

THE VOTE.
JULY 20, 1917.
ONE PENNY.

Woman Suffrage in Ireland:

CRITICAL POSITION.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, JULY 20, 1917

Edited by C. DESPARD.

OBJECT: To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained 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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POLITICAL NOTES.

Where is the Representation of the People Bill?

We understand that the Boundary Commissioners are not nearly ready with their report, and that this Bill cannot be proceeded with until that report is forthcoming. Last Friday, in reply to a question by Mr. John O'Connor in regard to the Corn Production Bill, Mr. Bonar Law said "I do not think that it would be possible for this House to go on sitting indefinitely after the strain to which it has been exposed," and Major Hunt immediately asked "If the Government are short of time could they not leave the Franchise Bill alone?" No answer was given to this question, but we have since learnt that the Government hope to get the adjournment before August 9. The continued delay in regard to this Bill and the Government's plan for an early rising of the House of Commons in spite of the pressure of business are not calculated to inspire women with confidence in the Government's intentions with regard to their enfranchisement, and we urge that before the adjournment takes place, the Government shall make some clear pronouncement in regard to the Representation of the People Bill. After all, we have a War Cabinet for the vigorous prosecution of the war, officers and men in the trenches find it increasingly difficult to get a few days' leave under any circumstances, and men and women munition workers have frequently to work long hours every day for many months without so much as a day off, so that "in spite of the strain to which it has been exposed," the House of Commons, which does not meet on Saturdays, not always on Fridays, and then for only half a day, should certainly stop and finish some of the important business of the country before it decides to take a holiday. Is it merely a coincidence that on at least two occasions recently, and in

the arrangements for next Monday, the Criminal Law Amendment Bill is given precedence of the Representation of the People Bill in the Orders of the day? Or, does the Government wish it to be understood that it prefers penalising women to enfranchising them?

The Food Problem.

The following resolution has been sent to the Prime Minister, the Food Controller, the President of the Local Government Board, and the Chairman of the London County Council Education Committee:—"In view of a possible shortage of food stuffs, the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League calls upon the Local Education Authorities and Public Health Authorities to set in motion at once the machinery for the feeding of school children, and provide the machinery for the feeding of nursing and expectant mothers and children of school age; and further, calls upon the Food Controller, the Board of Education, and the Local Government Board to commandeer, if necessary, a sufficient amount of suitable kinds of food, making the children a first charge on the national supply."

The Prime Minister has acknowledged our letters on the Food Problem and Women's Position under the Board of Education. The following replies have been received from the Local Government Board, Board of Education, and the L.C.C. Education Committee:—

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W. 1.

July 16, 1917.

DEAR MADAM,—I am desired by Mr. Hayes Fisher to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th inst., forwarding a copy of a resolution passed at a meeting of the

National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League with reference to the food supply for mothers and children.—Yours faithfully,
R. B. CROSS.
Miss F. A. Underwood.

Board of Education, Whitehall, London, S.W. 1.
July 14, 1917.

DEAR MADAM,—I am desired by the President of the Board of Education to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of July 13, enclosing a copy of a resolution, passed by the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League at its meeting on Saturday, July 7, on the subject of the feeding of school children, and to say that it will receive attention.—I am, yours faithfully,
C. S. SYKES.

Miss F. A. Underwood, Secretary, Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

London County Council, Education Offices, Victoria Embankment, W.C. 2. July 14, 1917.

DEAR MADAM,—I am desired by the Chairman of the Education Committee to acknowledge receipt of your letter and enclosure of the 13th inst., and to say that the matter shall receive attention.—Yours faithfully,
GERTRUDE DAVIS.

Miss A. F. Underwood, Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

The following paragraph appears in the Press:—
"Fines of £1 each were imposed on three Forest Gate women who applied for sugar for preserving fruit, all of them admitting that they did not grow fruit."

Now that fruit is cheap, does not every thrifty housewife wish to purchase it and make home-made jam for the family's consumption, especially since the price of butter is in many cases prohibitive, and margarine can only be obtained with difficulty, and then only in small quantities? How long are women to put up with men's muddle-headed legislation in matters of this kind and to be penalised by it?

Women and the Board of Education.

The following resolutions have been sent to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Board of Education:—"The National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League protests against the differentiation between the minimum salaries of men and women teachers, as proposed by the President of the Board of Education; and, in view of their equal professional training and duties, calls upon the Government to establish the same minimum rate for both men and women teachers."

"This Committee views with grave dissatisfaction the constitution of the Departmental Committee recently appointed to consider the principles which should determine the salaries of teachers in Elementary Schools. The attention of the President of the Board of Education is directed to the fact that, as women greatly outnumber men in the work of education, the representation of women teachers on that Committee is most inadequate. This Committee of the Women's Freedom League therefore urges the immediate reconstruction of that Committee on a more equitable basis."

