

Mrs Napier supported the motion. She had worked for 14 years in Edinburgh, and though she had not worked with the women police, she had done a little of such work on her own account. She related how on one occasion she had seen two lads from a man-of-war standing near a public-house, and two girls behind trying to attract their attention, so she had stepped in between, followed them when they went down a dark alley, and had not left them till they were safe. This was the kind of police work that could be done so well by tactful women. Like the chauffeur who, when the motor-car was stuck, invited all to "get out and push," so to carry this and any other reform she asked every one to "get out and push" for legislation to be passed.

Miss Melville quoted from a copy of the "Dreadnought," just received, that "the Minister for Munitions had appointed some hundreds of women police to visit the factories where women and girls were working, and they were doing splendid work."

Mrs Atkinson gave a brief resume of the efforts made last year to get women police appointed. Mr Mark Cohen, editor of the Dunedin "Evening Star," had investigated in 26 States or places, and in not one was any objection raised to women police, but everywhere admiration was expressed for their valuable work. The Minister for Justice had the report containing all this information, yet still he refused to move in the matter, though in these warmer climates and free outdoor life it was the more necessary to have protection for the boys and girls.

Mrs Don said that the W.C.T.U. had for years advocated this reform, in spite of the cheap jokes made against it. Dr Sheldon, on his visit to New Zealand, had told her about the work of the police women in Kansas, where it was recognised they must be the best educated that could be found—college graduates—the very best all-round women. She referred to her own experience in Dunedin, where, being an official visitor and connected with various committees, she knew by sight almost all the young people, and was often able to help and protect. Still better would police women get to know the girls that were giddy and allowed to go unrestrained, and armed with authority, could watch them, and shadow them about, go

into all sorts of places, and thus guide and guard them from evil. The reports from other places show that the work of police women is always preventive, and the male police force have testified that everywhere they have been appointed they have proved their value.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

A collection was then taken up, and an appeal made for new members to join the Union.

The second resolution was moved by Miss Melville, member of the Auckland City Council: "That, whereas women have, during the present war, proved their capacity to fill every position to which they have been appointed, and whereas the right to elect logically carries with it the right to be elected, this meeting earnestly urges the Government to take without delay steps to remove the obstacles in the way of women entering Parliament; and also to clear the way to their serving as Magistrates, Justices of the Peace, and Jurors."

Miss Melville, speaking to the resolution, gave a masterly review of the present position. Referring first to New Zealand, she pointed out that in 1914 this matter had been brought before the Houses of Parliament, without direct request from the women. When the Legislative Council Amendment Bill was before the Lower House, Dr. Newman moved that women be included, but the Upper House took exception to the amendment, on the ground that it ought to have been initiated in the Upper House, and it was sent back to the Lower House with the objection. Later on Mr McCombs moved to delete the word "male," and was defeated, after but slight discussion, by only 2 votes. Afterwards he again moved a similar amendment, but it was ruled out of order, as being the same as one already lost. But many members were in favour of the principle, and the speaker believed that if the women of the Dominion organised and put a definite request before Parliament, it would be passed without much opposition.

Passing then to other advanced countries, she stated that in the compact little democratic country of Finland, there were at present 19 women in Parliament. Finland had had to struggle for its national existence, and

could not afford to leave out half of its best people, but started by educating them to use their power rightly. In Norway, women sat in Parliament, and the general opinion is favourable to it, the main support coming from the Socialist Labour bodies, one of whose chief planks is equal rights for all citizens, irrespective of sex. In some of the United States are women Senators; but little authentic information re the women's movement is to be obtained through the papers. In China, in one of the provincial Parliaments, are five women. Since 1901 women have the right to sit in the Federal House, though no one has yet been elected. Miss Goldstein, an able, highly educated woman, has stood and polled well, but not believing in Party Government, she refuses to stand for any party, will stand only as an Independent.

As regards full voting powers, note that women exercise them in New Zealand, Iceland, Denmark, 12 States of the U.S.A., 3 Provinces of Canada, and Australia. In some this legislation has been passed since the war. It is interesting to note the attitude of different types of mind towards this question. Some maintain that women, by nature coercive, would place on the Statute Book too many "must nots." But the more women know, and the more they wish to help make the laws, the less likely they would be to make this mistake, and it must be confessed that in many cases it is necessary to prohibit. At present our only means of expressing our views is by asking from outside, through deputations, but we should have women there where the laws are made. There should be co-operation, not antagonism. The woman's point of view should prevail in making laws, seeing that women have to pay as well as men. Some think that the wrong women might get into Parliament, faddists, but we can trust public opinion to prevent the election of such.

Referring to the last clauses of the motion, Miss Melville stated that in Australia there are women Justices working in conjunction with women police; and as to women jurors, one Judge had testified of a certain mixed jury that he "had never had a more capable, candid, unbiassed jury"; another that he "had feared the jury system was rotten, but with the advent of the mixed jury, this fear had passed from his mind."