

THE VOTE
July 9, 1915
ONE PENNY

Why Delay? We are Ready.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. X. No. 298.

(Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper and transmissible through the post in the United Kingdom at the newspaper rate of postage but to Canada and Newfoundland at the Magazine rate.)

FRIDAY, JULY 9, 1915

Edited by C. DESPARD.

OBJECTS: 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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WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE & NATIONAL ORGANISATION.

Why are we not "Approved Societies"?

The pitiful debate in the House of Commons on the National Register scheme on July 5 is an example, if one were needed, of the impotence and incapacity of the ordinary Member of Parliament under the strangling grip of party politics. Nothing but confusion resulted from the debate—confused aims, confused counsels, confused accusations. The voting showed fewer than three hundred names, and "many members abstained from voting."

In the multitude of counsellors whose clamours assail the Government, one call rings out clear and plain, the call of the women to be allowed to do their work unhampered by political confusion. And this call should surely reach and appeal to the ear of the Minister for Munitions, for it is his own example that gives it strength. It is the demand that existing organisations of women should be utilised to classify and distribute the necessary or the available female labour. When Mr. Lloyd George achieved his great scheme of National Insurance, what gave the nation confidence was his insistence upon the value of working through the existing organisations—the co-operative, trade union, insurance, and friendly societies, all of whom were urged and encouraged to become "Approved Societies."

If the Government were to-day to encourage the women's organisations as "Approved Societies," and were to recognise their capability and allow them to form a Central Clearing-House for classification and distribution, we guarantee that half the trouble and half the expense of national registration would disappear, that friction would vanish, and that an enormous impetus to voluntary enrolment would be given. The Minister for Munitions has again recognised the value of co-operating with the men's unions in his present stupendous task.

Why does not the Government treat women as it treats men, and take them into partnership in the national firm through their own appointed and elected officials and societies?

C. NINA BOYLE.

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

Telegrams—"TACTICS, LONDON." Telephone—MUSEUM 1429

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Head of Political and Militant Department—Miss C. NINA BOYLE.
Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

HEADQUARTER NOTES.

Sunday Meetings.

We congratulate our London Branches on the excellent work they are doing in their arrangements for Sunday open-air meetings. The London Branches Council is having splendid meetings each Sunday morning in Hyde Park, near Marble Arch at noon, and those arranged by our Herne Hill and Norwood Branch in Brockwell Park, also at noon, are very successful. The Clapham Branch prefers the early evening—6.30—for its meetings on Clapham Common, and fine crowds are attracted. We appeal to all friends to support these efforts of our Branches, and by their presence to encourage the speakers and members who give up their time so willingly for such magnificent propaganda.

House Warming.

We very cordially invite all members and friends to pay us a visit at our new Offices, 144, High Holborn, next Monday, between 6 and 10 p.m. Mrs. Despard has very kindly promised to welcome them and to make a short speech. The charge for admission is 6d.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE. National Service Organisation.

We now have a large number of women enrolling for service, and we have also a large correspondence. We must appeal this week for helpers. Would friends interested in our work help us with the correspondence and typing?

Our work is giving us more insight into the causes of unemployment amongst women, and is proving the need for the direction of their energies into fresh channels in order to prevent waste at a time when waste should be a crime. There are many capable women thrown out of employment because of slackness in certain trades and at the same time the country is clamouring for workers.

Mr. Walter Long, who introduced the Registration Bill has now declared in the House that "all the new Register did was to compel those who were not helping their country in her time of need, and were not willing to help, to state the fact!" (Italics ours.) Our service is a triumphant denial that this "unwillingness" applies to women. On the contrary, there are hundreds and thousands of willing women, but there is enormous difficulty in fitting the right woman into the right place. We invite all those who can assist us in this work to call at our Office, 144, High Holborn (near British Museum), second floor.

FRANCES M. PARKER.
ETHEL MOORHEAD.

THE MOVING. £100 WANTED.

We have now moved into our new premises and the expenses attending the removal must be paid.

Our warmest thanks to the friends who have already helped; please let me have the remainder so that we may get out of debt.

Our smart appearance is rather spoilt by the bareness of the stairs. Who will give £5 to cover stairs and landings with a plain green linoleum?

E. KNIGHT.

WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS IN ITALY.