The following replies have been received from the Board of Education:—

Board of Education, Whitehall, London, S.W. 1.
July 16, 1917.

DEAR MADAM,—I am desired by the President of the Board of Education to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of July 12, enclosing copies of resolutions, passed at a meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League on July 7, and to say that he has felt bound to make a distinction between the minimum salaries which he proposes to prescribe for men and women teachers. He feels sure, however, that the Committee which he has appointed to investigate the principles which should determine the scales of salaries of Public Elementary School teachers, will consider the representation of those who are anxious to secure pay for men and women teachers.

With reference to the constitution of the Committee I am to enclose, for your information, a copy of a letter which he has addressed to the Secretary of the National Federation of Women Teachers.—I am, yours faithfully,
F. H. OATES.

Miss F. A. Underwood, Secretary, Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

Board of Education, Whitehall, London, S.W. 1.

June 20, 1917.

DEAR MADAM,—In reply to your letter of June 12, I am directed by the President of the Board of Education to say that the members of the Committee on Teachers' Salaries were not selected as advocates of any particular interests or opinions; and he is satisfied that they are fully qualified by their ability, knowledge, and wide experience of the conditions of elementary education to investigate the questions referred to them. A Departmental Committee is not in the position of a tribunal, and he is convinced that any evidence submitted to the Committee or any representations made to them will receive an impartial hearing and careful consideration. He certainly cannot accept the contention in your letter that any witnesses whom your Federation might wish to send would be in an unfair position.

Mr. Fisher regrets that he must accordingly adhere to his decision not to make any further appointments to it.—I am, yours faithfully,
(Signed) F. H. OATES.

Miss A. S. Byett, L.L.A., Hon. Secretary, National Federation of Women Teachers, 93, Grantham-road, Birmingham.

In connection with the above we would direct the attention of our readers to the following questions and answers given in the House of Commons on July 12:—

Elementary School Teachers (Departmental Committee).

Major Hunt asked the President of the Board of Education whether, in view of the fact that about two-thirds of the teachers in elementary schools are women, and that only four out of the sixteen members appointed on the Departmental Committee are women, he can see his way to increasing the number of women on this Committee?

The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Fisher): I am satisfied that this Committee, as now constituted, is fully competent to consider the subject of their reference in all its aspects, and that it will do full justice to any evidence before them. They are not asked to deal with rates of salary, but only with the principles on which salary scales should be constructed.

Major Hunt: Why, under the circumstances, were so few women put on this Committee?

Mr. Fisher: Because I consider it is very well constituted as it is.

It is quite a usual thing for men to consider their own arrangements "very well constituted," but what we would like to point out to Mr. Fisher is that women are not always equally satisfied with such arrangements, and that when women teachers have equal political power with their men colleagues they will insist on fair representation on all Departmental Committees of this character.

Women's Freedom League.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Saturday, August 18.—Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1. Jumble Sale, 3 p.m.

PROVINCES.

Monday, July 23.—Newcastle-on-Tyne. 7.30 p.m., Bigg Market. Chairman: Rev. McGauley. Speaker: Miss Dorothy Evans. Subject: "How Men Mind the Baby."

Tuesday, July 24, 12.30.—Hill 60, Scotswood-road. Chair: Mrs. Gibbon. Speaker: Miss Evans. Subject: "The Moral Question."

Monday, July 30.—7.30, Bigg Market. Subject: "Petticoat Government."



DARE TO BE FREE.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE. Critical Position in Ireland.

May I call the attention of British Suffragists to the very serious danger threatening Irishwomen? The *Daily Telegraph* of July 11 states that "the Government may agree to leave Ireland altogether out of the Representation of the People Bill, as the Unionists complain that the exclusion of the country from the redistribution proposals is a grave injustice to them, since it perpetuates their serious under-representation. Ministers have not come to a final decision on the subject."

Now as the Bill stands at present, Irishwomen will have the Parliamentary vote on the same basis—except for the age limit—as the men. Thus married women over 30 will have the Parliamentary vote in this country, while in England, under the last section of Clause 4, husband and wife cannot both be qualified in respect of the same property. The Bill, therefore, gives a wider measure of enfranchisement than in England. But the danger is real and serious. The Unionists are not actuated by any anti-suffrage feeling; they have always contended that any enlargement of the franchise in Ireland should be accompanied by redistribution, for perfectly obvious reasons, which have nothing to do with woman suffrage.

Meanwhile the General Council of County Councils in Ireland, on June 17, passed a resolution that the question of votes for women should be left to an Irish Parliament to settle for itself. If this were done, Irishwomen would be left without that voice in the settlement of the government of their own country, possessed by the enfranchised women of the Dominions and Great Britain. The result is that grave danger to which I have already referred. Ireland may be left out of the Bill, and the enfranchisement of Irishwomen deferred indefinitely.

