

THE VOTE  
MAY 25, 1917.  
ONE PENNY.

# Our First Duty

G. DESPARD.

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, MAY 25, 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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### REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL, 1917.

#### Women's Freedom League Whip.

The following whip was sent on May 21 to Members of the House of Commons by the Women's Freedom League:

May 21, 1917.

URGENT.

DEAR SIR,—You are earnestly requested to be in your place Tuesday and Wednesday, May 22 and 23, during the debate on the Second Reading of the Representation of the People Bill, and to ensure by your vote the inclusion in that Bill of Clause IV. enfranchising women.

Signed on behalf of the Women's Freedom League:

C. DESPARD  
(President),

E. KNIGHT  
(Hon. Treasurer),

FLORENCE A. UNDERWOOD  
(Secretary).

THE VOTE goes to press while the debate on the Second Reading of the Bill is in progress, but next week's issue will contain a report and comments on the proceedings of May 22 and 23.

#### Clause IV.: Women.

The Clause dealing with the enfranchisement of women reads as follows:

A woman shall be entitled to be registered as a Parliamentary elector for a constituency (other than a University constituency) if she has attained the age of thirty years, and is entitled to be registered as a Local Government elector in respect of land or premises in that constituency, or is the wife of a husband entitled to be so registered.

A woman shall be entitled to be registered as a Parliamentary elector for a University constituency if she has attained the age of thirty years, and would be entitled to be so registered if she were a man.

A woman shall be entitled to be registered as a Local Government elector for any Local Government electoral area where she would be entitled to be so registered if she were a man. Provided that a husband and wife shall not both be qualified as Local Government electors in respect of the same property.

#### The Speaker's Ruling—Then and Now.

On the introduction of the Bill Mr. D. Mason endeavoured to get some enlightenment from the Speaker with regard to the inclusion or exclusion of women. He asked:

On a point of Order. May I ask whether your former decision, when you ruled out the last Reform Bill because women were introduced into it, will apply to this Bill in the event of the House being unable to come to a conclusion with regard to the women and determining to proceed with a Bill not in accordance with its original introduction?

Mr. SPEAKER: The ruling would not be applicable, because in this case, as I understand, a Clause providing for the vote for women is included in the Bill. The door is open to the House to strike it out; that would not be an addition to but it would be a diminution from the Bill as passed on Second Reading.

Mr. MASON: Would it not, in accordance with your ruling, alter the character of the Bill as originally introduced?

Mr. SPEAKER: It would alter the character of the Bill in one sense, but it would not so alter it as to make it a new Bill. Assuming the House passes the Second Reading, it will have assented to the principle of including women, and supposing at a later stage the House strikes out the Clause which contains the Franchise for women, it will not have adopted any new general principle, although it will have altered one of the Clauses.

Mr. MASON: It will have altered the character of the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: It will not have affected the general character of the Bill.

The answer shows how the Woman's Clause will be open to defeat after the Second Reading. We maintain that after acceptance of the principle, Woman

Suffrage must be an integral part of the Bill, with all the power of the Government behind it.

#### Amendments in Committee.

Questioned by Colonel Sanders on May 21 with regard to opportunity for moving amendments, Sir George Cave, the Home Secretary, who is now in charge of the Bill, replied that the opportunity would be given in Committee. To the further question as to whether amendments would become part of the Bill no reply was given.

#### Motions in Opposition to the Bill.

An indication of the leaders of opposition to the Bill and the line they will take is given in the Notices of Motion, which appeared on the Order Paper of the House of Commons last Tuesday, on the Second Reading:

Major Henry Terrell, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Butler Lloyd and Mr. Blair move the rejection of the Bill in the usual formula: "That it be read a second time upon this day six months."

Lord Hugh Cecil (why Lord Hugh, a professed Woman Suffragist?) and Sir Stuart Coats are more explicit, and move that it is undesirable to proceed further in view of the preoccupation of the war and the anomalous position of the present Parliament. Mr. Pemberton Billing, who voted in favour of Mr. Asquith's resolution on March 28, opposes the Bill because no provision has been made for members of His Majesty's Forces on active service in any part of the world to vote, and because conscientious objectors are not disfranchised. Colonel Sanders opposes on similar grounds. Sir Frederick Banbury's motion of opposition is based on the reviving of violent political controversy during the war, and the weakening of unity necessary for victory. Mr. Blair, Sir Henry Craik and Mr. Nield object, and are substantially in agreement with the Member for the City of London; Colonel Bathurst objects because the representation of the agricultural interest will be diminished, and Mr. Rawlinson because the reform of the House of Lords should come first.

#### Woman Suffrage, the most Important Proposal of the Bill.

At a meeting of citizens in Edinburgh on May 20, convened by the Northern Men's Federation for Woman Suffrage, a resolution was passed declaring that

the enfranchisement of women was of more importance in the reconstruction of society than any other proposal put forward by the Speaker's Conference; protesting against the fancy franchise of age limit for women, while every youth of 21 is enfranchised on a six months' residential qualification; pointing out the liability of the Woman's Clause to obstruction without Government protection; and calling for equal franchise for men and women.

#### An Integral Part of the Bill.

The Women's International League passed the following resolution at a meeting of the Executive Committee on May 17:

This Committee asks the Prime Minister for an assurance that, as soon as those clauses of the Representation of the People Bill which confer the Parliamentary Vote upon women have received the sanction of the House of Commons, they shall become an integral part of the Bill, for which the Government will then accept full responsibility. The Committee begs to remind the Prime Minister that he has twice described the Bill as a House of Commons Bill, and further that a precedent for the course suggested was established on the occasion of the last Electoral Reform Bill in 1912-1913, when the late Prime Minister undertook that, if the House of Commons passed a clause to enfranchise women, that clause would become an integral part of the Bill, and would be defended by the Government in all its stages.

