

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

NON-PARTY.

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ONE PENNY.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1929

OBJECTS : To use the power of the Parliamentary vote, now won for Women upon equal terms with men, to elect women to Parliament, and upon other public bodies; to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes; and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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WORK OF THE LABOUR PARTY. By Marion Phillips
(D.Sc., Econ.).

XLVII.—WHEN I AM M.P.

MRS. BETA HORNABROOK, Prospective Liberal Candidate for the Deritend Division of Birmingham.

It seems, on looking back, a most extraordinary thing that I should be offering myself to the electors of the Deritend Division of Birmingham as a Liberal Candidate for Parliament; for it is not long ago that I was quite indifferent to the thought of the vote.

My husband, who was always in sympathy with those women who desired a share in the choosing of Governments, told me I ought to be ashamed of myself, pointing out that it was useless to rail at the mistakes of those in authority over us, unless I was willing to take my share in electing others who were likely to do better. I realised the truth of this and decided first to find out the kind of work those seeking election would be expected to do—then to satisfy myself as to their ability, and then the methods by which they suggested it might be done.

I joined the Citizens' Association and soon learned the things I was desirous of finding out, and was not long in seeing the need of women on all public bodies.

I had not been a member of the committee long before I was asked by them to stand as a candidate for the City Council as an Independent, and having seen the need for women I felt I could not refuse.

When I was returned by a big majority (at my third fight), I found endless jobs that could be better done by a woman than by any man, however good he was, and none that a woman could not do if necessary.

After the experiences on a City Council and Board of Guardians I have become a convinced feminist and back my fellow women every time, for I have found them easy to work with, understanding, big and necessary. I have taken part in elections in order to help women of all three parties, because (1) I know the need for women; (2) I believe, given the right type of woman, whatever her party, she will be a great asset to any public body.

It was my privilege to work and speak for Lady Astor, as a woman who was out for Social Reform and the betterment of her fellow women and little children. And

now I am standing as a Liberal Candidate myself, I am asked what I would do if elected.

If that should prove to be my happy lot I should

1. Throw myself heartily into any scheme offered for the betterment of the conditions under which countless men, women, and children have to live.

I should press for and support with all the earnestness at my command:—

2. A progressive housing policy and slum clearance. I believe that much of the ill-health of the nation arises from bad housing conditions.

3. A really progressive health service for the whole country, making it incumbent on all local authorities to establish pre-natal clinics. We have by our Infant Welfare Centres saved the lives of thousands of babies, and have set the lives of thousands more little children on a firm and healthy basis, but have done little as yet to save the lives of the mothers.

It is a well-known fact that one woman out of every 250 dies at child-birth. Surely this is a disgrace to our land, and I feel that with the return of more women to Parliament more steps will be taken to make so overwhelming a death-rate impossible.

4. I want to see the Infant Welfare work extended until the child is of school age, when it automatically comes under the care of the school doctor and the school nurses.

5. I want to see in all poor and overcrowded areas Nursery Schools opened.

6. Better educational facilities for the children of our land—a more equal education for all.

7. Above all, I should press for Peace. Women of all ranks and shades of thought are bitterly opposed to war. To most of us it is unthinkable that Great Britain should lag behind any country in working for Peace. We long to see England take the lead in declaring that we will work for Peace wholeheartedly. I believe if the League of Nations could be accepted by all countries



MRS. BETA HORNABROOK.

as the authoritative means of settling international differences, trade would increase tremendously.

8. Having lived in industrial areas all my life, I know something of the appalling consequences of unemployment. I should do all in my power to press for work being provided that will help to give back to the workless and hopeless his self-respect and his work.

Work which will benefit our land, such as the development of roads, afforestation, clearing of the slums, and other schemes which have been devised but put on one side as too costly.

With all these social reforms to finance there will be urgent need of economy, and I should strive to see that rigid economy was practised in all departments, especially in the Army, Navy, and Air Force departments.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Girl Establishes Air-Record.

Miss Eleanor Smith, a girl of seventeen, has established a new endurance record for women fliers. She remained in the air for 13 hours, 16 minutes, 45 seconds. The record for solo flying was formerly held by Miss Bobbie Trout, who remained in the air for 12 hours 11 minutes.

Art Student's Achievement.

Miss Evelyn Gibbs, a London Art student, has been awarded the Rome Scholarship for engraving.

Another Woman Rent Collector.

A woman has been appointed as rent collector for the first time by the Manchester Corporation. There were eleven men competitors, but the Housing Committee decided that the woman was the most suitable applicant, both as regards experience and ability.

Seven Men—One Woman.

The Lord Chancellor has appointed seven men and one woman, Mrs. Helen Charlotte Oxley, of Balcombe, as new Justices of the Peace for East Sussex.

More Women Magistrates.

Miss Isabella Newman and Mrs. G. M. Fletcher have been appointed Justices of the Peace for Worcestershire.

Women Stockbrokers.