We appeal to Unionists and Nationalists alike to forget party considerations and think only of Ireland, a country which needs the best services of all her people, men and women alike. The reports of "Baby Week" celebrations in Dublin and elsewhere would indeed read oddly if followed by a refusal to allow Irishwomen any effective share in safeguarding the children. All the questions pressing for solution in this country are women's questions—education, housing, Poor Law Reform, etc.

Last of all, when the Convention meets next week for the adjustment of differences and the healing of dissensions, it should surely be with the knowledge that whatever action be taken affecting the government of the country, the women of the country must possess assured rights of citizenship.

DORA MELLONE,

Hon. Press Secretary, Belfast Suffrage Society.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL

On Friday, July 6, the Home Secretary received a deputation of thirty-four "philanthropic" societies on this subject. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, Mrs. Creighton and other "influential" persons urged him to proceed with the Bill. Some other members, including the experienced social worker, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, wanted the Bill, but objected to Clause III.

Since then the Bill has been put upon the Order paper every Monday for the continuance of its report stage, but has not been reached. As we go to press the Bill has first place for consideration next Monday, July 23.

The Women's Freedom League as long ago as May 9 formed a joint "Drop the Bill" deputation to protest against its further progress. This deputation was not then received as the Bill was "not at present to be brought forward again in the House of Commons."

On July 5, hearing that a deputation in favour of the Bill was to be received, the Women's Freedom League immediately rang up the Home Office, and on the following day sent them a telegram urging that the Bill should not be taken until our deputation of organised women against it had been received. Since then we have twice written to the Home Secretary asking him to appoint a time for receiving us. So far nothing has been received in reply except formal acknowledgments.

By what right does the Home Secretary refuse to hear the opinions of thousands of organised women upon a question which affects women's liberties and women's interests far more than men's? Even now the police have far too much power over the lives of all women and girls in humble positions, and we are constantly being told of instances in which this power is abused. Only last week a girl of nineteen was prosecuted at Birkenhead Quarter Sessions for attempted suicide, and it was admitted in the court that the mother's accusations against some members of the Liverpool police force were true, and as the Recorder put it, "men who ought to have respected and protected her had caused her downfall." How many girls in this position have a determined mother who will insist on bringing these things into the light of publicity? For every case of which we hear there are many which pass unnoticed.

Under the proposed Bill still greater power is to be given into the hands of the police, with, of course, a corresponding increase of scandalous occurrences. The lives of working girls in cities are hard enough as it is, and the Women's Freedom League strongly opposes all such legislation as this Bill, and demands that the Government shall hear the views of women themselves, through the accredited representatives of their organised societies.
E. K.

No Vote! No Tax.

On Friday, July 13, Mrs. Darent Harrison's goods were sold by auction in her own house at St. Leonards-on-Sea without her permission being asked or given, by the Public Auctioneer. Bidding was allowed to run up to £70 by a system known amongst auctioneers as "puffing." Mrs. Darent Harrison protested against the sale taking place to pay the taxes of an unenfranchised woman. The proceedings appear to have been altogether irregular, the sale not having been advertised in the Press, the only notice given being a few posters sent to friends of the tax-gatherers. Further, no notice was given of the amount required to cover the claim.

Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1.

An easy way to help! Send anything and everything you can to our Jumble Sale, to be held on Saturday, August 18, at 3 p.m. Men's and boys' clothes, boots, etc., are in great demand, also boots for women and children, as well as coats and skirts, blouses, etc. Household utensils, pieces of linoleum and carpet find a ready sale. Address all parcels to the manageress.

FOR SALE.

Picturesque Freehold Cottage TADLEY

Near BASINGSTOKE and SILCHESTER

400 feet above sea, pine woods and gravel soil, pretty gardens (cultivated and wild), Ornamental Pond and other lands. In all about 3½ acres. Will be sold by auction at the Great Western Hotel, Reading, Saturday, 11th August, 1917, at 3 o'clock precisely. Particulars and conditions of sale (with photos) of R. W. B. BUCKLAND, Esq., Solicitor, 23, Bush Lane, London, E.C. 4, and of the Auctioneers, Messrs. NICHOLAS, 1, Station Road, Reading.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, July 20th, 1917.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—

To the Editor—on all editorial matters.
To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.
Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

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 a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed, but the Editor cannot be responsible in case of loss.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

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AGENTS.

International Suffrage Shop, 5, Duke-street, Charing Cross, W.C.; Messrs. Horace Marshall and Co., Temple-avenue, E.C.; City and Suburban Publishing Company, St. Bride's Churchyard, E.C.; E. Marlborough, Old Bailey, E.C.; A. Ritchie, Pemberton-row, Gough-square, E.C.; Simpkin, Marshall and Co., Orange-street, Haymarket; John Heywood, Manchester. Can be obtained at the Book-stalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son and all newsagents.