In Milan, the commercial and intellectual capital of Italy, a society was formed so long ago as 1892 by Dr. Paolina Schiff for protecting the social and legal rights of women. This lady fought for such measures as the Legal Protection of Women Workers, the Improvement of Divorce and Affiliation Laws (*recherche de la paternité*). Maternity Benefits and the Abolition of the White Slave Traffic. The aims of this society (*Lega per la tutela degli interessi femminili*) also included the municipal and political vote. One of the measures aimed at by it was granted in 1909, by which married business women can conduct their affairs independently of marital consent. The *Lega* collected statistics and information of all kinds relating to women in Italy, and continued useful work up to 1912. The *Unione Femminile* (founded in 1900) is now the most important women's organisation, its chief office being in Milan, with branches in Rome, Turin, Florence, Catania, Leghorn, and Girgenti. The President, Signora Ersilia Maino, among many other things, is actively interested in prison reform, is a member of the Royal Commission for investigating juvenile crime, and under her auspices the *Asilo Mariuccia* in Milan was started in a pretty villa on the outskirts of the city, a home of refuge for young women anxious to reform.

The schools started by the *Unione* in the *Agro Romano*, the district about Rome, are of great interest. On the committee stand among others the names of Professor Celli and his wife (who has also worked hard for nursing reforms in Italy), and the authoress, Sibilla Aleramo. The Campagna district is still wild; there are few railways, tramways or good roads; no proper dwellings, and the inhabitants are of the poorest. Some are in a way nomadic, coming down from the mountains for harvest work in the plains, or wandering with flocks from place to place. The families, living in wretched hovels, are often in permanent debt for rent and food; water is often bad and malaria abounds. Scattered over the various districts are harvesters of various crops, miners, quarrymen, shepherds, cattle and horse breeders, charcoal burners, cheese makers, etc.—a population of some 30,000 away from civilisation. The State does not provide anything like sufficient schools to meet the needs of these. The *Unione* is now doing excellent work in spite of all difficulties. Schools can only be held in the evening or on holidays; teachers, men and women, walk long distances, get an occasional lift in some conveyance, or ride a bicycle, weather and roads permitting. They find girls and boys, often also parents, glad to learn the three R's, and elementary knowledge is given by simple talks on familiar objects.

Women in Italy work very hard in many districts; they often do men's work in the fields. There are some three millions of women in Italy working in agricultural pursuits, and another three millions in factories. The more intelligent women and men workers are quick to see the necessity for the vote if they are to secure good conditions of work.

The necessity of education for working women was recognised early in the Movement, and much was done in this direction for the higher grades of workers (clerical and teaching) by the pioneers. In Milan a special branch of the *Unione*, called *La Fraternala*, provides a centre or club for recreation of all kinds on holidays, and hopes to start a similar centre in every city. This is connected again with the general club, which (for a very modest subscription) offers library, reading-rooms with papers and magazines, lectures, lessons, concerts, etc., to its members. A special hostel is

provided for maid servants, in connection with a strictly controlled registry office, whilst the care of children is not forgotten by the committee *Pro Infanzia*.

The Roman society, *Per La Donna*, belongs to the International Woman Suffrage Association. It has groups in the various districts of Italy (started in 1906), all united in the National Council of Italian Women, under presidency of the Countess Spalletti. This society also aims at helping women workers, and among other ways is trying to revive some home industries, such as lace-making, embroidery, weaving.

MARY HARGRAVE.

UPON FILLING CRADLES AND COFFINS.

Two ecclesiastics of high repute have expressed the opinion that the women of our day are degenerate, and fail in the high duty for which they were created; they leave the cradle empty! These holy men are the Bishop of London and Father Bernard Vaughan, both noted and reverend churchmen. Another authority for filling the cradle is the well known writer, General von Bernhardt, who states in his new work that a great war is necessary to Germany because that race increases at the rate of one million a year; therefore Germany must annihilate alien races so that its own offspring can exist. Malthus discovered one hundred years ago that if too many cradles were filled food would fail.

The first difficulty is that in England there are two million women more than men. These two millions of women are forbidden the art of filling the cradle unless we introduce polygamy. Germany also has one million more women than men, and might desire to return to the customs of patriarchal days. However, all great changes are slow in coming about. There is also the remedy of female infanticide. Now the British woman and the German *frau* still fill cradles in Europe, but our law and customs kill more innocents than the historic Herod ever did. In a parish in North Kensington 50 per cent. of the children born die before they are a year old. In all large towns infant mortality is nearly as great; the conditions into which they are born are such that but few survive—bad air, dirt, want of necessary space, bad food, starving mothers, soon reduce the occupants of the cradle into little dwellers in the coffin. Anyone in touch with the poor of cities has heard a woman say, "I have had ten or twelve children, but only three are living." That children, in any class of life, live at all is due to a mother's love. The working man's wife weeps tears of agony over the empty cradle and the small coffin filled by bad laws, frequently due to callous ineptitude of "politicians" who, out of sheer ignorance, and often with a light heart leave women and children to starve.