For some time Leeds has had women stockbrokers, but the London "House" still forbids women to enter its doors. A deputation is shortly to interview the Committee to propose that women brokers and women clerks be admitted. Women now form a large proportion of City investors, and several women stockbrokers are already in business outside the "House."

Women Shoe Repairers.

Miss G. A. Hunt, of Oxford, has succeeded her father as a boot and shoe repairer.

Miss R. Burden, a London girl, works as a shoe repairer in her father's shop.

Woman President of Boot Traders' Association.

Miss Edna Muriel Snow has been elected President of the Northampton Boot Traders' Association.

Other issues of the series, "When I am M.P.":—Miss IDA SWINBURNE, February 1, 1929; Mrs. CATHERINE M. WADHAM, January 18, 1929; Miss HELEN SCHILIZZI, November 16, 1928; Lady STEWART, October 26, 1928; Miss BARBARA BLISS, September 28, 1928; Councillor KINGSMILE JONES, September 14, 1928; Miss JESSIE STEPHEN, August 17, 1928; Dr. MARION PHILLIPS, August 10, 1928; Mrs. C. D. RACKHAM, J.P., M.A., June 15, 1928; Miss ENID LAPHORN, June 1, 1928; Miss H. M. KEYNES, May 25, 1928; Mrs. HAMILTON, February 17, 1928; Miss F. B. WIDDOWSON, January 6, 1928; Mrs. TOWNSEND, September 16, 1927; Mrs. MASSINGHAM, August 19, 1927; Miss RUBY PART, June 3, 1927; Miss ELEANOR STEWART, May 13, 1927; Mrs. BEATRICE A. BAYFIELD, April 29, 1927; Mrs. PANKHURST, February 25, 1927; Miss MONICA WHATELEY, January 21, 1927; Miss ELISABETH EDWARDS, January 7, 1927; Miss MARY RICHARDSON, September 24, 1926; The Lady RATHCREEDAN, August 27, 1926; Mrs. CECILIA STREETEN, April 2, 1926; Dr. STELLA CHURCHILL, March 12, 1926; Mrs. MURIEL MATTERS PORTER, September 12, 1924; Mrs. ANNE CORNER, August 29, 1924; Mrs. LOUIE SIMPSON, J.P., August 15, 1924; Councillor ELLEN C. WILKINSON, M.A., July 4, 1924; Miss MINNIE PALLISTER, July 6, 1923; Miss C. PICTON-TURBERVILL, September 8, 1922; Mrs. HAMILTON MORE-NESBITT, August 18, 1922; Mrs. BURNETT SMITH, June 30, 1922; Lady CURRIE, April 7, 1922; Mrs. STEWART BROWN, March 31, 1922; Miss HELEN FRASER, March 24, 1922; Lady COOPER, March 17, 1922; Commandant MARY S. ALLEN, O.B.E., February 17, 1922; Miss MARY P. GRANT, January 6, 1922; Mrs. MARJORIE PEASE, J.P., October 28, 1921; Mrs. AYRTON GOULD, October 21, 1921; Dr. ETHEL BENTHAM, October 7, 1921; Mrs. WINTRINGHAM, M.P., September 23, 1921; Mrs. ELEANOR BARTON, August 26, 1921; Mrs. SCOTT GATTY, August 12, 1921; Mrs. CORBETT ASHBY, July 15, 1921.

These are the things in which I am greatly interested, because in my work I have seen the urgent need of such reforms. There are many others which space and time will not allow me to discuss, but as I have already said, everything that makes for betterment of social conditions I should support.

Whether I am elected as an M.P. or not, I shall continue to press for these things I have at heart, though I feel I could do it more adequately if I were in the House.

In my local government work I found that the women of Devonport supported me through thick and thin in my fights for them and theirs, and my hope for this Parliamentary election is that the women of Deritend Division of Birmingham will realise that I am offering myself as a worker for them and will honour me by their support.

Merthyr's First Woman Solicitor.

Miss M. Spector, who recently passed the final examination of the Law Society, is Merthyr's first woman solicitor. At 19 years of age she gained the degree of LL.B. at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and she has served her articles with a Birmingham firm of solicitors.

Woman Heads Bar List.

Celia Raphael, at the age of 21, recently came out first in the list of 307 students taking the examination for the Massachusetts Bar.

Women Street Car Conductors.

Equal Rights (Washington) reports that fifty young women, divided into three shifts, each working eight hours, are conductors on the street car system of Matanzas, Cuba.

THE KING'S ILLNESS.

The following letter has been received by the Secretary of the Women's Freedom League from Sir Harry Verney, K.C.V.O., in reply to a message of sympathy sent by our Executive Committee at its last meeting to Her Majesty the Queen.

Buckingham Palace,
1st February, 1929.

DEAR MADAM,

I have had the honour to submit to the Queen your letter of the 31st of January.

In reply, I am commanded to ask you to convey to the Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League an expression of the Queen's grateful and sincere thanks for their kind message of sympathy with Her Majesty in the long illness of His Majesty the King.

I am to add that the Queen warmly appreciates the earnest good wishes expressed for the continued improvement in His Majesty's condition.