"MARTYRS BY THE PANG WITH- OUT THE PALM."

Mrs. Browning made a strong appeal to her contemporaries when she sang of the sufferings of those little ones, who were sacrificed to the so-called prosperity of the nation, when they toiled unremittently in the mine and in the factory. I should like to put in a plea to-day for the infant martyrs, daily offered up to the relentless god of war. Whereas the great god Gun kills his thousands in the battlefield, infant mortality has risen in this country in a most appalling manner, and those of the rising generation that survive are being handicapped, maimed, and crippled in every possible way under the horrible Juggernaut Car, which is rushing ruthlessly onwards, regardless alike of the true interests of future generations and of the most sacred traditions and memorials of the past. We all of us entered into a great and rich heritage of art and literature fraught with lofty and noble ideals. How are we going to hand these on to our children? Is the barbarous cry of "Blood for blood" going to drown the voice of conscience and vanquish the traditions of our race? "Let me keep the eye of my soul" was Plato's prayer, and in days of storm and stress such as these we may all of us utter the same petition. But for our children, is not the strain of enforced self-control and rigid repression a burden greater than they can bear?

All through the war the interests of true education have been sacrificed to economy. Children have not been admitted into most of the schools until they have reached the age of six or seven years, and the tiny tots with whom we were so familiar, and who were receiving the tenderest nurture from sympathetic teachers—the foundation of real education—have to make shift as best they can at home, and such a home, for mother is away making munitions, her proper sphere, according to Horatio Bottomley. Not content with curtailing the educational opportunities of the little ones, a wise Government sends the bigger children, both girls and boys, to work in the fields and at munitions, in the name of patriotism robbing them of their happy childhood,

an essential of all healthy development. Lately the U-boat campaign has entailed economy in food upon the nation and even upon the nation's children. Herbert Spencer, in his treatise upon education, written more than fifty years ago, drew a deplorable picture of the evil effects of limiting a child's appetite for simple and nourishing food. Yet we have huge posters, depicting little girls and boys heroically denying themselves another slice from the loaf in order, presumably, that some selfish and overfed adult may profit by their abstinence, or that more gin may be distilled or more beer brewed to the destruction of the national health and sanity. In one school a manager told me, rubbing his hands with glee, that all the children had signed a promise to take one instead of two slices of bread for lunch. "Isn't this self-denial splendid," he said. Vicarious self-denial often appears so, but this form of it is suicidal to the race. Let the overfed adult be dieted if necessary, but spare the children. I have lately taken combined classes of from 300 to 400 children for literature and history lessons, and I have wondered, watching the little ones at the time of a threatened air raid, whether we are not putting too great a strain upon their power of self-control. The blinds were drawn down and in the dim light the infants were stationed in their little squadrons in the school hall. Nothing could have been cheerier, or more sympathetic and motherly than the attitude of the teachers, of their heroism in the face of danger pages might be written, but the baby faces of the pupils were so white and wistful that when they quavered forth in their tiny voices to the accompaniment of the guns outside, "It's a long way to Tipperary" or "Smile, smile, smile," I felt much more inclined to weep. Who can doubt that these little creatures have heard and seen much in our lurid picture papers and cinema shows of the actual horrors of war from which they and their schoolfellows are in no way immune, for were there not several infant victims in a school some days ago? "The race marches forward on the feet of little children," and those who consciously or unconsciously put stumbling-blocks in their way are checking the onward march of humanity, the only progress worth having. Of all the crimes of the war, the greatest, to my mind, is the hindrance put in the path of the young. Sometimes it is urged to be necessary to make children realise the war. Then they are living in an atmosphere of fear and vengeance, how can they do otherwise than realise with horrible clearness that their heritage of security and of love is lost to them just at the time when they need it most. "Let childhood ripen in children" Froebel urges, and this is wise advice, for it is only when children have dreamed their dreams and spun their blissful romances at leisure that they can develop into happy and useful citizens of the great Commonwealth of Humanity.

MARGARET HODGE.

THE DOVE SPEAKS.

I am the symbol of Peace, of Purity, and of that Sacred Love which is the Holy Spirit.
I became the threefold symbol because seers of old knew this Trinity to be Indivisible.
But the foolish peoples refused to understand.
O Man! O Woman! I drift homeless on weary wing over the black flood of hate, and lust, and greed, that submerges the world.
O Man! O Woman! Give me shelter in the ark of thy soul until the olive unfolds her leaves above the foul waters: (And each soul that shelters me assists that glad event).
Then shall I, the threefold symbol, fly abroad again to teach the foolish peoples.
Henceforth, perchance, they will try to understand.
And Peace, and Purity, and that Sacred Love which is the Holy Spirit, the Indivisible Trinity,
Shall abide with the Man, the Woman, who now shelters me.
E. V. JENKINS.

WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

As British Diplomatist.

One of the six British official representatives at the Anglo-German Conference at The Hague on prisoners of war was a woman, Mrs. Darley Livingstone. She is an American, who has married a British officer, and has been a member and hon. secretary of the Government Committee on the treatment by the enemy of British prisoners of war since its formation two years ago. There is probably no one in England to-day who has a more extensive knowledge of the actual conditions in prisoners' camps in Germany and elsewhere. A *Daily Mail* interviewer discovered that she could successfully devote "her not inconsiderable talent to diverting conversation from her unique experience," but she said that people were surprised to find a woman among the British representatives. "I was there," she added, "to assist Sir Robert Younger, our chairman, with information which, as secretary of the committee, I naturally have at command. It was real hard work all the time, and both parties were concerned solely with the welfare of the prisoners. Questions concerning them were the only ones discussed, and I think the agreements concluded will be found to be very satisfactory. It would be quite impossible to give an adequate idea of the extreme formality of the proceedings."

As Pulpit Assistant at the City Temple, London.

Miss Maud Roydon has been invited to become pulpit assistant to Dr. Fort Newton at the City Temple, and has expressed her willingness to help in this and other ways. Dr. Newton cordially supported the resolution passed at a largely attended meeting of the church and congregation, and said women have a new outlook and new obligations, not only because of the war, but because of their approaching political enfranchisement. "We want the woman point of view, the woman insight, the woman counsel, especially for the young women."

As Russian Minister of Charities.

Russia, having decided for progress, has appointed a woman as Minister. She is the Countess Sophie Papin, and she holds the post of Assistant Minister of Social Tutelage. She is responsible for the administration of charities and the care of children. The countess is a wealthy woman about 45 years old, an ardent feminist, and a member of the Cadet party.

More Doctors Wanted.

Last summer women doctors were sent to Malta, one of the largest military base hospitals; women are doing R.A.M.C. work at Northampton military hospital; Dr. Stoney is X-ray expert at Fulham military hospital; Endell-street military hospital, with 550 beds, is entirely staffed by women; and Dr. Helen Chambers, pathologist, has done remarkable research work. The R.A.M.C. has asked for more women doctors for service with the Colours. Many women doctors are taking over civil and private practices. Under pressure of increasing need the Senate of the University of Cambridge had to consider whether women should be admitted to the Bachelor of Medicine degree.

German Feminists as Officials.

Two of the German feminists whose names and work are most familiar to English suffragists have been appointed to important positions under the new German scheme of systematically organised women's labour, says the *Manchester Guardian*. Dr. Alice Salomon, advanced feminist and keen suffragist, is now directress of women's service for the Berlin district. She was well known in London as the Secretary to the International Council of Women, and her last visit to England was for the purpose of attending an Executive meeting of the Council. She

had a great deal to do in organising the Council's conference at Rome. Another woman of very liberal views, who is also directress of one of the six divisions for women's services, is Marie Luders, who has always interested herself in industrial questions. It is known that for some time before receiving this new appointment she was employed on work in Belgium. It is evident that in Germany, as in England, the training suffragists have given themselves in civic work is now recognised as having fitted them peculiarly for national service.

HOW MEN DISTRESS THEMSELVES ABOUT WOMEN.

(Max Pemberton is still industriously filling columns of the *Weekly Dispatch*. After weeks of exaggerated statements about the dangers to British and Colonial soldiers of young and flighty girls who, in Mr. Pemberton's imagination, throng the streets of London with the sole object of luring these stalwarts to their doom, this novelist turns his attention to the Women Patrols, and asks: "Have the women police failed?" He describes the dress of these women patrols, says he has watched them in Piccadilly Circus, and complains about their efforts in Hyde Park. He also seems to be annoyed because their work has been blessed by an Archbishop, and among other things says, "Even their very evidence, remember, is woman's evidence. They believe it to be true, etc." Suffragists at least would recognise that woman's evidence would be a vast improvement on the usual police evidence upon which convictions are generally made. May we suggest to the *Weekly Dispatch* as a suitable heading for another column, "Has Mr. Max Pemberton failed to prove his case?"

Another "Special Commissioner" in last week's press fears that women may find themselves pushed out of industry after the war. He has been told by employers that women workers, strangely enough, are "not perfect," that "they simply won't do their best unless the price is right from their point of view." It never seems to occur to the kind people so anxious to prevent women from losing their work that the majority of women have no desire for work on any and every condition, but prefer to be without the work unless the price is right from their point of view. The true altruist no doubt should insist upon her "price being right from the employers' point of view," but women are usually too familiar with the domestic details of everyday life to reach this giddy height.