#### Forecasts.

Mr. Walter Runciman, ex-President of the Board of Trade, addressing his constituents at Dewsbury on May 18 said, in speaking of Woman Suffrage as embodied in the Bill, that of his old colleagues in the Cabinet, he thought only one remained to vote against the suffrage, and of the Conservative Cabinet he did not think there were more than two who would

be hostile. They might safely say that the front benches had at last come to their senses. He thought the courage with which the country had faced all the losses of the war, and was still looking determinedly towards the achievement of a satisfactory end of this appalling struggle, was due in a large measure to the courage of the women at home.

*The Times*, of May 21, in its Political Notes, was optimistic as to the fate of the Bill. It said:

The opponents of the Bill will not muster many votes in the Division Lobby. The plain fact is that the great majority of members of all parties welcome the opportunity of a settlement of this question, and are anxious to pass into law as rapidly as possible an eminently reasonable and workman-like compromise.

*The Sunday Times*, May 20, declared that "Mr. Walter Long's warm support of the Electoral Reform Bill has disarmed a good deal of the Unionist opposition to it, and it is unlikely that the Committee stage will be very protracted. It is anticipated, however, that the Proportional Representation experiment will be dropped. . . . As for Woman's Suffrage, the opposition promises to be almost negligible. Even among those who are still opposed to it in principle there is a feeling that it is a *chose jugée* by the war."

*The Church Family Newspaper* says: "The day has passed when Woman Suffrage can be opposed . . . but we are of opinion that the best solution of the whole woman question, as far as Parliament is concerned, is to place the sexes on an equality and to trust to good sense influencing the voters."

*The Yorkshire Observer* states that "There is good reason to believe that woman suffrage now commands a large majority in Parliament, and though there may be a good deal of difference of opinion as to the age limit, it is unlikely that it will make agreement impossible."

*The Sheffield Daily Telegraph* writes: "We do not think the section represented by Lord Claud Hamilton will succeed in offering any effectual opposition to the Representation of the People Bill. . . . The work of women in this war has brought others besides Mr. Asquith to a recognition of their claims to have a voice in the government of the country of which they are citizens just as much as men, and we trust that Parliament will deal with the question in a broad and generous spirit."

#### Debate on the Second Reading, May 22.

SIR GEORGE CAVE, opening the debate, dealt generally with the Bill and commended it as a reasonable compromise. On the question of votes for women, he said that following the recommendations of the majority of the Speaker's Conference, the Bill proposed an age limit for women, and of the two ages which had found favour with the Conference the Government had adopted the age of 30 in preference to that of 35. The other qualifications were that the woman voter must be entitled to be registered as a local government elector, the wife of a husband so entitled, or a university voter. It was estimated that this provision would add six million voters to the register, of whom five millions would be married women. He had always been in favour of some measure of woman suffrage. (Hear, hear.) He asked hon. members who still held strong views on the subject whether it was possible, having called on women for so large a contribution to the work of carrying on the war, and having received so splendid a response, to refuse women a voice in moulding the future of the country which their help and devoted self-sacrifice had done so much to save. (Hear, hear.)

COLONEL SANDERS, moving an amendment against proceeding further with the Bill, said that he felt strongly that women ought to have the vote, but instead of leaving the question to an open vote in the House of Commons, the Government should undertake to drop the Bill if women were denied the vote by an amendment carried in the House of Commons or the House of Lords.

LIEUT.-COLONEL ARCHER SHEE strongly objected to Woman Suffrage at the present time.

LORD HUGH CECEL, who opposed the Bill, declared that the Woman Suffrage clause was the most absurd ever put forward; the question ought to have been settled thirty years ago.

SIR JOHN SIMON, who strongly supported the Bill, said that the country needed the creation without delay of a House of Commons representative of both men and women to make good the results of victory in the field.

Opposition to the Bill was voiced by Mr. Burdett-Coutts and Mr. Blair; Mr. J. B. Watson, Mr. C. A. Cochrane, Mr. Ramsay MacDonal, Mr. A. Williams supported the Bill, and the Solicitor-General replied on behalf of the Government.

#### Press Comments.

*The Daily Telegraph* (May 23): Upon the two proposals in the Bill which are to be left to the free vote of the House, the limited measure of Woman Suffrage and the no less limited measure of Proportional Representation, we are decidedly of opinion that an electoral verdict would be at least as strongly in favour of both as the decision of the House of Commons is likely to be.

*The Daily Chronicle* (May 23): "Our pre-war failure to set our electoral house in order had exposed us to a great danger and a great handicap; that the nation has been extraordinarily lucky in having a way of escape from this danger and handicap indicated to it by the Speaker's Conference representing an accord between all parties; and that posterity would never forgive us if we threw such a great piece of good fortune away."