I am, Dear Madam,
Yours very truly
(Sgd.) HARRY VERNEY,
Private Secretary to the Queen.

IN PARLIAMENT.

Sexual Offences.

VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Plymouth) asked the Home Secretary the number of cases in each of the four classes of sexual offences against young persons, recommended by him to be referred by Chief Constables to the Director of Public Prosecutions in the Circular 492,077/9, dated 17th September, 1926, which have been so referred since that date? SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: From the 17th September, 1926, to the 7th December, 1928, sixty-three cases involving offences against seventy-five girls under thirteen have been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. In three of these cases, three or more girls were involved, and in six cases disease had been communicated. No cases have been referred to the Director under the fourth category added by the Home Office Circular. Cases referred to the Director by the Commissioner of Police are included in the above figures.

Women in the Civil Service.

SIR W. de FREGE (U., Blackpool) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury the Government Departments to which, for the first time, women have been appointed within the last year; and whether, in view of the success of women candidates in the examinations, he will give further consideration to the adoption of the principle of equal pay for equal work, irrespective of sex, in the Civil Service? MR. CHURCHILL (Chancellor of the Exchequer): Within the twelve months preceding the 28th January, 1929, women have been appointed from open competitive examinations for the first time in the capacities stated to the following Departments:—

"Ministry of Transport—Junior Administrative Officer.
"Customs and Excise—Executive Officer.
"Inland Revenue—Executive Officer.
"Ministry of Labour—Executive Officer.
"Estate Duty Office—Assistant Examiner.
"Exchequer and Audit Office—Assistant Auditor.

With regard to the last part of the question, His Majesty's Government have given renewed consideration to this matter in view of representations recently made on the subject. They have, however, found it impossible to depart from the decision already announced, both by this and the late Government, that the present state of the country's finances will not admit of the great increase of expenditure involved in the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women in the Civil Service.

VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Plymouth): Does that statement really carry out the sex equality which this Government passed—the Bill for sex equality? Is that fair or just? MR. CHURCHILL: It really represents the decision and policy of His Majesty's Government and the decision and policy of their predecessors. VISCOUNTESS ASTOR: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that because his predecessors have made a mistake, or were unjust, he has any right to carry on the injustice? MR. CHURCHILL: I should be perfectly prepared, on a suitable occasion, to argue the matter with the Noble Lady, but this is not the occasion.

MR. MACKINDER (Lab., Shipley): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in a case where an ex-service man was employed by the Minister of Labour, and was unable to go on because he was disabled, his wife had to take on the job at exactly £1 a week less.

MR. CECIL WILSON (Lab., Attercliffe): Would the right hon. Gentleman be prepared to engage in a debate on the wireless with the Noble Lady? (No reply was given).

Marriage (Legal Age, India).

MR. THURTLÉ (Lab., Shoreditch) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is in a position to state the attitude of the Government of India in regard to the question of raising the legal age of marriage in India? EARL WINTERTON: A Bill designed to establish for the first time a minimum age by penalising the contracting of marriages below that age, but without rendering such a marriage invalid, is now before the Indian Legislature. As I explained, in answer to a question by the hon.

Member for Leicester, W. (Mr. Pethick-Lawrence), on 17th December, the attitude of the Government of India towards this Measure is one of cordial approval.

MR. THURTLÉ: Is the noble lord aware that last week the Government members of the Legislative Assembly voted down the particular Bill to which he has referred? EARL WINTERTON: No, sir. I am not blaming the hon. Member if he has gathered his information from the press report, which was necessarily somewhat short. What happened was that the Government members voted for the Motion delaying the progress of the Bill, and their reason for doing so was that important sections of the community had shown great hostility to the Measure, and they thought it best, in the interests of the Bill, to await the Report of the Committee which is now examining the cognate subject of the age at which, in cases of sexual intercourse, a valid defence can be set up to a charge of rape. It was done in the interests of the Bill.

COL. WEDGWOOD (Lab., Newcastle-under-Lyme): Has not the Bill been killed for this Session? EARL WINTERTON: I can give an absolute assurance that in this, as in other Bills, the Government of India have regard to the feelings of the House. The right hon. Gentleman knows that there are circumstances, which are difficult to explain in reply to a question, where the Government of India, in the interests of a particular Bill, have to adopt certain tactics. They allowed their members to vote for the Motion in consequence of the view which they held.

Labour Conditions (Royal Commission).

MISS LAWRENCE (Lab., East Ham, N.) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether in view of the part that Indian women play in industry and agriculture, and of all the circumstances prevailing in India, he will take steps to appoint on the Royal Commission on Indian Labour at least one Indian woman with practical experience of trade union work? EARL WINTERTON: As explained by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, on Thursday last, the personnel of the Royal Commission on Indian Labour is not yet settled, but all relevant considerations will be borne in mind before a decision is reached.

Female Hospitals (India).