Another unpleasant surprise to the hopeful employer of women's labour has been the discovery that women can combine in their own interests just as readily as men will, and, as one employer says, "It is now evident that if ever we had hopes that women would solve the labour troubles for us those hopes are doomed to disappointment." So the cherished dream of women, the unknown quantity, serving as unlimited blacklegs and bringing down the wages of their brothers must be given up too.

"Sardonyx" is specially worried, and asks in the *New Statesman* "What will happen to feminist energy now that woman suffrage is won?" We hardly like to remind him of the classic warning, "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched," but all the same a measure of woman suffrage is not yet on the Statute Book! He is particularly concerned about the fate of "paid officials," and incidentally of "the honorary leaders habituated to the delights of command." What will happen to them all? After a few suggestions as to what they might do, including "a campaign might be begun for putting women into Parliament," he concludes his paragraph with the following helpful advice: "It seems to me that feminism might discover a useful field for its energy in the political

education of the woman voter," ending on a triumphal note, "The field is large—it is infinite!" How many men have educated the voters of their own sex or are prepared to begin the political education of the soldiers of 21, or even of 18? "The field here is large—it is infinite."

GET RID OF THEM!

The daily exhibition of muddles, blunders, recklessness and incompetence by our rulers is crowned and surpassed by the Mesopotamian Report. The chief responsibility is laid upon the shoulders of Sir John Nixon, "whose confident optimism was the main cause of the decision to advance." He is further described as "revelling in responsibility," as being carried away with power, he consulted no one, accepted no advice, therefore upon his shoulders falls the greatest share of blame.

But blame is fully laddled out to many more men, all in high office. What we want to know is, are they to be blamed, then excused and reinstated into high positions or, as they have failed us, are we once for all to get rid of them?

Periodically we hear that a certain department has muddled, but is it ever cleaned up? Is a clean sweep made of the muddlers? Is a better system introduced, or, after the first outbreak of public indignation has been expressed, do we allow the old order to go on unchanged, unchecked, until disaster once more sweeps over our path?

We are shocked, and rightly shocked, with the appalling disclosures of the miseries our troops have had to suffer in Mesopotamia; but apparently it is all part of the bad Indian Army Medical Service. The Commission quote Sir Alfred Keogh's very strong statement, in which he says:—"I have no hesitation whatever in saying that the medical arrangements connected with the Army in India have been for years and years most disgraceful. I say that with a full sense of responsibility. I have served many years in India. I have not been there for some time, but in my opinion things are not better than they were. Anything more disgraceful than the carelessness and want of attention with regard to the sick soldier in India it is impossible to imagine."

Is it little wonder the hospital arrangements broke down, if their own standard was so low? Is anything drastic going to be done or are we going to be satisfied with talk?

The Commission has given its Report. Lord Hardinge has made his apologia in the House of Lords; one may pity him, but his remarks do not shake confidence in the substantial findings of the Majority Report. Mr. Chamberlain has resigned as head of the India Office, as "he cannot remain head while his conduct is under criticism." There is much need to criticise and much food for criticism. He explained that the Home Government agreed to the advance because they were in need of "striking success in the East" to offset the Gallipoli disaster. They have been singularly unsuccessful in their effort. Mr. Chamberlain objects to criticism being directed against himself and his colleagues. The public is indignant that such criticism is required. Mr. Chamberlain boasts "that sixteen months ago he prophesied that a lamentable and inexcusable breakdown would take place." Apparently his prophecies fell on deaf ears, but he did not dream it his duty to enlighten the public; the men who went out, the women who were bereaved were not told his prophecies. Should our fate rest in the hands of such men? It is to be hoped that no one responsible for the Mesopotamia disaster will ever be in any public position in the future. Think of what their folly, obstinacy and stupidity have cost us! After the battle of Ctesiphon 3,500 wounded

men had to be removed from the battlefield to the river bank, in some cases a distance of ten miles, without proper ambulance transport and with an insufficiency of medical personnel, of food and comforts, so that a large number had to make their way on foot, in spite of their injured condition. At the river the available steamer accommodation was gravely inadequate. Wounded and weary men were crowded into steamers and barges without sufficient medical attention, appliances, or conveniences. Some of the wounded were disembarked at Marah, but the majority went on down to Basra, a journey from the battlefield which in some cases lasted fourteen days. The Commissioners confess to a shrinking from the task of describing the sickening horror of the condition of many of the wounded on arrival at Basra, but they quote Major Carter, C.M.S., who was in medical charge of the hospital ship *Varela*. His statement is too revolting to reproduce. No arrangements existed for the natural function of the wounded, many of them dysentery cases. "We do not wish it to be inferred," comment the Commissioners, "that the conditions in all the steamers reached this pitch of horror; many, however, did."

