 minutes to a motion by the Rev. Mr. Mullineux (Lab., Roodeport), who asked leave to introduce a Bill "to provide for the extension of the franchise to include European women in the election of members of the House of Assembly and Provincial Councils." Mr. M. Alexander (Con. Dem., Hanover Street), moved as an Amendment the omission of the words "include European" from the Motion. This Amendment was lost by 76 votes to 26. Leave to introduce the Bill was refused, on another division, by 63 votes to 39.

### EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN. MEETING AT FULHAM.

In connection with the Equal Political Rights Campaign a very successful meeting was held by St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance at Fulham Town Hall, on Wednesday, February 23rd. Miss Butler-Bowdon presided, and the speakers were Miss Gladys Waldron, daughter of the Mayor of Fulham, Mr. Victor Duval, a Liberal and an old supporter of Women's Rights, Councillor Miss H. A. Packer, who was one of the earliest members of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise League, and who did valuable service in the early Suffrage Campaign, and Mr. J. Palmer, prospective Labour Candidate for East Fulham.

Miss Waldron, who spoke for the unfranchised women under 30, refuted the chief argument against the giving of the vote to women of 21—that they were irresponsible. That, she said, was a statement not supported by facts. If women had the vote at 21, many social workers would be found. She further stressed the fact that the women's vote was always cast for peace and stability.

Mr. Duval showed how the Government had so far failed to carry out their promise to give equal franchise, and commented upon what the country was missing in debarring women under 30 from voting. He was of the opinion that women of 21 were brighter than men of 21, and that men must get out of their heads all ideas of superiority.

Councillor Miss Packer said she was glad to see a Liberal and a Labour representative there, and that all Parties agreed about Equal Franchise. She showed the justice of the cause and contended that women should have the same privileges as men.

Mr. J. Palmer said that the giving of the vote to women was not a matter for consideration. Women had already shown how wisely and well they had used their votes, and why should not the younger women do the same? It did not worry him what Party got their votes, but he did worry about the justice of the thing.

The following resolution was carried unanimously:—"In view of the Prime Minister's statement that the Cabinet is considering the question of Equal Franchise at the present time, this meeting demands an immediate Government measure giving votes to women at 21 and on the same terms as men."

As a result of the meeting, Colonel Vaughan Morgan, M.P. for East Fulham, received a deputation of his constituents at the House of Commons on Monday, February 28th. He received the deputation with much courtesy, and discussed the matter with them for nearly an hour. When asked by the deputation if he would pledge himself to vote on the question in the House, he replied that he preferred not to give a pledge, but that the matter would have his sympathetic support and that he would do his best to influence his Party.

### THE NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN TEACHERS.

The Annual Report of the National Union of Women Teachers for 1926 is a record of astonishing activity and encouragement. It surveys the work of the Union, first in its own particular field, the educational world, where in fighting for that big thing equality it yet keeps some of its valuable energies for general matters affecting the schools in which its members work, and for the care and help of the members themselves. The Union runs a weekly paper, *The Woman Teacher*, of which a good account is given in the Report. Those of us who know it will endorse its praise. Outside the educational world this Union takes an active part with other societies in forwarding the advancement of women. One of the objects of the Union is "To secure the franchise for women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men," and this has involved it in much work. Recently, the

### EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN. DEPUTATION TO S.E. ST. PANCRAS M.P.

Last Wednesday, Mr. J. W. W. Hopkins, M.P. for South-East St. Pancras, received a deputation from the Minerva Club branch of the Women's Freedom League to discuss with him the best means of insuring that women should vote at the next election on the same terms with men and at the age of 21. The members of the deputation were Dr. Knight, Miss Edith Rodgers (League of the Church Militant), Mrs. Dollar (Women's Co-operative Guild), Miss Rance, Miss M. Lyon and Miss Reeves, all of whom are voters or potential voters in the constituency.

Mr. Hopkins received the deputation at the House of Commons, where he gave them tea. He listened with sympathy to the arguments put forward by the various members, and assured them that he had always been a convinced supporter of equal political rights between men and women. He promised to support any measure that might be introduced for the granting of equal voting power with men, but did not believe that any private Member's Bill had any chance of being adopted by the Government or passed by the Commons. He did, however, believe that the Government fully intended to redeem its pledge and bring in a measure which would enable women to vote at the next election on the same terms as men.

The members of the deputation thanked Mr. Hopkins for receiving them, but came away convinced that, although they could count on his support for any Government Bill that might be introduced, the demand for the Bill had to come from women themselves, and that it behoved all those who desired this measure of simple justice not to relax their efforts, but to increase them by every means in their power until this absurd injustice is removed.

### THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER.

22nd February, 1927.

To the Secretary, Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee.

MADAM,—With reference to my telephone conversation with you yesterday, I am now writing to say that the Prime Minister will be glad to receive a Deputation representing the Women's Societies, on Tuesday, March 8th, at 5 o'clock, in his room at the House of Commons, in order to discuss the problem of Franchise.

As I explained to you on the telephone, the Prime Minister can only receive one Deputation of this character, and it must, therefore, be made thoroughly representative. Moreover, owing to the limited accommodation available, he finds it necessary to restrict the members of the Deputation to 24 at the outside. I understand that you are in a position to organise the Deputation on these lines, seeing that all the important Societies interested in this problem are affiliated to your Committee with the exception of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. So far as that body is concerned, I am writing to them to inform them of the position and to let them know that you will communicate with them in regard to the matter.

Yours truly, PATRICK GOWER.

Government has been bombarded from all sides to grant equal franchise—a bombardment in which, with the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, the National Union of Women Teachers has not been backward, and which has now resulted in the offer by Mr. Baldwin, to the Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee, to receive a deputation on Tuesday, March 8th, on Equal Franchise. The Union has realised the relation between Equal Franchise and Equal Pay, and the necessity of establishing the fundamental right of women to full citizenship.

### WHERE TO GO.

#### WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.



#### LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Monday, March 7th, at 3 p.m.  
Hampstead Branch. Members' Meeting at 16, Denning Road, N.W.3. (by kind permission of the Misses Berry).

Tuesday, March 8th, at 7.30 p.m.  
Equal Political Rights Campaign. Mid-London Branch. Public Meeting at the Central Library, Holloway Road, N. Speakers: Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, A. S. Comyns Carr, Esq., K.C., Dr. Ethel Bentham, Miss Chave Collisson, M.A. Chair: Mrs. Mustard.

Friday, March 25th, 3—7.30 p.m.  
Spring Sale at 25, Wimpole Street (by kind permission of Dr. Lewin). Songs, Recitations, little stalls, and Dainty Teas.

Saturday, March 26th, at 10 a.m.  
National Executive Committee Meeting, at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.  
Saturday, April 29th, at 10 a.m.  
Annual Conference of the Women's Freedom League, at Caxton Hall, Westminster.

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 to 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

#### PROVINCES.

Wednesday, March 31st, at 3 p.m.  
Portsmouth Branch. Branch Meeting at 2, Kent Road. To discuss Conference Agenda, etc.

#### SCOTLAND.

Tuesday, March 8th.  
Glasgow Branch. Annual Business Meeting and Social at Grosvenor Restaurant.

Wednesday, March 9th.  
Dunoon Branch. Business Meeting.

#### OTHER SOCIETIES.

Saturday, March 5th, at 3 p.m.  
The Speech Club. Miss Carthew on "Travels in Three New Countries—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania."

Monday, March 7th, at 2.30 p.m.  
Meeting on "Equal Franchise," at Brixton Road Branch of Women's Co-operative Guild. Speaker: Miss Reeves.

Monday, March 7th, at 3 p.m.  
Six Point Group. Miss Ursula Williams on "The Legislative Results of Women's Franchise." Tea 4—5 p.m.

Tuesday, March 8th, at 8 p.m.  
Equal Political Rights Campaign Committee. Equal Franchise, Public Meeting at Minerva Club, Hunter Street. Speakers: Members of the Deputation to the Prime Minister.

Thursday, March 10th, at 3 p.m.  
Six Point Group. Mr. Walter de la Mare on "Atmosphere in Fiction." Chair: Miss Hope Mirrlees. Tickets 5/6, 2/6. Tea 4—5 p.m.

Thursday, March 10th, at 4 p.m.  
Joint Parliamentary Advisory Council. Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson on "An Actor's View of Shakespeare," at the Governor's House, Chelsea Hospital. Lord Ernle in the chair.

Thursday, March 17th, at 3 p.m.  
Joint Parliamentary Advisory Council. Dr. Montague James on "Some Minor Excellences of Dickens," at 41 Upper Grosvenor Street. Lord Darling in the chair.

Tuesday, March 22nd, at 3.30 p.m.  
Women's Guild of George Street Congregational Church, Croydon. Speaker: Mrs. Mustard. Subject: "Why women should take an interest in Municipal and Political Work."