A child is said to require one quart of milk a day, costing 4d. or 5d.—roughly 2s. 6d. a head a week. But all it gets is a share of the half-pennyworth a day taken for tea, or perhaps a portion of condensed milk, at 6d. a tin. The bread which the dweller in the cradle receives is often adulterated, and he may die of slow poisoning, or grow up rickety and undersized. Is there no remedy? The milk and bread trades ought to be in the hands of women, and sacred to them. In early society it was always so. The very word "daughter" means "a milkmaid," the Sanscrit form is "Dhued-tar"; the grinding of wheat and the making of bread was required of every woman.

The last hundred years have seen women driven out of the following eighteen trades:—

Food Industries.—Bakers, brewers, drysalts,

butter makers, cheese makers, confectioners, jam and pickle makers.

Clothing Industries.—Spinners, weavers, dyers, stocking makers, lace makers and embroiderers.

Miscellaneous Industries.—Sellers in markets, perfumers, chandlers, soap manufacturers and midwives.

Women are employed as "spinsters" in mills, but conditions are not so happy as when these industries were carried on by women in their own houses while the children played around their hearths. In spite of sacerdotal advice, unless a woman can do justice to her baby, it is better to leave the cradle empty.

MARGARET J. SCOTT.

FACTS TO BE NOTED.

The Rise in Food Prices.

Sir Henry Dalziel gave the House of Commons, a few days ago, the following figures from a statement by "one of the greatest experts in the provision trade," showing the price of certain food stuffs in June, 1914 and 1915:—

	1914.	1915.
Tea... ..	9d. per lb.	1s.
Flour	24s. 6d. to 27s. per sack	48s. to 53s.
Butter	115s. per cwt.	145s.
Cheese, Canadian	60s. per cwt.	98s.
Bacon, Irish	70s. per cwt.	95s.
Beef, Scotch	7d. per lb.	11d.
Beef, Argentine... ..	5½d. per lb.	9½d.
Sugar, English refined	16s. per cwt.	28s.

Mr. Runciman stated that exploitation would not be tolerated.

Women's Volunteer Service: Latest Figures.

Replying on July 4 to questions by Mr. King and Mr. Snowden with regard to Women's Volunteer War Service, Mr. Runciman, President of the Local Government Board, said:—

"Up to June 25 the total number of women who had placed their names on the War Service Register, exclusively of 2,708 who subsequently cancelled their applications, was 87,861, and of these 2,616 had been placed in employment from this Register. I should also mention that during the period from March 13 to June 12, which corresponds approximately to the period during which the War Service Register has been open, the number of women placed from the ordinary Register was 81,005. The number of women remaining on the ordinary Register on June 25 was 43,058."

Procession to the House of Commons.

The East London Federation of Suffragettes protests against the cry for compulsory service, which it describes as "playing with fire," and calls attention to the disproportion between the numbers of women who have volunteered for war service and the number who have actually been given employment. It further calls attention to the shameful wages paid to women for national work—from 8s. to 12s. a week at the Vickers' factories; 2s. 8d. a dozen for khaki shirts in the clothing trade—and demands equal pay for equal work, women with men, protection from exploitation and high prices of necessities, and the vote for women.

Resolutions embodying these and other views have been passed and forwarded to the Board of Trade, in response to its request that the Federation would ask the public to eat less meat. It is pointed out that with present prices, less meat could not be consumed by a large number of families without serious injury to health, and demands a representative committee for safeguarding the national food supplies. A procession is being organised, from East London to the House of Commons, on the night of June 20, in support of these requests.

"YOUR INTERIOR FORCES.—Miss Jane Steer had an enthusiastic welcome last Monday evening when she began her series of popular lectures on "Psychology" at the Essex Hall, Essex-street, Strand. She dealt with the self-conscious and sub-conscious mind, and urged the development of the inner consciousness of every individual. "Fancy having your grandmother bottled up inside you!" she said, in protesting against the idea of heredity by which we think we must reproduce the thoughts, feelings and ailments of our ancestors. The lectures continue at the Essex Hall on Mondays at 8 p.m. throughout July.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd.,
144, High Holborn, W.C.