We read this indictment; then that some men revelled in responsibility, and others object to criticism. Thousands of lives have been lost, and our reputation is not improved. We have the right not only to criticise but to demand that not only the subordinates but that the principals concerned be punished. It is not enough for them to acknowledge their mistake, they must suffer; and we must make it impossible to repeat these mistakes. Not only Mr. Chamberlain, but all in authority objected to criticism, with the result that all correspondence from the Front that hinted that all was not well was systematically suppressed. So reforms were delayed and the mischief done. Let us be firm in demanding that these muddlers disappear for all time from public view. We do not want them reinstated in some other well-paid official job. They have had their day. Let them go; let them bury their mistakes in obscurity. Let us on our part see to it that the old systems and mistaken policy are swept away, and that in the future it be impossible to repeat the terrible blunders that have disgraced and saddened us just now.

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

ON OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

"Woman's Effort."

Under the above title Miss A. E. Metcalfe has recently published a very interesting history of British women's struggle for citizenship from 1865-1914. The introduction is written by our old friend Mr. Laurence Housman. The arguments he gives there in favour of the women's demand for electoral rights having the first claim to attention seem so unanswerable that we should like to know that the seventeen Anti's in the House had been forced to read it.

The study of this book would have the effect of lessening one's faith in human nature if it were not that the treachery and shilly-shallying of the majority of politicians is more than out-balanced by the loyalty of the few, and by the heroism and self-sacrifice of the women.

During the first years of the movement it was confined to the upper middle-class where prejudice on the subject was most rife and in their disappointment and indignation at the great betrayal of 1884 many women turned to other work such as municipal work, the entrance of women into professions and

"WOMEN'S EFFORT" (B. H. Blackwell, 3s. 6d. net) is on sale at the W. F. L. Literature Department.

Clyde Coast Campaign.

Organiser, Miss B. H. McLelland, 18, Windsor-place, Rothesay. Speaker, Miss Margaret Hodge.

Glasgow Fair is a great institution and, to the visitor from the South, the crowds which throng to it are so dense that it seems as if all Scotland must have turned out on holiday. The warnings of the hotel keeper in Glasgow had led me to expect a long, crowded and difficult journey to Rothesay, the great holiday resort, but realisation exceeded all anticipation. After a journey by train, punctuated by frequent and long stoppages inside and outside small stations, we arrived at Wemyss Bay only to find unhappy victims on the pier, who had already been waiting four or five hours for steamers. Luncheon-time was past, but to obtain food was impossible, for no preparation had been made for the in-rushing multitudes and the majority of the hungry travellers had to content themselves with ruefully viewing the outside of the restaurants, where tempting menus were displayed before their eyes, advertising foods as unobtainable as the fruit which was dangled before Tantalus. After waiting for two hours and seeing one steamer start off packed to its utmost capacity, I succeeded in securing a seat and immensely enjoyed the beautiful view of the Kyles of Bute in a lovely opalescent mist. Arrived at Rothesay with hosts of other travellers I made my way to Miss McLelland's rooms, as she is organiser for the Women's Freedom League work in this district. That evening, Saturday, July 14, punctually at 8 p.m., we unfurled our banners fixed upon the cart provided for a platform, and, in a moment, as if by magic, we were surrounded by a crowd of holiday-makers—many of whom had acted as audience on preceding occasions and appeared prepared to stay for a long time.

Miss McLelland introduced me as the speaker, who had had much and varied experience of suffrage campaigns to many lands, and to peoples of every shade of colour. The audience listened to me for forty minutes with interested attention and a lively discussion followed; lasting till 10 p.m. Sixty-seven copies of THE VOTE were sold as well as some pamphlets, so the propaganda work goes on well. To-day the weather seems to have broken, and so we were unable to hold a meeting this morning, but we are hoping that it will clear for the evening. Miss McLelland, by her great energy, enthusiasm and tact, has won over the people of this district, so that we are certain of a number of friends in our audience, although it is inevitable in so large a crowd that we should meet with some opposition.

MARGARET HODGE.

Women's Freedom League Settlement, 95, Nine Elms Lane, S.W. 8.

Mrs. Tippet's Jumble Sale is fixed for the last week of July, and there is still a yawning cavity in our last sackful of things. Useful parcels have been received from Mrs. Walter Carey, the Misses Sprentall, Mrs. E. M. N. Clark, Mrs. E. V. H. Clark, and further contributions should reach the Settlement not later than the 21st inst., or be sent direct to Mrs. Tippet, Rosemary Cottage, Wetherden, Suffolk, marked "Jumble." Grateful acknowledgments to Mr. Uter, Miss Ashbee, for toys; Miss A. E. Tollemache, vegetables; Mrs. Tarrant, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Presbury, Miss M. Holmes, roses; Mrs. Harvey, Mrs. Thomas, Guest House clothing; Mr. F. E. Pearce, more apples; Mrs. Mustard, a photo frame for shop window; Miss Pleace, dish-cloths, etc.; Mrs. Lacy, gramophone needles and record cases; Mrs. Clark, provisions and books for Settlement Library; Miss Riggall (six weeks), 6s.; Miss M. Holmes, 5s. towards children's tea-party. The worst financial quarter of the year has opened most auspiciously with a gift of £25 from Mr. T. Clive Davies for the Guest House, for which we already have applications for after the holidays. These begin on the 25th inst., and last till towards the end of August.