MR. DAY (Lab., Central Southwark) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the total number of hospitals and dispensaries for females that at present exist in British India; and whether any increase has been made during the previous twelve months? EARL WINTERTON: The total number of female hospitals and dispensaries in British India recorded in the official Reports for 1926 was 186, with 4,522 beds available, as compared with 173 with 4,249 beds available for the previous year. The figures do not include mission and private hospitals, or beds available for women in general hospitals. No later figures have yet been received.

RIDICULE CUTS RED-TAPE.

As an outcome of the amusement which arose when, in order to comply with the rule which lays down that a Member wishing to raise a point of order during a division must remain "seated and covered," Miss Susan Lawrence improvised a hat out of a sheet of paper, the Speaker has decided that the rules of the House of Commons about hats shall not apply to women.

PEERESSES BILL.

In the House of Lords last Tuesday, VISCOUNT ASTOR introduced the Parliamentary Qualifications (Peeresses) Bill, which was read a first time. We hope to give the provisions of this particular Bill in next week's issue of THE VOTE.

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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.

WOMEN AT CROSS PURPOSES.

While feminists are making a straight demand for equality of treatment as between men and women, other women appear to be frightened at the possible results of this equality, and during the last week the Press has shown that there is great activity among the more timid. One day a long letter appeared in *The Times*, signed by seventeen well-known women, who viewed with varying degrees of gloom any attempt to remove the present restrictions on the work of women in industry. They urged the continuance of these restrictions because a very large proportion of women workers in industry are under twenty-five; because so many of them leave their occupation on marriage; and women, being more unorganised than men, have less chance of bargaining with their employers; and their conclusion is that women should be safeguarded and protected against night-work, long hours, and injurious trades and processes, in the beneficent hope that similar safeguards and protection may ultimately be applied to men's work! The view of the Women's Freedom League is that in all industrial legislation regulations shall be based on the nature of the work, and not on the sex of the worker, and that necessary restrictions relating to hours, conditions, night-work, injurious trades, etc., shall be applied equally to men and women. An adult woman worker, even if she is under the age of twenty-five, is as capable of looking after her health as a man worker of the same age. Workers of both sexes have a definite right and an equal right as citizens to the conditions necessary for health and safety in industry, but we see no reason why adult women should be prohibited by law from working at night if they wish to do so. We are certain that not one of the signatories to the letter in *The Times* would for one moment tolerate being prohibited from carrying on her own work at night. These special restrictions on women's work undermine all their attempts to secure equal opportunities and equal pay with men throughout industry. The day following the appearance of this letter in *The Times*, the *Daily News* had a leader referring to it and commending the anxiety of the signatories to see these special "safeguards" extended to men, at the same time advising women's organisations to "get beyond the narrow limitations of a one-sex mentality"! What the Women's Freedom League asks is that the "safeguards" in industry for which the *Daily News* exhibits a new affection shall from the first be applied equally to men and women workers, and not imposed first of all on women workers in order to militate against their competition with men. Then there is another woman writer who has been telling readers of the daily Press that "Women Don't Want Sex Equality," because women, as a whole, have never asked for it. As though men, as a whole, ever asked for any political change! Was it not Mr. G. K. Chesterton who, once upon a time, asked his wife, his mother, and his charwoman if they wanted a vote, and because they all said "No," came to the weighty conclusion that women, as a whole, did not want a vote? Yet another woman has been writing on Penalties of Independence—for women, of course! Her theory is that wifehood is a career in itself, and wives who try to earn money have to pay the penalty of independence, the penalty which often resolves itself

into separation, not to speak of divorce! The writer of this curious article gives us to understand that she manages to follow both careers. Doubtless a miracle was arranged for her case; notwithstanding which she has one lament—she cannot do some of the things her housekeeper does for her! The Women's Freedom League has no sympathy with these detractors of women's independence. We want a fair field and no favour, with equal opportunities and equal rewards with men in any work we undertake. We do not ask for privileges, but we do not want obstacles placed in the way of our progress.

WHY NOT GIVE WOMEN A CHANCE?

According to *The Times*, the Simon Commission examined Mr. J. J. Anderson, Commissioner for Tenasserim, a province in Lower Burma, on January 31st. Mr. Anderson said that 55 per cent. of the adult population of Burma had the vote, but only 18 per cent. used it at the last General Election. He added that Burmese women desired to enter the Council, and when the Government turned down the proposal a crowd of women marched round the Secretariat protesting. It seems to us obvious that the way to increase the number of people voting at an Election in Burma is to allow the Burmese women to stand for election! Readers of THE VOTE will remember that in March, 1927, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence asked the Under-Secretary of State for India (Earl Winterton), why the Government had opposed the eligibility of Burmese women, and the reply was: "The question at issue was the removal of sex disqualification for the candidature for the election of Burmese women to the Legislative Council. If the report I have seen is correct, the Home Member (who, I may observe, is a Burman) opposed the motion, on behalf of the Government, on the ground that it was premature, and might well await the Statutory Inquiry." We are convinced that if Burmese women stood as candidates for the Council, there would be an end of the present political apathy in Burma.

WOMEN 10%.