*The Daily News Lobby Correspondent* (May 23) calls attention to dangers, especially a plot to wreck the Bill in Committee. He writes: The Government are pretty sure of a good majority for the second reading of the Electoral Reform Bill in the Commons to-day. When Mr. Asquith moved for the embodiment of the compromise in a Bill a hostile amendment pressed by Mr. Clavell Salter was supported by 62 Tories, and this band of 62 have privately determined to kill the Bill, if they can, in Committee. If the minority against the Bill were shown in the division to-night to have seriously increased, the Government would be disinclined to proceed with it, but this is not likely to be the case. The murder of the Bill may be effected more subtly in Committee. For example, a revolt of the county members who would be disfranchised is threatened. A group of the opponents of Woman Suffrage, with Mr. Arnold Ward as secretary, mean to press for a referendum on Woman Suffrage. They had a meeting yesterday, attended by a few Liberals as well as Tories. The referendum in recent years has been tossed from one side to the other in politics, and it is always the side which is losing its cause at the moment which desires a referendum.

MRS. HUMPHRY WARD, in a lengthy letter published in *The Times* on May 23, states her case against Woman Suffrage, declaring that "to rush the recommendations of the Speaker's Conference through this Parliament at the bidding of the majority of a small Parliamentary Committee, however eminent and able, is the real 'outrage.'"

#### Items of Interest.

MISS BALLARD DAWSON has become a fully qualified "local preacher" in the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Swanage, and therefore has the right to attend and vote at the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

For the first time in the history of British rule in India a deputation of Indian women waited upon the Viceroy; they urged that indentured labour, which is "destructive to the purity and honour of Indian womanhood," should be permanently abolished. In a sympathetic reply, the Viceroy said: "There are many matters in which the Government of India would be greatly helped if they could get the advice and help of women." Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the poet, was a member of the deputation.

Mrs. Anna Haslam, 163, Rathgar-road, Dublin, is interesting herself in the case of Miss Frost, whose appointment as Petty Sessions Clerk of Six Mile Cross was not sanctioned by the Lord-Lieutenant solely on account of her sex. Further legal proceedings are contemplated, and Mrs. Haslam is taking charge of a fund to meet the expenses.

The vivid and enlightening study of the personality and work of Elizabeth Malleon, which appears in the current *Englishwoman* should be read by all who are interested in the educational, political and social progress of the last 60 years. That it is written by Miss M. A. R. Tucker is an assurance of excellence.

MISS MAUDE ROYDEN'S SERMONS AT THE CITY TEMPLE, on May 20, will be published as penny pamphlets by the "Christian Commonwealth" (Salisbury-square, E.C. 4.). The morning sermon will appear next week; the evening sermon, which dealt with the relations between the sexes, will follow. "Miss Royden," says a critic, "has certainly established her title to take a man's place in the pulpit."

The attractions of the Russian Exhibition at the Grafton Galleries include beautiful work by women, and the pictures of the revolution show the return of the women exiles from Siberia.

#### HOW WE HELP YOU AND YOU HELP THE "VOTE."

The Sale and Exchange Department is extending its activities by undertaking renovations and mending, including socks and stockings and the making of underclothing. A competent dressmaker also is being engaged on whose skill customers may depend. Success in this new development means financial success for THE VOTE.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 232.

## Women's Freedom League.

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Telegrams—"DESPARD, MUSEUM 1429, LONDON."  
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### FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, May 25.—Croydon. Sewing Party and Discussion on "The Criminal Law Amendment Bill," 32a, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m.

Saturday, May 26.—L.B.C. Drawing-room Meeting, 38a, Trebovir-road, Earl's Court, W. (by kind invitation of Mrs. F. E. Smith), 3.30. Speakers: Miss Margaret Hodge on "The Evolution of the Anti-Suffragist," and Mrs. Despard. Chair: Miss Reeves.

Wednesday, May 30.—Stamford Hill Branch Drawing-room Meeting, 7; East Bank, 7.30. Speaker: Mrs. Despard on "Dual Control in Family and Nation."

Sunday, June 3.—Open-air Meeting, Hyde Park (near Marble Arch), 12 noon. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Miss Munro. Chair: Miss Hodge.

Wednesday, June 6.—Croydon. Drawing-room Meeting, at Sanderstead, by kind permission of Mrs. Foster. Particulars next week.

Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge. Subject, "The Russian Revolution or the Evolution of Democracy under a Despotism." Admission free. Tea (6d.) can be obtained in the Café.

Sunday June 10.—Drawing-room Meeting at 129, East Dulwich-grove, S.E., 4 p.m. Speaker: Miss Abadam, "Feminism and its Vital Work."

Saturday, June 16.—Magna Carta Celebration.

#### PROVINCES.

Saturday, May 26.—Chester. Jumble Sale, The People's Hall, Delamere-street, off Northgate-street, 3 p.m.

Wednesday, May 30.—Portsmouth Branch Picnic, Cosham Light Railway, 3 p.m. Middlesbrough: Suffrage Club Discussion, 7.30.

Monday, June 4.—Middlesbrough: Branch Meeting, 7.30 p.m., 231, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

Wednesday, June 6.—Portsmouth: Afternoon Whist Drive, Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, 3 o'clock. Tickets 1s. each.

Tuesday, June 12.—Portsmouth: Members' Meeting, Suffrage Rooms, 2, Kent-road, 7.30 p.m., prompt.

### We draw special attention to—

Saturday, May 26.—London Branches Council Drawing-room Meeting (see above).

Wednesday, May 30.—Stamford Hill Branch Drawing-room Meeting (see above).

The next Wednesday afternoon meeting will be held on June 6 at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, when Miss Margaret Hodge will speak on "The Russian Revolution or the Evolution of Democracy under a Despotism."

### Whitsuntide Holidays.

The Offices of the Women's Freedom League, and the Minerva Publishing Company, will be closed from Friday, May 25, 5.30 p.m., until Tuesday, May 29, 9.30 a.m.