FRIDAY, July 9th, 1915.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—
To the Editor—on all editorial matters.
To the Advertisement Manager—on advertising.
To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote
orders, printing and merchandise, etc.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.
Telephone MUSEUM 1429.

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.

At Home and Abroad ... 6/6 per annum, post free.
"THE VOTE" may be obtained through all Newsagents
and at the Bookstalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son.

WHY DELAY?

The rapidly changing political situation contains certain disquieting features which should not be disregarded by Suffragists. Signs are not wanting that the Coalition, heralded publicly as a noble, non-party, and national measure to meet an emerging situation, and to serve that purpose only, is not so regarded by some of those who helped to bring it about. It is, on the contrary, looked upon as the first step towards the ultimate overthrow of the Liberal-Labour federation and to the triumph of the Unionist party. In the presence of party intrigue disguised as patriotism, it behoves Suffragists to be supremely careful lest their desire to give national service should be exploited and the Woman's Movement entangled in the meshes of party politics. And it is the more necessary for THE VOTE to sound this note of warning, inasmuch as a certain portion of the Movement appears to be well on the way already, in the direction indicated.

It has been a principle adopted by successive conferences of the Women's Freedom League that it is no part of the Women's Freedom League work to censure or criticise other sections of the Movement or to denounce their methods. It is, as a matter of fact, just as permissible for the leaders who so lately led the W.S.P.U. in militancy to support the policy of the Unionist party, and to adopt a Unionist party measure, as it was for the National Union to give its allegiance to the Labour party. It is for the members of those bodies to pronounce upon the expediency or propriety of such decisions, without remark from other societies. For the Freedom League, however, there has hitherto been one recognised path of safety and common-sense, and that is, the strictly non-party line. If ever this line should come to be abandoned, it would only be after long and profound deliberation and a serious discussion in conference of delegates from all branches in the three kingdoms. That time has assuredly not yet arrived; but the danger, of seeing the Woman's Movement split up into party organisations, seems to be coming visibly nearer.

The cry raised by certain Suffrage leaders for compulsory service, and even for "martial law" (a phrase which is very strangely misunderstood by most of those who use it so lightly) is distinctly a party cry. Compulsion is and has been the chief plank in the war policy of the Unionist section of the Coalition. Those Suffragists who demand compulsion, and equally those who cherish the passionate conviction that voluntary service is as far above compulsory in both its physical as well as its moral results as the heavens are above the earth, are asked

to note that whether or not they like the principle or distrust it, it is in its essence, and has for a long time been, a party principle severing the two great political parties in a definite cleavage. For any section of the Woman's Movement to demand compulsory service is not only to stultify all previous demands for freedom and self-government, but to tie itself to the tail of the party juggernaut.

In the face of the strong desire shown by women of all classes to be included in the national forces for service—a desire as natural as it is admirable—the threat of compulsion, national registration, or any form of government control, seems ludicrous. The women are there, ready, clamorous for service; it is the Government that has been standing in their way. They have already registered in thousands, with humiliating results. Work waits for them that only they can do; in the care of infant life, in the custody of the nation's food supplies that the Government is wasting wholesale, in the tending of the Army and Navy in those mobile field hospitals and in the change-houses behind the fighting lines, which, alas! do not exist. In these matters it is the Government that blocks the fairway. Rather than flinging themselves at the feet of the Minister for Munitions, begging for his patronage and beseeching him to condescend to allow women to do the work he thinks they might be entrusted with, it would better become the women of England to march to Whitehall and to demand that the cumberers and blunderers should be cleared remorselessly out of the way, and room made for women to do their real and sorely needed work.

To ask for the Government to take over the organisation of women is to court delay and mismanagement. The Departments of State cannot even organise the energies of men; are they likely to be able to organise women? Have they ever, indeed, shown any capacity for using and directing the energies of women for the greatest good of the State? What has happened to make them more capable now? Instead of inviting the Government to take more hay on its already obviously overloaded fork, we call upon it to consult with existing organised bodies of women, and to give them authority and facilities to utilise their ability in directions where they are urgently and most unhappily needed. Why delay—for registration or any other form of procrastination?

C. NINA BOYLE.

WE ARE READY.

If we were asked what was the thing most to be desired at the present moment what is that which would be likely to bring about, in the least possible time, an end to the present appalling situation, we should unhesitatingly answer: clear and definite thought on the part of those who are responsible not only for the conduct of the war but for the safeguarding of our national interests while the war lasts, and after it is over. The nation knows what it wants. Until the great wrong that has been committed is redressed, until Belgium and France are free of a foreign foe, until substantial guarantees are given against the recurrence of the horror and outrage that have disgraced the past year, peace is not possible. The question for us is, how can these great ends be achieved with the minimum of loss?