Under the provisions of the Government's De-Rating Bill only unemployed insured men were to be estimated for determining weighted population of a county or county borough. Last week Mr. Neville Chamberlain moved an amendment to add unemployed insured women; and then to ascertain the percentage represented by the proportion which "the number of unemployed insured men, increased by 10 per cent. of the number of unemployed insured women, bore to the average estimated population." Mr. Chamberlain said he thought the 10 per cent. estimate in regard to unemployed insured women would fairly meet the claims of industrial areas. Mr. Pethick-Lawrence urged that the distinction between unemployed insured men and women should be abolished, and "unemployed insured persons" substituted. He said that the real question was the impoverishment caused to a locality by unemployment. The amendment was carried.

ARE YOU ON THE REGISTER?

Women have had a long struggle to get votes at the same age and on the same terms as men. One more thing qualified women must do, and that is, see that their name is *now* on the Parliamentary Register, since that Register comes into force in May and will remain in force until October, 1930. If a woman over twenty-one lived at one address from September 1st to December 1st last year her name should be on the list, which can be seen at the Registration Office, the Town Hall, the Post Office, or at the local offices of the various political parties. If her name is not on the list, she should at once obtain a Claim Form from the Registration Officer and return it before the 16th of February. After this the Register will be corrected and will be published and come into force on the 1st of May.

CHILD SLAVERY IN HONG KONG.

MR. L'ESTRANGE MALONE (Lab., Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that a Petition has been presented to the Governor of Hong Kong by British and Chinese subjects, praying that a declaration may be issued of personal freedom for all mui tsai on their reaching the age of 18 years; and whether, seeing that the Colonial Secretary in 1922 gave instructions to the Government that the system of mui tsai was to be abolished within twelve months, he is prepared to advise the Governor against issuing a declaration which would retain in bondage the mui tsai until the age of 18 years?

MISS WILKINSON (Lab., Middlesbrough, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, in spite of the pledge given to Parliament in 1922 by the then Colonial Secretary that mui tsai slavery in Hong Kong should be abolished in one year, the number of girls in this position has actually increased; and whether he will take action to remove this evil?

MR. CECIL WILSON (Lab., Attercliffe) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies: (1) Whether the mui tsai in Hong Kong have in the past received weekly wages; if so, what is the amount; whether any proposals have been made to the Governor in the matter; and, if so, what is their nature? (2) Whether, seeing that it is now more than six years since an undertaking was given to this House by the Colonial Secretary that the system known as mui tsai slavery in Hong Kong should be abolished within one year, his attention has been drawn to the fact that the system is still in full operation, and that cruelty has increased; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

MR. AMERY: In pursuance of the undertaking by the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the 21st of March, 1922, an Ordinance was passed in Hong Kong on the 15th February, 1923, which declared the complete personal freedom of all mui tsai, and their unrestricted right to leave their employers if they so desired, prohibited the taking into employment of any fresh mui tsai after the Ordinance came into effect, and made provision for the proper treatment of existing mui tsai who might continue in the service of their employers. I have recently called for a report on the working of the Ordinance, and I propose to defer any statement on the various points of detail which have been raised until that report is received.

MR. MALONE: Is it not the fact that the number of these mui tsai has increased from 8,000 to 10,000 in this period; are they not being sold for money and employed without wages; and is it not time to bring into force legislation to prevent this slavery in the British Empire? MR. AMERY: No, Sir. I have received no information bearing on all those statements, but I am anxious to get the fullest statement possible from the Governor.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN INDIA.

A very interesting address on Social Conditions in India was given by Mrs. Cannon at the Minerva Club, Thursday afternoon, January 31st. Mrs. Cannon spent seven years in India, travelling from place to place, in villages as well as in the towns, in order to study the social conditions of that vast country. She explained how difficult it was for Westerners to understand Indian life; the traditions, the religion, the customs and the conditions of the people were utterly unlike our own, and she emphasised the fact that it was only in India itself that one could get in touch with the people. The Indians themselves who came over here were quite different in their own country. Mrs. Cannon said that we were so apt to think of India as a country about the size of England, whereas it was roughly the size of Europe if Russia were excluded, and the differences between North and South India were as great as the differences between Iceland and Southern Italy. The population of India was 320 millions, which included

MR. LOOKER (U., Essex, S.E.): Is it not the fact that this practice has been prevalent and recognised in China for thousands of years; and that the constant changes of population between the adjoining provinces and Hong Kong results in a great number of these girls coming from Canton and elsewhere, and that the practice is very difficult to check; and is not the real remedy for the difficulty that action should be taken by the Chinese authorities?

VISCOUNTESS ASTOR (U., Plymouth): Have not some of us been writing every year to the Colonial Office about this, and does the right hon. Gentleman's Department not know about it, since there has been as much discontent regarding it on this side of the House as on the other? Even if it has been going on in China for thousands of years, why should it be continued under British administration, if it is possible to stop it?

MISS LAWRENCE (Lab., East Ham, N.): When does the right hon. Gentleman hope to have a full report from the Governor?