### Women's Freedom League Settlement, 93, Nine Elms Lane, S.W. 8.

An account of the very successful and delightful House Warming on May 19 will appear next week. Meantime, all good wishes to the splendid work and the devoted workers.

### The Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead Road, N.W. 1.

Helpers are urgently needed for Saturday evenings, Sundays from 3.30 to 10 p.m., and NEXT Monday, from 3.30 to 10 p.m.

A NOTE OF SYMPATHY.—To our valued member of many years' standing, Mrs. Philip Thomas, and family, we express our deepest sympathy in the loss of her eldest son, recently killed in action.

## THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd.  
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FRIDAY, May 25th, 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.  
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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.

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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 Haywood, Manchester. Can be obtained at the Book-stalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son and all newsagents.

### OUR FIRST DUTY.

The long-expected Bill for the People's Representation is at last before the country. We are told that "all the existing and mysterious qualifications" are by this Bill swept away, but that "it is necessarily complicated and technical in its character."

Some of us would prefer a perfectly simple measure, conferring the suffrage on every adult man and woman, and there can be no doubt that this will ultimately happen, for democracy is advancing by leaps and bounds. But our male politicians have not the imaginative outlook of the men of Russia. They take their reforms slowly, surrendering ancient prejudices bit by bit. Fears, as illusory and old-fashioned as nursery-fables, haunt them. The bourgeois vote, the commercial vote, the mechanics' and labourers' and agriculturists' vote—all these have been drawn from reluctant persons who have foreseen all sorts of disastrous results.

Were it not, indeed, that our present legislators are in a cleft stick, with a House of Commons prolonging its own life from session to session and no machinery at hand to organise anything but a sham election, we should not now be having a People's Representation Bill.

We draw hope from the circumstance that for the first time in the history of the country a Bill that can with any consistency be called a People's Representation Bill being debated in the House of Commons. We are faced with the danger that what gives it a true claim to this title may be withdrawn. We do not think it will be. Although service rendered to the State in war-time forms no part of our reason for claiming rights of citizenship, it is difficult for us to imagine how the House of Commons, recognising the services of fighting men, can ignore the no less gallant services of women—doctors and nurses, and hospital orderlies, and munition workers.

Lord Claud Hamilton, in his futile little speech of opposition, asks pathetically: "Are we" (we presume he means the Anti-Suffragists) "to have all our positions swept away and the franchise conferred upon women in spite of the convictions we hold?"

That has been the fate of many who have failed to go forward with the times. This ancient Member of the House must not complain. The sun will not delay its rising because we are unprepared for its light.

Much more cogent, much more manly, are the reasons given by Mr. Long for pressing the Bill upon the House. "I have no hesitation, old Conservative as I am," he says, "in recommending this Bill to the House of Commons and to the country, believing as I firmly do that our first duty is to set our own house in order, so that we may be able to deal satisfactorily with all these great questions which are so closely bound up with the future, with the prosperity and with the very existence of our Empire."

In the thought, the work, the vigilance, the energy which, as we hope and believe, our members and associates will throw into the next few weeks' campaign, they cannot do better than take at once as their motto and their incentive to action the words used by Mr. Long:

**"Our first duty is to set our own house in order."**

That disorder, such as imperils the very existence of the national family, has been reigning amongst us no one who has watched the course of events during these recent disastrous years will venture to dispute. Preventable disease, preventable death, preventable shortage in food—these against which a wise and far-seeing household management might have preserved the nation are aggravating the horrors of war. And now, apparently, the only way of stemming the under-current of fear and suspicion that is poisoning the well-springs of industry is by arrests, punishments, and restrictions. Time indeed it is that the people, who during these years of agony have been speechless should find a voice and insist upon making it heard.

The People's Representation Bill, if it becomes law, will be a step in that direction. It is needless to insist that the absurd limitation in the woman's vote will not satisfy us; that we shall not rest until our first object—representation for women on the same terms as men—has been achieved. Meanwhile we feel it is our first duty, believing with Mr. Long that our house must be set in order,

**to obtain the removal of sex disqualification in civil rights.**

C. DESPARD.

### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

The Bill Hung Up.

In consequence of the violent and determined opposition which this Bill has aroused, the debate on its Report stage has not yet been continued, there are rumours that the whole Bill may be dropped, but we shall still keep a sharp look-out, and our campaign against it will go forward until the Bill is finally killed.

The New and Dangerous Move.

The Government's sudden loss of interest in its Bill may be explained by the appearance of a new Regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act, which gives power to the authorities to make any arrangements they please for any persons or classes of persons in any area. In this way, of course, it is very simple to carry out locally and unknown to the public those infamous ideas of the Contagious Diseases Acts, which the country will not allow to be openly followed. We shall oppose any action of this sort with our whole strength.

The Brentford Scandal Again: Questions from Scotland.

The Northern Men's Federation for Woman Suffrage wrote to the Lord Advocate asking:

(1) The name and date of the Act empowering magistrates to order compulsory medical examination.

(2) Whether if such an Act exists it applies equally to men.

(3) Where a copy of the Act can be obtained.

The Lord Advocate replied: "In Scotland there exists neither law nor statute which would warrant an order being pronounced there similar to that alleged to have been pronounced by the Brentford magistrates. So far as his Lordship is aware there is no statute in England authorising such an order. Whether, apart from statute, there is any law which would support such an order his Lordship is not aware."

In the House: An Unsatisfactory Answer.