We reckon up our resources. Money there is and to spare, as the answer to the Government's appeals has abundantly proved; and of eager, willing labour there is no lack. We read in the *Daily News* of Saturday: "The men enrolled for war work now number 46,000—the women enrolled are nearly

double that number—the real question is how many of the men are finding employment. Up to the moment the women's register has been a dead letter."

Lord Curzon, in his speech on the Munitions Bill, bore witness to the spirit and ardour of the people. "He saw no indication whatever of any lapse in the resolution or fortitude of the people as a whole."

Surely the part of a great leader and of a strong and definite thinker would be to take advantage of the people's enthusiasm by instantly setting measures on foot whereby it might be translated into action. That done, to gather the tremendous labour forces of the country together, not by so futile a proceeding as a labour census, but by laying suspicion to rest, in the first place, and secondly by using the organisations that already exist—men's trade unions and women's societies—through which the workers could be grouped, classified and—the most important item of all—mobilised for service. It is easy to imagine how, were such a course pursued, the whole country would soon have been a busy hive of workers, each one conscious of a mission, all rejoicing in the manifest result of their common labour.

But have we clear thinkers? Let us trace things back. When the war began, there was no thought of an industrial army. The only way to serve your country was to join the colours. Men workers threatening even to grow scarce, appeal was made to the women, who responded splendidly, until they found that registering at the Labour Bureaux was useless. Then came the cry for munitions, answered by Mr. Asquith in his Newcastle speech that any who said there was an insufficiency of munitions for the needs of the army were liars. But the cry grew in volume and intensity. Nothing could stifle it. Opportunities were being lost. Precious lives were being sacrificed. Something would have to be done.

Meanwhile, the nation, learning the truth for the first time, awoke, skilled mechanics were called for and they poured in; thousands of women, who had been working, each in her own way, gave their names as ready to take the places of the men who were called to other work. Never has a Government had so fine an opportunity of organising a nation for service. Money, skill, labour, and with them the enthusiasm that stops at no sacrifice, are theirs if they will only take them.

They may do so still. It is possible that the lightly framed scheme of a new Labour Register—Prussian in principle—compulsorily applied, worked for the most part by untried volunteers—a long, intricate, clumsy and costly process—will not be attempted in its present form. We venture to hope that the House of Commons will take a common-sense view of the situation and direct the Government before passing extraordinary and, in this country, untried methods to make use of the materials at hand. The men of the country, we believe, are ready. As a new, young military army sprang up at the word of the War Minister, so will a vigorous and capable industrial army spring up at the nation's demand.

And we, the women, are ready: nay, we are more than ready. Our earnest wish is to see the war honourably ended; we desire with an intensity of passion that no mere words can express to save the precious lives that are being sacrificed for want of skilled help at the Front. We are indignant at the backwardness of the nation in supplying our brave

troops with the munitions that will entitle them to face their foes on equal terms. We will not be compelled; our banner is freedom. But, heaven knows, compulsion is not necessary. We bring freely to the help of our country, to the safeguarding of our children, all that we have and are. We only ask that our work may be utilised.

C. DESPARD.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE NATIONAL AID CORPS.

FOR WOUNDED WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Many of our readers have expressed the desire to visit the Brackenhill Hospital, Bromley, Kent, at which, through the energy, generosity, and forethought of Mrs. Kate Harvey, wounded women and children, British and Allied, have been nursed back to health and strength. An excellent opportunity will be afforded on Saturday, July 17, when a garden performance of "Hiawatha" will be given at 5.30 p.m. Our friends will remember with pleasure the performance of Longfellow's poem, adapted by Mrs. Harvey, given for the Women's Freedom League at the Cripple Gate Institute, and will welcome the opportunity to see it as a pastoral play, and to visit the hospital at the same time. The hospital will be open for inspection from 3.30 to 5.30 p.m.; tea will be provided and served by the Bromley Branch of the "Girls' Realm" Guild at 6d. each. The performance will begin at 5.30 p.m. Reserved seats 2s. 6d.; unreserved 1s.

How to Get to Brackenhill.—Book to Shortlands. Trains from Victoria Station (London and Chatham Railway), 2.28, 4.25, and 4.45 p.m.; from St. Paul's Station, 2.42, 3.2, 3.32, 3.57, and 4.42 p.m.