MR. AMERY: I communicated with the Governor some time ago. I hope to receive his answer in the course of the next few weeks. With regard to the question of my hon. Friend the Member for South-Eastern Essex (Mr. Looker), it is very probable that the large influx of Chinese families from the mainland may have included a considerable number of these girls, described as members of the families.

MR. WILSON: Why has the very specific declaration made in the House in 1922 not been complied with? The then Colonial Secretary then said: "Both I and the Governor are determined to effect the abolition of the system at the earliest practicable date, and I have indicated to the Governor that I expect the change to be carried out within a year."

MR. AMERY: The promise given by the then Secretary of State was fulfilled, and I have no reason to believe that the authorities of Hong Kong are not carefully watching any case of ill-treatment, or any case of a girl who wishes to leave the family with which she is living. Obviously, nothing could be more cruel than to drive these girls out of the families in which they are living when they are, perhaps, separated by many hundreds of miles from their original homes in China.

MISS WILKINSON: In reference to the right hon. Gentleman's statement that the Hong Kong authorities are carefully watching this matter, is he aware that it is not so much a question of ill-treatment as of the system under which these girls are detained?

MR. AMERY: Everything has been done to make it clear to the girls that they are absolutely free, and in a great many cases, I think, they prefer to continue with a family with whom they have perhaps been living for a great many years.

200,000 Europeans, and there were twenty-two different religions. However much Europeans tried to impose their ideas on Indians, it was clear that the latter did not assimilate them. The speaker complained that in India we did not treat the people as equals and friends; we would not travel in the same compartments with them, and Mrs. Cannon pleaded for a better understanding and more goodwill on the part of British people towards the people of India. In discussing caste, the speaker pointed out that we had different classes of people in this country, and explained the different castes in India, and she told us of the work of Indians for the education of their countrymen. Mrs. Cannon stressed the great influence that religion has on the lives of people in India, and contrasted the religious idealism of that country with the materialism of our own. Mrs. Cannon also censured the Government members of the Legislative Council for opposing the raising of the marriage age in India. Mrs. Cannon said that great masses of people in India were starved in body and mind, and she gave appalling figures of infant mortality. She spoke with appreciation of the

work of Indian women who in all but two States, Behar and Orissa, had equal voting rights with men and eligibility to the Legislative Councils. Women were taking their place as magistrates and in most branches

of public life in India.

Many questions and some discussion followed Mrs. Cannon's address, and the meeting concluded with a cordial vote of thanks to the speaker.

THE EDUCATION OF THE NEW VOTER.

2. THE WORK OF THE LABOUR PARTY.

In view of the General Election, and for the information of our readers, we have opened the columns of THE VOTE to protagonists of each of the three political parties. The Conservative point of view was given in our issue of Jan. 25th. The present article dealing with the work of the Labour Party will be followed by an article giving the Liberal point of view. Many women, we hope, are standing as candidates in all three parties.

The educational work of the Labour Party for women is in the main done through its Women's Sections. These are made up of the individual women members of the Labour Party in each constituency, divided very often into ward or village Sections, linked together in the constituencies in Federations. Both Parliamentary and Local Government questions are constantly considered by the members of the Sections, and the active election work done by the women increases their knowledge of politics, economics, and social questions.

Labour Party organisation is on very democratic lines with considerable local autonomy. The object of its central authority is always to give every possible freedom to each separate constituency Party. Within the constituency the Women's Section forms an integral part of this, having representation on it and taking part in all its work, but it also conducts its own affairs in an independent way.

Hundreds of Labour Women's Conferences are held every year, covering wide areas, all of which are organised by the women members of the localities concerned. They have not only Women's Federations and Central Committees for single constituencies, but over 50 Women's Advisory Councils covering larger areas. The latter hold about 150 educational Conferences for the discussion of particular questions, and also organise big Demonstrations during Women's Month in the summer, with processions and other special features. More directly educational work are their One-Day and Week-end Schools and Summer Schools. At the present time, for example, Advisory Councils are arranging in many instances for each of the constituencies they cover to have a special One-Day School in preparation for the General Election as well as Week-end Schools, and at both, Labour's programme will be discussed. There is also every year a great National Conference of Labour Women to which are also invited delegates from all the organisations linked up in the Advisory Committee on Women's Questions to the Labour Party, which has the very long title of Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations. This is entirely made up of women representatives and includes women from the Labour Party, Trades Union Congress, Women's Co-operative Guild and Co-operative Union, and various Trade Unions and Socialist Societies. As the Advisory Committee to the Labour Party, it draws up the reports presented at the Women's Conference on general policy, and takes a leading part in putting forward the views of working women on all public questions, frequently organising deputations to Ministers, giving evidence before Departmental Committees, arranging Conferences on special subjects and representing Labour women on various bodies of a more general kind. The political education of women is also developed by a journal of their own, the *Labour Woman*, published monthly by the Labour Party.