#### BRANCH NOTES.

##### DEAL AND WALMER BRANCH.

A meeting, organised by the Deal and Walmer Branch, was held on Friday afternoon, February 25th, at 4, Victoria Road, Deal, when Mrs. Wynne Nevinson, J.P., addressed the audience on the subject of "What the Vote has done for Women." Mrs. Juson Kerr, J.P., presided, and opened the meeting by taking the other side of the subject, showing why it was the extension of the Vote was so urgently needed, in view of the "so much more" that still was waiting to be done before women could or would be thoroughly satisfied. Unfortunately, some torrential showers of rain prevented many from coming who would otherwise have been present, but among the number in the room were two more women Justices of the Peace, and one man J.P. The latter asked permission to say a few words, and he was followed by a friend who had accompanied him—a man from the North Midlands—who gave the welcome news that the hostility to women in Parliament, which at one time had been very intense, was in his locality fast dying down, and promised to be soon entirely non-existent. Questions were invited at the close of the meeting, but few were asked. A member of the audience—who had gone there "to learn"—probably put the reason correctly by pithily remarking that the Speaker had "elucidated" every point so well that no questions were needed, a compliment the Speaker received with a gracious smile and a few appreciative words.

An interested audience of working women (with a sprinkling of men) met at The Friends' Meeting House, Dover, on the afternoon of February 24th, to hear Mrs. Nevinson, J.P., and Mrs. Juson Kerr explain the need for extending the vote on equal terms with men. Quite a few were women under thirty, and their interest was apparent when question time came. The resolution was passed unanimously (and with enthusiasm) that the member for the constituency, Major Astor, should be written to and asked to support the Bill when it came before the House. "Perhaps he'll do it," remarked one 'under-thirty,' "for he may think by doing it he'll get the women's vote he hasn't got now."

#### DUNOON.

On Tuesday, February 22nd, Mrs. M. D. MacPherson again kindly presided over a Women's Freedom League meeting held in the Masonic Hall. After saying how pleased she was to occupy his position, as her great desire was for the advancement of her own sex, Mrs. MacPherson introduced Miss Nina Boyle, who was advertised to speak on "Winter on the Volga." Miss Boyle then gave an extremely interesting, instructive, and amusing account of the adventures and misadventures which fell to the lot of the small party of seven, of whom she was one, who visited the famine area of Russia during the winter of 1921—22, ending up by urging the audience to support those organizations which were working for just reforms, for, she said, that was the best way to escape revolution.

After Mrs. MacPherson had proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Boyle, and Mrs. Hall had performed the same service for Mrs. MacPherson, the organizer once more emphasized the aims and objects of the Women's Freedom League, and called upon those present to join, if they had not already done so.

Tea (which had been provided by members) was served, and several new members were enrolled. After the collection the meeting was declared closed to the public, and a short branch meeting ensued. As, however, there was not time to transact all the business, this was adjourned until March 9th.

(Organiser) LILIAN LENTON.

#### HASTINGS.

We are very grateful to Mrs. Strickland for so kindly taking the place of Mrs. Darent Harrison at the Meeting at the Queen's Hotel last Thursday. Mrs. Strickland read letters of apology for non-attendance from Lord Eustace Percy, M.P., Mr. W. H. Dyer (Editor of the *Hastings Observer*), Miss Nora MacMinn, and others. A message was sent to Mrs. Darent Harrison expressing sympathy with her in her serious illness. In introducing the speaker, Mrs. Strickland said that everyone present must be very sorry to hear of Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence's illness, but she hoped that they would all very cordially welcome Miss Collisson, who had very kindly come at short notice to speak at that meeting. Miss Collisson, M.A., in a brilliant speech, said it was an amazement to her that women were still fighting for the extension of the vote. All English constitutional principle and precedent were put on one side by those who refused it. The following Resolution was carried unanimously: "That this Meeting expresses its indignation at the omission of any mention in the King's Speech of a Bill to enfranchise women at 21 on equal terms with men, and it demands immediate legislation so as to ensure that the Prime Minister's pledge that women shall vote on equal terms with men at the next election may be honoured." The Resolution was seconded by Mrs. Muriel Matters Porter. We are grateful to Miss Rance, Mrs. Buckingham and Miss Callow, who acted as stewards. A good number of VOTES were sold.

(Organiser) MISS WHITE, 8, Holmesdale Gardens.

#### PORTSMOUTH.

The Whist Drive on Wednesday, February 23rd, was very successful. Mrs. Whitehead, Mrs. Brading, Miss Mottershall and Mrs. Whetton kindly gave the prizes. Will members please save their unwanted clothes, etc., as there will shortly be a Jumble Sale? There will be a members' meeting on Wednesday, March 9th, at 2, Kent Road, at 3 o'clock, to discuss the Conference Agenda and other business. Members are earnestly requested to attend.

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