From Shortlands to London.—6.23, 6.29, 7.16, and 7.31. Return Tickets.—1st class, 2s. 9d.; 2nd class, 2s.; 3rd class, 1s. 6d. The Hospital is 12 minutes' walk up the hill from Shortlands station.

What Brackenhill Hospital is doing.

From its opening in October last to early in May the Hospital has dealt with some 150 cases, and is needed now more than ever owing to the pressure of the increasing number of wounded soldiers brought into the London hospitals. Women have been taken in four days after an operation; but for Brackenhill they would have been discharged; and if we did not take in our child patients many of them would get no help at all. Up to May seventeen babies have been born in the Hospital: 6 Belgian, 8 English, and 3 French, mostly to widows or wives of men at the Front. In connection with the Maternity Ward there is a School for Mothers, which is specially helpful to the young women.

Not the least important part of the work has been the care and feeding of women, generally mothers of young families, to fit them to undergo operations, after which they return to Brackenhill for recovery. Dr. Ethel Mordaunt, Dr. Herbert Brookhouse, Dr. Montgomery, and Dr. Henshaw most generously give their services, and Mr. Baker supplies all dentistry needs. In visiting the hospital on July 17, friends will not only spend a very happy afternoon, but will help in the great work of saving the nation's real wealth in this time of crisis—the mothers and children.

TOO GOOD TO MISS.

Miss Alix M. Clark has begun again to make her famous Mayonnaise Sauce in aid of the Birthday Fund, and solicits orders until the end of July. Miss Clark will be glad to have weekly orders, which will be despatched promptly. All letters will receive immediate attention. Price 9d. per pot, post free 1s. Address:—11, Severn-street, Newtown, Montgomery Boroughs, North Wales.

WOMEN AT WORK.

Woman Invents Anti-Asphyxiation Mask.

Italy is indebted to a woman, Signora Bianco Bardoli of Bologna, for the invention of a gauze mask to neutralise the effect of asphyxiating gases. It has met with the approval of Senator Giacomo Ciamician, professor of chemistry in the University of Bologna, and has been presented by him to the military authorities. While men are preparing new devices for the taking of life, women seem to be at their age-old task of preserving life. The women of Bologna are already making great numbers of these gauze masks for the Italian army.

—And Aeroplane.

A Suffragist in a gaily decorated Suffrage biplane created a sensation at the Hempstead Carnival (U.S.A.) last month. It was Mrs. Kate J. Boeckh, from the Suffrage State of Washington. With a whirl of propellers and a laughing good-bye, Mrs. Boeckh soared above the aviation field and pelted the crowd below with Suffrage literature. The biplane is of Mrs. Boeckh's own invention.

Breaking down Sex Prejudice.

Mr. Robert Donald, editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, speaking at the recent celebration of the eleventh birthday of the Lyceum Club, London, on "The Discovery of Women," declared that women had discovered their opportunity to-day, and there would be no going back. Prejudice against the work of women must be broken down; women must receive full recognition, not out of gratitude, but as a right. Mr. Frederick Harrison, on the same occasion, said there was no reason why most plays should not be written by women. Women were great supporters of the theatre, and women dramatists could give them what they wanted.

German Women: "A Source of Strength."

In the series of articles which a "Neutral Observer" is contributing to the *Times*, entitled "Revisiting the Enemy," the one published on Friday, June 25, was on "Woman's Share in the War." It declares that women are one of the chief sources of strength and moral force and although they were unorganised, unaccustomed to public duties, devoid of political education and aspiration, they are learning to act together and think in community of interest; the departure of their husbands on military service has brought about an upheaval in their lives. They have their households to consider, and have received instructions from the Government in the preservation of fruits and vegetables and the preparation of nutritive food. Communal kitchens have been opened, and "the present relative abundance of food in Germany" is said to be due in a great measure to the efforts of women. They are also taking positions of responsibility as directors of factories, etc., they have taken charge of the wounded, says the writer, and are doing a large share of the equipping of the forces; 40 per cent. of the makers of shells, high explosives, etc., are women.

IN THE PARKS.

Brockwell Park

Mrs. Mustard and Miss Le Croisette were the speakers in Brockwell Park last Sunday morning, and a good meeting was held, despite the attractions of khaki. Miss Le Croisette's address on the work of the Women's Freedom League and the economic position of women in war time drew a good audience from the recruiting van, and Mrs. Mustard followed with a brilliant speech exposing the results of male mismanagement and pointing out the impertinence of the Government in dictating economy to women (most of whom are poor), while they themselves are wasting money, goods and men in every direction. A good collection was taken, and THE VOTE was sold out.