On May 17, Commander WEDGWOOD asked the Home Secretary what further steps had been taken in investigation of the Brentford Case, whether the magistrate who illegally ordered the medical examination of two innocent women is still administering justice in the Brentford district, and whether the doctor who conducted this illegal examination is continuing to examine women in Holloway Prison without obtaining their consent.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Home Secretary whether he had yet received any reply from the Brentford Magistrates, and whether any steps had been taken to make any possible reparation and apology to the women for the wrong done to them.

Sir GEORGE CAVE said he was informed that the magistrates did not order the examination, but remanded the women, saying that they would be obliged by the opinion of the medical officer as to whether they were diseased (a distinction without a difference).

He had told the magistrates that in his opinion they should not have made this request.

He was assured that the consent of the women was obtained (but the women themselves say that their consent was never asked and never given, and nobody else could have given it for them).

It appeared that no illegality was committed, but he repeated his regret for the magistrates' request.

### Venerable Diseases Bill.

This Bill, introduced by the Local Government Board, which has already passed through the House of Lords, was read a third time in the Commons on May 15. It makes the advertisement of remedies for venerable diseases an offence and penalises their treatment by any person not a registered medical practitioner.

E. K.

### JOHN STUART MILL COMMEMORATION, MAY 21, 1917. Israel Zangwill's Tribute.

Mr. Zangwill, who was unable to be present at the Commemoration, sent the following tribute to John Stuart Mill, whom he described as "One of those rarer saints who is never weary in well-thinking":

Far End, East Preston, Sussex.

May 17, 1917.

DEAR MISS UNDERWOOD,—In my regrettable absence from your Mill Commemoration I feel it a privilege to be allowed to send a brief tribute to the memory of that great representative of a great age—for the Victorian age was far more fruitful both in greatness and modesty than our own. Nothing is more beautiful in Mill's character than the humility with which he felt himself—say, as compared with Carlyle—a plodding pedestrian. Yet this pedestrian found in more than one direction the road to the future which many of the winged geniuses of his generation managed to miss. It is not only as the pioneer and prophet of Women's Suffrage that John Stuart Mill stands out as the most clear-sighted and magnanimous of his generation, though at this moment it is naturally his most conspicuous claim upon our reverence and gratitude. But Mill was also the first Free Thinker to suspect and to suggest that Religion and Reason were not so mutually opposed as each seemed to the other, and whatever validity or helpfulness there lies in the modern notion of a non-omnipotent God with whom His creatures

can co-operate, the notion itself belongs not—as an illiterate age imagines—to William James but to Mill's "Essays on Religion," published over a quarter of a century before James's first book.

But his "Essay on Liberty" is even more in line with our latest thought, cruelly as the so-called "Defence of the Realm Act" throws back the movement of our age. At a moment when we are casting out the devil of Prussian militarism like a clumsy exorcist who drives the demon into his own mouth, this is the book of Mill's which is most to our need, and dedicated as it is to (and indeed worked out in common with) the "friend and wife whose exalted sense of truth and right" is declared to have been the author's strongest incentive, as her approbation was his greatest reward, it stands in no insignificant relation with his feminist philosophy. Had the doctrine of this book been heeded by Germany, her development would have been a blessing, not a curse to the world—for Mill so far from believing that *Kultur* may be enforced by the sword denies it even the right to suppress such a vagary as Mormonism, and finds the highest good of State life not in its uniformity but in the richness of its diversity.

"That so few dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time," he wrote of a period, which, compared with our own, seems an era of saturnalian licence. In his more scientific works, his "Logic," his "Political Economy," his "Examination of the Philosophy of Sir William Hamilton," he rendered immeasurable service to honest thinking, not so much by what he achieved in final truth as by the scrupulous fearlessness of his method. Mill is a discipline, not a dogma, and there is more truth in his mistakes than in the verities of souls less noble. In Parliament he was a failure: could there be a greater indictment of Parliament? And yet Parliament has ultimately to do his will: it is a strange way of failing there. Gladstone, in one of his rare epigrams, called him "the saint of Rationalism," and it was a fine tribute to a sainthood that sustained itself without the orthodox compensations. But the phrase suggests an even larger meaning than Gladstone intended, for Mill was one of those rarer saints who never weary in well-thinking. He never rested on his laurels, and so his laurels will ever rest on him. You do well to remind humanity in its madness that great, sane spirits have been with us and that it is never too late to listen.

Believe me, with best wishes to your admirable Commemoration, sincerely yours,  
ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

Lord Morley and Lord Courtney wrote to express keen regret for unavoidable absence.

### A Great Pioneer.

Mrs. Despard, presiding over the Commemoration, which took place at the Central Hall, Westminster, on May 21, said:—"It is a particularly fitting moment to celebrate the memory of one of our greatest pioneers, now that we are so near the attainment of our object—the political emancipation of women—as a Bill that may pass is actually before Parliament. It is hard in these days for us to realise the difficulties that these pioneers had to contend against; it is impossible for us to imagine the absolute deadness to great questions in the mid-Victorian era. Hostility braces us; it is a sign of strength when our Cause provokes strong opposition. Indifference only chills and discourages; J. S. Mill, with his wonderful book, "The Subjection of Women," together with his fellow champions of the Woman's Cause, were brought up against the stone wall of indifference. The book is a great classic, and it is as full of suggestiveness to-day as it was when it first appeared half a century ago. We have many schemes for advising and helping mothers, but this book sets out clearly the need for the complete self-dependence of women, only made possible by their political emancipation. The writer shows what the subjection of women in the family really means, and emphasizes the fact that when the mother is not duly honoured in the home the boys and girls will not grow up with a right sense of their responsibilities as members of a great community." Mrs. Despard pointed out that several of the speakers at the meeting had enjoyed the great privilege of knowing or of hearing John Stuart Mill, and of sharing in his work.