The large number of women candidates the Labour Party will put forward at the next General Election—probably over 30—shows the growing interest taken by women, and their firm establishment within the Party. Naturally there are not as many women as men candidates, for the very idea of women candidates is new to the constituencies and a very large number of women cannot undertake Parliamentary duties because of family ties. There is also the reason that woman have not yet served a long enough apprenticeship to political work to be as prominent as

men, who still greatly outnumber them in the parties. A very large number of Labour candidates have been members of Local Government Authorities, and have, as it were, learned their Parliamentary job by serving on Municipal and County Councils and Boards of Guardians. There has not been the same opportunity for women until recent years, and though the number on such bodies is increasing, it is still far smaller than that of men. The Labour Party attach much importance to the educational value of this administrative work, not only for the good it does to the community, but also as a training ground of citizenship, and a large part of the attention of the women in the Party is devoted to the study of Local Government, especially with relation to women and children. But though the Party has a staff of women organisers who are constantly about the constituencies helping and advising the Women's Sections, the Party has always been very careful to give its members freedom to develop their political interests in a way that suits their own district and desires best.

The number of young women who are now coming into the Labour Movement is very encouraging. On the whole, however, it has more attracted the married woman, especially the young mother. The Labour Party's League of Youth, of which the development has recently been quickened and is expected to grow very much in the next few years, will do much to bring forward the young women from 18 to 25 who will probably provide many leaders in the near future. It is noticeable that amongst these a large proportion are the children of working-class families, who have had a secondary school education and who have not, therefore, the heavy handicaps which their mothers felt, when after an elementary school life ending at 14, they turned in later years to the work of political organisation. But with all their handicaps these are the women who are now educating themselves and others. The Labour Party recognises very fully that when a woman becomes a capable president, secretary, treasurer or committee woman, she is getting a mental training which will make her far wider awake and readier to play her part in the nation's concerns. The aim of the Labour Party in all its work is to create not only Labour voters but people who know why they vote Labour; what they want a Labour Government to do; and how they want it done. They seek to educate public opinion—not only to get a cross written upon a ballot paper—and they say to the women voters of all ages: "Come with us and share in creating a happier community in which there shall be an equal opportunity for a prosperous and healthy life for every member of the community."

MARION PHILLIPS (D.Sc. Econ.), Chief Woman Officer of the Labour Party.

WOMAN GRAIN EXPERT.

Miss Cora Hind, commercial and financial editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*, is said to know more about cattle and crops than the most experienced farmers. She has lived all her life in Canada and thirty-five years ago settled in Winnipeg, where she attended farmers' conventions as a shorthand writer and at the same time took up the study of grains and cattle. To-day her opinion of crops is said to set the standard all over North America and affect the grain market of the world.

Women's Freedom League.

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WHERE TO GO.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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Friday, March 1st, at 3 p.m.

Hampstead Branch Meeting, at 7, Gainsborough Gardens, N.W.3 (by kind invitation of Dr. Knight).

Thursday, March 7th, at 4.30 p.m.

Meeting at the Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Speaker: Mrs. Dore. Subject: "The Position of Women in South Africa." Tea 4 p.m.

Friday, March 8th, at 3.15 p.m.

Hampstead Branch. Conference, to see what can be done in Hampstead to induce the Authorities to provide more women police for duty on the Heath (to be held by kind invitation of Mrs. Hugh Thompson), at 26, Ellerdale Road, N.W.3. Speakers: Miss Helen Brooke Herford, P.L.G., Mrs. Nevinson, J.P., Councillor Mrs. Carnegie. Chairman: Dr. Knight. Other speakers to be announced later.

Saturday, March 9th, at 10 a.m.

National Executive Committee Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Saturday, April 13th, at 10 a.m.

Women's Freedom League Twenty-Second Annual Conference, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W.1.

PROVINCES.

Monday, February 18th, at 7 p.m.

Middlesbrough Branch Victory Social at Hinton's Café. Speakers: Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and others. Music, Speeches, Playlets, etc., and refreshments. Tickets 2/-.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Friday, February 8th, at 7.30 p.m.

National Council of Women. Meeting in the Music Room, Werneth Park, Oldham, by kind permission of Dame Sarah Lees. Speaker: Miss M. I. Neal. Subject: "Equal Opportunities for Women and Men."

Saturday, February 9th, at 3 p.m.

Saturday Speech Club, at the Minerva Club, 56, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Debate: "That one on in this country should be allowed an unearned income of more than £500 a year." Proposer: Miss L. H. Godfrey. Opposer: Mrs. Whiton.

Tuesday, February 12th, at 7 p.m.

Electrical Association for Women. 'Lantern Lecture' at the E.L.M.A. Lighting Service Bureau, 15, Savoy Street, Strand, W.C.2. Lecturer: Mr. H. de A. Donisthorpe (Osram Valve Department, General Electric Company, Ltd.) Subject: "Radio Progress and its Connection with the Thermionic Valve." Chairman: Miss A. Tomlinson-Lee.

Tuesday, February 12th, at 8 p.m.