Clapham Common.

We had a splendid meeting on Clapham Common last Sunday evening when Mrs. Mustard spoke for more than an hour on "Women and National Service." She was enthusiastically applauded by the audience. The chair was ably taken by Miss Le Croisette. We had a good collection, sold many copies of THE VOTE, and distributed a quantity of handbills of the Women's Freedom League National Service Organisation. The speaker next Sunday will be Miss Nina Boyle, and the chair will be taken at 6.30 p.m.

LONDON BRANCHES COUNCIL.

The Council hopes to arrange a debate on the "National Register" on Monday evening, July 19. Will members please look in next week's VOTE for further particulars?

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.



Sunday, July 11.—HYDE PARK, noon. Speaker: Miss N. Boyle. BROCKWELL PARK, 12 noon. Speaker: Miss Rushbrooke. CLAPHAM COMMON, 6.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss Boyle.

Monday, July 12.—HOUSE WARMING at 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C., 6 to 10 p.m. Admission 6d. Welcome by Mrs. Despard.

Tuesday, July 13.—HORNSEY, Branch Meeting, 7.30 p.m., 100, Wightman-road, Harringay, N. CLAPHAM, Branch Meeting, 8 p.m., 1, Imperial Mansions, Bromell's road, HAMPSTEAD, Branch Meeting, 22, Harley-road (near Swiss Cottage), 8.15 p.m.

Wednesday, July 14.—"DESPARD ARMS," 50, Cumberland Market, Albany-street, N.W., Closing Gathering of Summer Session. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. 6.30 to 8.30.

Thursday July 15.—HACKNEY, Branch Garden Meeting, 23, Terrace-road, South Hackney, N.E., 4.30 to 8.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Nevinson. Chair: Miss Mary Rawlings. Tea 6d. CROYDON, Open-air Meeting, Katharine-street, 8 p.m. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle.

Friday, July 16.—KENSINGTON, Branch Social. Sunday, July 18.—HYDE PARK, 12 noon. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle. BROCKWELL PARK, 11.30 a.m. Speaker: Mrs. Schofield Coates. CLAPHAM COMMON, 6.30 p.m. Speakers: Miss Eunice Murray and Mrs. Schofield Coates.

Saturday, July 24.—KENSINGTON, Branch Picnic. Sunday, July 25.—HYDE PARK, 12 noon. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle. CLAPHAM COMMON, 6.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle. BROCKWELL PARK, 12 noon.

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PROVINCES.

Sunday, July 11.—MIDDLESBROUGH, Suffrage Centre, Lecture, 6.45 p.m. Speaker: Mr. Crow on "The Planetary Chain."

Monday, July 12.—MIDDLESBROUGH, Jumble Sale, 3 p.m. Lecture by Mr. Crow, on "Free Will and Necessity," 8 p.m.

Wednesday, July 14.—LIVERPOOL, Musical Evening, Clarion Cafe. Speaker: Mrs. Cousins, Mus. Bac., on "The Relation of Music to Life." Artistes: Violinist, Mrs. Howroyd; vocalists, Madame L. Walshe, Miss May Anderson; elocutionist, Miss Davey; pianist, Miss Theresa Anderson. Silver collection.

Friday, July 30.—MIDDLESBROUGH, Open-air Meeting, Borough-road Corner, 8 p.m. Speakers: The Rev. T. C. Gobat and Miss Goddard.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Tuesday, July 13.—INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB, 9, Grafton-street, Piccadilly, W. Club tea, 3.30 to 6 p.m. Lecture, 4.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Despard, on "The Despard Arms."

THE DESPARD ARMS.

Mrs. Despard will be present at "The Despard Arms" on Wednesday next, July 14, 6.30 to 8.30 p.m. Will all helpers and friends make a special point of being there to welcome her, as it will be the closing night of the summer session? She hopes to make a preliminary announcement of our plans for the autumn. Friends will be interested to know that she has willingly consented to the request of the young men who make constant use of the "Despard Arms" to allow them to call their new football club the "Despard Uniteds."

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OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

A very interesting afternoon was provided at the last of "Our Wednesday's" for the summer session, at the Fabian Hall on June 30, with Mrs. Cobden Sanderson and Miss Boyle as speakers and Mrs. Tanner in the chair. Dealing with "War Babies" Mrs. Cobden Sanderson said that she expected that now the great question of the illegitimate child would be settled. She pointed out that the man was always left alone, but every effort was made "to bring the sin home to the woman" and explained the degrading and costly methods of dealing with mother and child under man-made law. The war, she considered, would change the whole position of women, but watchfulness was imperative to prevent exploitation.