### The Intellectual Champion.

Mrs. Fenwick Miller emphasized the importance of doing honour to the great men and women who

have gone before us, to the early labourers and thinkers in the great Movement for Woman's Emancipation. It is most important for that Movement, she said, that Mill should have championed it, for he brought extraordinary intellectual power, an exalted moral character, and a high literary reputation into the introduction of that Movement to the public. No Movement started by such a champion could excite ridicule, and his emphatic declaration that "the interests of women as women are no more involved in the interests of men than the interests of subjects are involved in the interests of kings," was a complete refutation of the Anti-suffrage contention that, as every woman was related to a man as daughter, wife, or mother, the interests of the sexes were identical and women were represented if their male kinsfolk were enfranchised. Mill was intensely interested in the discovery of great abstract truths, and when he had discovered them he usually cared little about their practical application, but he did not take up the question of the Political Emancipation of Women in this spirit. The strong intellectual attraction between J. S. Mill and Mrs. Taylor (afterwards Mrs. Mill), and the great influence that she exercised over him led him to desire to bring the question into the sphere of practical politics. "Her intellect is much profounder than mine as her heart is nobler," he said, and he felt keenly that the co-operation of woman with man was essential for the welfare of the State, and her powers were an asset that should not be wasted.

#### The Thinker and Dreamer.

Mr. John Scurr congratulated the Women's Freedom League on being the one Suffrage Society that was commemorating the great champion of the Woman's Movement. John S. Mill was an advocate of liberty, and there is special need to bring the memory of such champions before the public to-day. Before the war we did not really concern ourselves about liberty. The Russian Revolution was a success because the soldiers refused to fire on the people. Tom Mann was imprisoned because he urged the British soldiers to undertake that they would not shoot their compatriots. In the persecution of the promoters of the Woman's Movement the Government has constantly attacked liberties, confirmed by statute; the Women's Freedom League has always heroically stood up for constitutional rights, even at the cost of imprisonment. Mill was a thinker and a dreamer, and it is the thinker and dreamer, he added, that urges us along the road of progress; the practical man is so practical that he often does nothing at all. Mill kept an ideal before his eyes and those of his generation and posterity. "I trust that you women, when you gain your full citizen rights," said Mr. Scurr, "will not forget the struggle you had to obtain them, and that you will think of the subject races of India, the problem of Ireland, and of the working-classes, and that you will bring your intellectual powers to bear upon these and to discover the best means of making the road easier for those who are to come after you. If you can do that you will preserve your ideals and use your power for the benefit of humanity."

#### Individualist, then Socialist.

Dr. G. B. Clark gave many interesting facts from the biography of J. S. Mill, and he also spoke of his own personal knowledge of the great writer and thinker. The two books Mill thought were his best were his "Liberty" and "Subjection of Women." Mill sat for two years as Member of Parliament for Westminster, but he did not like the House of Commons. During those years he supported every radical measure; he championed Malthus, and subscribed to Bradlaugh's election fund. Mrs. Mill had

great influence over her husband. He began life as an individualist and died a socialist. He moulded the thoughts of the last century and his writings are still greatly influencing many at the present time.

#### An Indian's Comment.

Mrs. Cobb stated that she had heard Mill speak upon Woman's Suffrage in a debate, and that his opponent was a woman who opposed the emancipation of her sex. An Indian student, who was present at the debate, said that the arguments urged against giving women the vote were the same as were brought forward in his country against teaching any of that sex to read. M. H.

### TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION.

#### Miss K. Raleigh.

For non-payment of Inhabited House Duty—the amount of which was seven shillings—Miss Kate Raleigh's goods were distrained on last week at Uxbridge. Miss Raleigh naturally made use of the occasion for propaganda purposes, conversing with the tax collector for some time on the subject of Woman Suffrage, and presenting him with Suffrage literature, which he accepted. Before taking his leave he expressed himself as, on the whole, in favour of women's claims to enfranchisement.

#### Miss Evelyn Sharp.

Following on the bankruptcy proceedings against Dr. Winifred S. Patch, the next victim is Miss Evelyn Sharp, the brilliant writer and speaker, whose long service to the Woman Suffrage cause is widely known and honoured. At the first meeting of "creditors"—again the only creditor is the Government, but dignified by a plural—Miss Sharp entirely disputed the claim of £56 19s. 10d. in respect of unpaid income-tax, in view of her political status as an unenfranchised woman, and the unconstitutional procedure of levying taxes without representation. For three weeks a bailiff has been in possession of Miss Sharpe's bed-sitting room; early this week, however, all her furniture, books, and other possessions, except her bed and bath, were removed, including even her typewriter, which is certainly a tool of her craft. An added indignity and, we say, illegality, is that her letters have not only been opened but detained for a week. It is expected that the public examination will take place early in June.

The Women's Freedom League expresses its warm appreciation of the action of these Suffragists in defending the principle of "No Taxation Without Representation."

### OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

On May 16, Miss Underwood, from the chair, spoke most earnestly of the importance of the Suffrage Bill now before the House of Commons, and referred to the fifty years of agitation for women's votes. Mr. Laurence Housman gave a most stimulating and suggestive address on "Peaceful Slumbering, or Mental Paralysis in War time." The cry of "Don't criticise the Government in war time," which is raised by the militarist and the profiteer for their own interests, is cordially responded to by the great majority of Britons, and greatly facilitates the process of assaulting liberty and breaking down constitutional safeguards. Exploitation by powerful interests is encouraged by blind patriotism, though it is greatly hampered by reasonable criticism. Hence the former is stimulated and the latter suppressed. We may cling pertinaciously to the idea of complete victory, until all our liberties have been paralysed. A striking contrast was drawn between the procession, which marched in May, 1913, behind the coffin of the woman who stopped the King's horse, and the demonstrations organised by Mrs. Pankhurst and subsidised by the Government in 1915. The former really celebrated woman's awakening to her potentialities and her responsibilities, the latter was an exhibition of blind submission to authority. The war, waged at first for a righteous cause, has become a commercial opportunity, and such a degradation of purpose was only made possible because the profiteers utilised the paralysis

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of the national mind. Vigilance is specially necessary to preserve liberty in war time as encroachments are made upon it on the plea of military necessity. Directly a nation ceases to care for its liberties, it ceases to care for righteousness, hence the degeneration of our war aims. If we are fighting for democracy, now that 170 millions of Russians have declared for it, the future of Europe is with us. If our Government, with its liberal aims at the outset of the war, could identify itself with the imperialism of the old Russia, why cannot it now identify itself with the internationalism of the new Russia, which will ensure the triumph of the democratic principle and safeguard Europe against future wars? The many questions asked showed the interest which was aroused by Mr. Housman's address, and warm appreciation was expressed.

### IN PARLIAMENT.

#### No Women's Representatives—yet.

On May 16, in the House of Commons, Colonel Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK asked the Minister of Munitions, inasmuch as the interests of women workers may be affected by the Munitions Act Amendment Bill now before the House, whether any woman representative of organised labour has been appointed to sit on the consultative committee now considering the amendments to the Bill; and, if not, whether he will take steps to ensure the appointment of a woman representative of organised labour?

Mr. KELLAWAY: The Committee to which the reference is made by the noble Lord was not set up by my right hon. friend, but by the unions themselves, with which he conferred last Friday on the labour situation. The members of the Committee were nominated and elected by that conference. I have already explained to the representative of the women workers that I should be willing to consider any proposals for amendments from any representative of women workers.

#### An Unwarrantable Impertinence.

Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK asked the Minister of Munitions whether he is aware that a notice has been posted in the premises of Messrs Strachan and Henshaw, Whitehall Ironworks, Bristol, asking whether the women are by slacking going to allow their husbands and brothers to be slaughtered for want of shells; and, seeing that the women workers resent this imputation, whether, to promote good feeling between employers and employed, he will direct the notice to be removed?

Mr. KELLAWAY: My attention has already been called to the action of this firm in posting the notice referred to in their works. I have enquired into the matter, and find that the local representative of the Ministry of Munitions has on three separate occasions remonstrated with the firm, but that they refuse to remove the notice. I have no power to compel the firm to remove the notice complained of, but I cannot too strongly deprecate action of this nature, which seems likely to give offence to women workers who are rendering most valuable service to the country at the present time.

#### Voters Get 3s.: Voteless Must Wait.

Mr. MILLAR asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he has completed his inquiries into the wages paid to the men and women employed at Aldershot and Weedon, and whether he has decided to grant increase proportionate to those paid to workers in other Government Departments?

Mr. FORSTER: An increase of 3s. a week has been granted to men at Weedon. The other inquiries are not yet complete. **How the Government Wastes Our Money: The Price of a Man.**

In reply to questions asked in the House of Commons last Monday, it was elicited that the cost of the National Service Department since April 30 last (just three weeks!) had been £104,000, £78,000 of which had been spent on advertising. 9,092 men had been employed, so that the total average cost of getting one man a job was £11 6s. 8d., £8 10s. of which had gone in advertising for it! Comment is needless. F. A. U.

### BRANCH NOTES.

#### Bowes Park.

The branch held a most enjoyable drawing-room meeting at Avondale Hall, Palmer's Green, Mrs. McLaughlin presiding. Keen disappointment was felt when our hostess informed us that Mrs. Despard could not be present. Miss Margaret Hodge held the undivided attention of the meeting in a most instructive and enlightening address on "Women as Empire Builders." Sidights were thrown on the hardships endured by our women colonists such as only a woman with Miss Hodge's wide experience could give. The speaker emphasized the often-forgotten fact that women by their presence and teaching are the real Empire-builders in that it is they who inspire the love of country and home in the hearts of men and children.

**Middlesbrough Suffrage Club, 23 1a, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.**

We hope to be able to publish in next week's issue our Summer Programme, and shall then call for volunteers for a

variety of indoor and outdoor work. Suggestions will be welcomed.

On May 14, our good friend, Miss Cook, of West Hartlepool, gave an interesting address entitled "A Constructive Proposal for the Solution of the Social Evil Problem." About thirty members and friends were present. At the close of her address Miss Cook asked that the following resolution be passed:—"That as an alternative to the Criminal Law Amendment Bill now before Parliament, a simple Bill be brought in absolutely prohibiting the sale or purchase of a woman's honour; i.e., a Bill to make it punishable for a man to give money and a woman to receive money for prostitution." This, however, was rejected in favour of the following:—"This meeting protests against any legislation being enacted which penalises women, until such time as women have an equal share with men in the making of laws."