Fabian Society (Women's Group), at the Caxton Hall, Victoria Street, London. Lecturer: Miss Evelyn Sharp. Subject: "The Growing Pains of Emancipation." Chairman: Mrs. J. B. S. Haldane.

Wednesday, February 13th, at 8 p.m.

The Guild of Girl Citizens. Public Meeting at The Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Speaker: Miss Ishbel Macdonald, L.C.C. "The Work of the London County Council." Chair: Lady Maurice.

Thursday, February 14th, at 1 p.m.

Open Door Council. Monthly Luncheon at Pinoli's Restaurant, 17, Wardour Street (2s. 6d.) Mr. Frank Briant, M.P., on "Economic Equality for Women."

Thursday, February 14th, at 3 p.m.

National Council of Women. Public Meeting at the Aeolian Hall, Bond Street, W., on "Raising the Status of Domestic Servants." Speakers: The Duchess of Atholl, Miss Margaret Bondfield, M.P., and Professor Winifred Cullis, D.Sc.

Monday, February 18th, at 6 p.m.

St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance. Open Meeting at St. Patrick's Clubroom, Soho Square, W., on "Women in Business." Speaker: Councillor Helen Fraser, Chairman: Miss Eleanor Fitzgerald. Admission Free.

Wednesday, February 20th, at 8 p.m.

Character Builders Association, 45, Lancaster Gate, W.2. Speaker: Miss Marian Reeves. Subject: "Protective Legislation as it Affects Women."

BRANCH NOTES.

ASHFORD.

A successful meeting was held at the Hempsted Street Hall, on Friday, January 25th. Mrs. Miles, who presided, said that important work had to be done, viz., framing resolutions for the Annual Conference. After an interesting discussion, four resolutions were sent to Headquarters, then the appointment of a delegate took place. Miss White pointed out that although only delegates could vote, members were entitled to attend the conference. Mrs. Miles was chosen to represent Ashford. Mrs. Palmer promised to take her place if for any reason she could not attend. Mrs. Kither and Mrs. Lamprey hope to go, so Ashford should be well represented. We were very pleased to welcome Mrs. Mockford at the meeting.

HASTINGS.

What might be described as a magnificent meeting was held in the beautiful ballroom at the Queen's Hotel last Tuesday evening. The people thronged into the Hall long before 7.30, and were still coming in long after the meeting had commenced. For once we were glad of a wet, stormy night! If it had been fine we should have been faced with an overflow meeting.

Mr. Alfred Dyer, J.P., who presided, said that he was there in the capacity of speaker of the local parliament and was entirely impartial.

Mr. John Farnsworth spoke on the ideals of the Conservative Party. He pointed out that his party had carried out its policy put forward in 1924, and he urged the electors, both young and old, to return it to power at the next election.

Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence spoke for the Labour Party. In a splendid speech she dealt with Social Reform. She said she wanted to impress upon the new voters that they would get no great reform from any party in Parliament.

Reforms could not be given, they must be won. Women had political equality, but had yet to fight for economic equality. She placed special emphasis on the value of human life. "If we don't build houses for our people we shall have to build hospitals, asylums and prisons," she said. The Labour Party was out to crush grinding poverty.

Mrs. Edwardes, Liberal, said her party was great in achievement and had a magnificent policy which they intended to carry out after they took over the reins of government at the next election, which remark caused laughter. The Liberal Party would do something at once by special works:—road schemes, reclamation of land from the sea, housing schemes, slum clearance, development of garden cities, etc.

At the close of the meeting a vote of thanks, proposed by Mrs. Darent Harrison and seconded by Mrs. Stickland, to the Chairman and speakers was enthusiastically applauded.

Our warm congratulations to all those who helped to make the meeting such a success.

Special thanks are due to Mrs. Prelooker and Miss Rance, who put in colossal work. Also to the stewards who carried out their duties admirably. Our literature sold well. There was a run on THE VOTE, and our membership leaflets were eagerly taken so that those present could learn something about the League.

MAUD L. WHITE.

To All Members.

Subscriptions for 1929 are now due and will be gratefully received; also any from 1928 still owing.

E. KNIGHT.

144, High Holborn.

To Branch Treasurers.

Please send me Branch Balance Sheet for 1928, for inclusion in the final VOTE list of the year.

MRS. PANKHURST'S MEMORIAL.

A group of friends and followers of Mrs. Pankhurst are arranging for a headstone for her grave in Brompton Cemetery, a portrait of Mrs. Pankhurst, by Miss G. Brackenbury, to be presented to the National Portrait Gallery, and a statue of Mrs. Pankhurst to be erected in Westminster. We understand that the Prime Minister has consented to unveil this statue, but the ceremony will not take place until after the General Election.

Membership Application Form.

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NOTICES.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES.—Guild-house, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, February 10th. 3.30. Music. Lecture. Professor E. B. Poulton, D.Sc., LL.D. 6.30. Maude Royden.

PUBLIC SPEAKING.—Lectures, classes, and private lessons. Saturday Speech Club.—Miss LUCY BELL, Minerva Club, Brunswick Square, W.C.1. Tel.: Museum 4791.

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