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business, etc.; and many joined men's political organisations. To those of us who have worked in militant societies and who look back to that time it seems a thousand pities that militancy did not begin then instead of twenty years later. Miss Metcalfe deals very fully with the years 1905-1914, and shows how militancy grew from what we should now regard as very mild methods to the violence which came to an end with the beginning of the war.

Freedom Leaguers may perhaps feel on reading this book that the author has given very little space to the work of their League. The Grille Protest, the Picketing, the Ballot Box Protest and Tax Resistance do not receive as much attention as they might.

When one considers the years of patient work and afterwards of militancy one cannot but be astounded that this measure of justice to women has been delayed so long. Every suffragist, whatever her society, should read this book, and even if she has been herself in the thick of the fight for years, she cannot but be amazed at the realization of the amount of work that has been done in the Cause.

A. M.

BRANCH NOTES.

Croydon. Office, 32a, The Arcade, High-street.

Holidays.—After Saturday, 21st inst., the office will be closed until further notice. Sewing Party.—The last meeting for sewing and discussion was held on July 13; the next will be on Friday, September 14. Anyone wishing to make garments during the holidays should apply to the Secretary within the next few days. Communal kitchens.—Members are invited to attend the Friends' Meeting House, Park-lane, on Wednesday, July 25th, at 8 p.m., to meet Councillor Muggerridge, who wishes to confer with women who are likely to use such kitchens.

Suggestions for public meetings and other work would be gladly received by the Secretary. Has anyone a scheme for helping other women that our Branch could adopt?

N.E. District: Organiser, Miss Dorothy Evans, 9, Stoneyhurst-road, Gosforth.

On Tuesday last, along the Scotswood-road, great excitement was created by the advent of our green, white and gold flag on Hill 60, where Miss Dorothy Evans held the second of her series of meetings for munitioneers. The close of her speech was greeted with great applause. Meanwhile Mr. Drummond, finding Hill 60 occupied, retired to the canteen and there held a meeting, addressing a rather puzzled audience, urging all women to concentrate on winning the war. The distinctive points of view of the two organisations, a local paper, *The North Mail*, clearly gives. "The Freedom League," it says, "are agitating for votes for women now professedly so as to take a share in the problems of reconstruction after the war." Miss Evans will speak in Scotswood-road at 12.30 every Tuesday in July.

The first suffrage meeting for two years was held in Whitley Bay on Wednesday last. A number of friends of the cause collected round, and were glad to hear that a campaign is to be held there the first week in August.

We have to thank Mrs. Haggie for a delightful afternoon at the Manor House, Longheaton, on Thursday. Miss Evans spoke on "The Male State v. The Father-Mother Commonwealth," and at the close nine new members were enrolled. Friends gave generously to the Birthday Fund. Mr. McGauley very kindly presided, and confessed to being stimulated by his connection with the woman's movement.

Portsmouth.

The joint meeting of the Portsmouth women's organisations, to protest against profiteering and high prices of food, which was held at the Trades Hall on July 9, was a great success. Miss N. O'Shea, President of the Women's Conference, took the chair. Mrs. Despard was the principal speaker, and received a rousing welcome from the audience. She said the food question was most important to women, first as housekeepers, then as mothers, and finally as social workers. Much as men had striven, it was absolutely impossible for them to do alone all that was necessary. The threefold resolution, dealing with (1) high prices and profiteering, (2) the quality of war bread and flour, (3) coal for the poor, was passed unanimously. Every copy of THE VOTE was sold. The thanks of the members are due to Mrs. Slatter, who kindly entertained the work-party in her garden on Wednesday, July 11. The proceeds of the very enjoyable tea, provided by our hostess, were added to the Birthday Fund. There will be no branch meetings during August.

FRIDAY,
JULY 20,
1917.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

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PAIR PATENT BUTTON BOOTS; grey cloth tops; size 3; 12s. 6d.

BLACK GLACE BUTTON BOOTS; small 3's; 10s.

CHILD'S MOLE-COLOUR SILK FROCK; feather-stitched blue silk; length 33 inches; 12s. 6d.; new.

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SMALL HOUSE, close to shore and station; 3 bedrooms, 2 sitting, bath (h. and c.), scullery, gas cooker; terms for August, 3 guineas per week; reduced terms for other months or longer period.—Miss J., c/o "THE VOTE."

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MISCELLANEOUS.

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