Miss Boyle dealt with the National Register as a compulsory means for obtaining voluntary work, and mentioned that while everyone was working overtime the House of Commons was working half-time on full pay.

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MEETINGS.

Wednesday, 14th July, 3.30-6 p.m. Club Tea. (Lecture 4.30.) Mrs. Despard. "The Despard Arms." Hostess: LADY NORR-BOWER, P.L.G.

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THE VOTE

CWEEKLY

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

BRANCH NOTES.

Will Branch Secretaries kindly write their reports in ink distinctly and briefly on ONE SIDE of a sheet of paper, leaving a margin on the left, and address to the Editor, THE VOTE Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.? A halfpenny stamp is sufficient; the flap of the envelope should be tucked inside. All reports must reach the Office on or before the first post on Tuesday mornings.

Anfield.

Our monthly meeting on June 25 took the form of a social which was thoroughly enjoyed by the splendid gathering of members and friends. Mrs. Shaw's address on "Women's Work during the present Crisis" was much appreciated. A discussion followed.

Cardiff.

On Friday last a splendid Branch meeting was held at the Welsh Industries, Queen-street. After the business meeting, Mrs. Gibson, one of our members, read a paper on "Mental Deficiency." The meeting was open, and very well attended. The paper was listened to most attentively, and a long and interesting discussion followed and many questions were answered by Mrs. Gibson. Our next Branch meeting, on the first Friday of August, will also be an open one, when Mrs. Stevenson Howells will give a paper on "Women and Evolution." Will members please bring as many friends as possible.

Clapham

Will members kindly note that we are calling a special Branch meeting on Tuesday, July 13, at 1, Imperial Mansions, Bromell's-road, at 8 p.m.? This is instead of the meeting previously announced for July 26. All members are urgently requested to attend.

Croydon—Offices 32a, The Arcade, High Street.

On July 1 a large gathering assembled to hear Mrs. Tanner, in Katharine-street; in spite of a few men, who evidently wished to break up the meeting, the speaker's good humour and logical replies prevailed, and the majority were seriously attentive and resented the attempted interruption. Miss Nina Boyle will be the speaker at our next open-air meeting (Katharine-street) on Thursday, July 15, at 8 p.m.

Hampstead.

A Branch meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 13, at 22, Harley-road, by invitation of Miss A. A. Smith, at 8.15 p.m. Members are urged to make a special effort to attend to deal with important business.

Liverpool.

On June 28 a business meeting was held in the Clarion Café, and it was decided to hold a musical evening for

the Birthday Fund on Wednesday, July 14, when Mrs. Cousins, Mus. Bac., will give an address entitled "The Relation of Music to Life." The following artistes have promised to contribute to the programme:—Violinist, Mrs. Howroyd; vocalists, Madama Lilian Walshe and Miss May Anderson; elocutionist, Miss Davey; and pianist, Miss Theresa Anderson. Members are requested to come and bring their friends in order to make this meeting a great success. Plans for the future work were also discussed, and we hope to be able to arrange a series of public lectures during the winter. Full particulars will be given later. The organiser wishes to hold a number of open-air meetings in Liverpool and on the Wirral side of the river. Members willing to help in any way please communicate with Miss A. Broughton, 61, Borrowdale-road.

Middlesbrough. W.F.L. Rooms—231a, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

At our meeting on June 28, Nurse Lee gave a very interesting address on "The Psychic Faculty." The chair was taken by Miss Amy Mahony. A good musical programme was contributed by Miss Bertha Westwood. Nurse Lee and Mr. Stanley Bird, with Mrs. Walker and Mr. Walter Westwood as accompanists. At the committee meeting on June 30 Miss Amy Mahony resigned from the position of honorary secretary, and as no other member present would accept nomination, the office is at present unfilled.

Nine Elms Restaurant.

Mrs. Tippett acknowledges with grateful thanks 5s. monthly subscription from Miss Rogers.

A WORD TO THE WISE.

You are sure of satisfaction if you go to Messrs. Thompson and Co., Tottenham Court-road, at any time, but during the sale, now going on, the bargains you will find in all departments are astonishing. Hats for all occasions, boots for all weathers, and furnishings for all houses, are a few of the special features of this year's sale. Mention THE VOTE.

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