The Club continues to thrive, and has excellent discussions on Wednesday evenings. Recent discussions have included "Reason versus Emotion," Education, Ireland, "Is Trade Unionism Tyrannical?" "Do Women want the Vote to make laws?" "Should there be a Women's Party when the Vote is Won?" We have read "Alice in Ganderland" (Laurence Housman) and have reserved a night for "Damaged Goods" (Brieux). On May 30, the Rev. Mr. Gobat will speak on "A Doll's House" (Ibsen).

#### Portsmouth.

A picnic has been arranged for Whit-Wednesday, May 30, weather permitting. Meet at Cosham Light Railway at 3 p.m. In aid of the Birthday Fund a Whist Drive will be held on Wednesday afternoon, June 6, at the Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, at three o'clock. Tickets 1s. each. Parcels for the Jumble Sale may be left at 17, Duncan-road, Southsea.

#### Sunderland.

Three very successful meetings were held here last week. A public meeting convened by the Joint Women's Co-operative Guilds on Monday was addressed by Miss Evans. The Hall was crowded, and great enthusiasm was shown. On Wednesday afternoon a delightful drawing-room meeting was held at Mrs. Witherington's house, at which several new members were enrolled. We express our grateful thanks to our hostess for her hospitality and her subscription. In the evening a great crowd collected to hear Mr. Ross and Miss Evans in Gill Bridge-avenue. A resolution calling for Government whips for the Woman Suffrage Clause was carried, and a good collection taken. We are grateful to all the men and women who came down especially to support us.

#### At Darlington.

A very successful meeting was held in the United Service Club by courtesy of the Women's Co-operative Guild, and a number of members were enrolled. As we go to press a meeting will be in progress in the Temperance Institute, Gladstone-street, at 5.45, to consider the progress of the Representation of the People Bill, and what action can be taken in support of the Woman Suffrage Clause. There will also be a discussion on "Compulsory State Service for Voteless Women." It is hoped that a North-Eastern Council of the Women's Freedom League can be reformed, and that Darlington will send a representative.

Letters received from Miss Nina Boyle during last week state that she hopes soon to be home again.

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 232.

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# THE VOTE

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WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

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The articles enumerated below can be seen at "The Vote" Office, 10 to 5 daily, 10 to 12 Saturdays.

**LARGE SIZE COOKING STOVE;** twin steel ovens, enamelled throughout, 6 top burners, and grill; by Gill, of London; price £7 10s.

**PAIR SOROSIS TAN LACE BOOTS,** size 4½; 9s. 6d., cost 18s.

**LIBERTY ART PEWTER TEA and COFFEE SET,** with tray; £5 15s., or would be sold separately. **VASES** to match, 25s. each, or £2 2s. the pair.—Mrs. S., c/o "THE VOTE" Office.

**BLACK SPANISH LACE SCARF;** very cheap.

**NAVY SERGE COSTUME,** full skirt, short sacque coat, double-breasted; good condition; very cheap, 8s. 6d.

**PAIR LADY'S LACE BOOTS;** cloth tops, patent golosh, Louis heels; cost 29s. 6d.; 15s.

**INDIAN DELHI-CARVED SOLID IVORY BULLOCK-CART,** with drivers and attendants; 12in. long, 7in. high; exquisite and perfect; £15 or offers.

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**NAVY BLUE COSTUME;** worn once; large size; £2 15s.

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**NAVY BLUE SERGE COSTUME DRESS LENGTH;** 7s. 11d. yard.

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**BLUE and WHITE STRIPED SILK SCARF;** 26in. wide, 2½ yards long; new, 8s. 6d.

**NEW WHITE CREPE DE CHINE DRESS;** 29s. 6d.

**QUEEN ANNE PATTERN PLATED TEA and COFFEE SERVICE;** £2 2s.

**BLUE SERGE COSTUME;** large size; Blue Striped Chiffon Blouse over gold net; 25s.

**USEFUL Hair-stuffed COUCH;** 47s. 6d.

**MOLE-COLOURED GABARDINE,** 7 yards; 7s. 6d. yard; would be cut.

## FOR SALE—cont.

**FOR SALE, GEYSER,** lin. "No. 2 Rapid," with locking gear, by Righton; in first-rate condition; £5. Also some **ELECTRIC FITTINGS,** including one 3-light pendant, small hall pendant, and several glass shades, etc.—Apply, H. L. Stow, 55, Cawley-road, South Hackney, E. 9.

**GREY VELOUR VELVETEEN,** 7½ yards; 14s. 6d.

**BLUE SILK DAY DRESS;** £4 4s. Mourning.

**GREY SATIN DAY DRESS;** £5 5s.; through mourning.

**LARGE SIZE CREAM LACE and NET BLOUSE;** 30s.

**A FIRST-CLASS VIOLIN.** Price £16. Seen by appointment only.—Mrs. F., c/o "THE VOTE" Office.

**PINK SATIN and LACE EVENING DRESS.** Full skirt. Excellent condition. Medium size; 30s.—Miss A., c/o "THE VOTE" Office.

**PALE SAXE BLUE OSTRICH FEATHER;** complete hat trimming; very full; 9s. 6d.

**BLACK SILK CREPE** (9 yards); 46in. wide; 9s. 11d. per yard; would be cut.

**NEW, STOCK SIZE WHITE VOILE DRESSES;** entirely hand-worked; tucks and embroidery; ornamental silk buttons.

**CHINE SILK EVENING COAT;** skirt draped at sides, double collar, bodice lined cream satin, dark colouring; condition as new; only 25s.

**NAVY BLUE SERGE COSTUME LENGTH** (5 yards); new; cost 10s. 11d.; now 7s. 11d. per yard.

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## MISCELLANEOUS—cont.

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