

THE VOTE,
Oct. 15th, 1915.
ONE PENNY.

PRESIDENT WILSON—SUFFRAGIST.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, OCT. 15, 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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"THE GENIUS OF VICTORY!"

"Are women out for a fuller life for themselves, or are they out to obtain, through the power of the vote, the one thing that can alone give fuller lives to millions of women?" is a question one sometimes asks oneself as one sees the eager suffragist of yesterday caught in the glamour and equally eager in the new Cause of to-day.

Indeed, as suffragists drop out of the Movement for one reason or another, chiefly through misunderstandings inseparable from the sustained and strenuous fight, I have sometimes asked myself, are the qualities of tenacity and steadfastness, hitherto associated with the British character another of those time honoured traditions that must go by the board?

If not, why do suffragists who know the need of sustained effort allow themselves to be drawn off their own Cause to assist in others, and leap into breaches which less enlightened women are capable of filling and anxious and eager to fill?

Why does the suffragist of to-day, with her larger understanding and ripe experience, insist on repeating history and pulling down her standard?

A greater opportunity to point out to the people the direct relations existing between politics and their effect upon women, has never existed, than the present European war affords. Why, then, do suffragists neglect to teach the lesson at the psychic moment? If every woman alive who has joined the Movement since 1867 had remained steadfast in it, had freed herself from Party shackles, worked for it and gone forward, is it conceivable that we should still be political outlaws?

We can conceive that the war afforded certain leaders an opportunity to change their tactics, get back to "respectable" suffragism; a change of tactics is very often necessary in warfare, and that is their affair. But why abandon propaganda at such an opportunity, and for suffragists who were under no obligation to change their tactics it would seem almost frivolous to take down their standard

and dance to the tune of the *paid* Pipers of Westminster and Fleet-street, who won't *even recognise them!* I asked a Norwegian woman the other day why it was that the women of Norway gained the vote so quickly and quietly; "Was it Ibsen's influence?" I asked.

"No," she answered. "Ibsen certainly influenced public opinion on many things, but he did not gain the vote. When the Norwegians want a thing, they make for it and never leave go until it is obtained."

And there, in a nutshell, lies the genius of Victory!

In 1907 the members of the Militant Society were advised by the leaders to withdraw their subscriptions from all charitable and philanthropic institutions, to send in their resignations to all party and political organisations, and to concentrate unto the death upon the one thing more than any other which would obviate the necessity for charity and rescue, viz., Woman's Suffrage.

Many have done this; Emily Davison did. But many, alas! have failed in steadfastness, and, in firm of purpose, have wandered away into other paths, even the primrose path of dalliance, the fuller life for self.

DIVIDED INTERESTS WIN NO CAUSE!!

That public opinion will be all on the side of the kind and philanthropic suffragists there can be no doubt. But public opinion that was of any value was on the side of the suffragists before the war broke out, and it only awaited a lead from the Premier, Mr. Asquith, who was, instead, trying, in his own words, to "strangle us in a network of judicial niceties." Meanwhile the vote has to be won, and Mr. Asquith or other Cabinet Ministers grappled with sooner or later.

Trained suffragists are the only women who can win the vote, and it therefore behoves all suffragists who are not too much committed to schemes arising out of the war to be laying their plans for

the future, to be ready with their programme, to go straight on in the cause to which they stand so much committed and for which so much has been sacrificed, and above all "never to leave go until it is obtained!"

In looking over some papers the other day I came across an allegory I wrote when a girl. Here it is:

"There is a picture in my mind's eye which haunts me:—

"A huge rock in the midst of a stormy raging sea. A figure is sitting there which we will call Fate. The figure is huge, cruel, gloomy and clothed in black.

"There has been a shipwreck; the sea is full of figures struggling for life; one by one they swim to the rock, some scramble on and are saved, others cling to the rock but sink back exhausted and are seen no more.

"One figure, the one that haunts me and the one

I love, is that of a woman, her long hair wild and tossed, her face seared with suffering; she swims to the rock, but the cruel hand of Fate repulses her; she comes again, clinging with her teeth, her hands, her arms, and she is pushed back again; she comes again and again, and yet again, and yet again is pushed away. And while the other figures creep on to the rock and pass into nothingness, or else are drowned, I always see that woman grappling with Fate and she never dies. Dear woman, how I love you, what strength, what endurance, what suffering, and what a lesson you teach. I don't know who you are, you are my ideal, and were I a painter or a poet I would immortalise you."

Who the central figure of my youthful vision was, I never could decide. I know now.

She was the Spirit of Steadfastness, the Genius of Victory.

MAUD ARNCLIFFE SENNETT.

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

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

Hyde Park Meeting.

Next Sunday there will be a meeting in Hyde Park (near the Marble Arch) the speakers being Mrs. Sproson and Miss Murray; the chair will be taken by Mrs. Whetton at 12 o'clock. We hope to see many Freedom Leaguers at this meeting.

Reception to Delegates.

Sunday afternoon from 3.30 to 5.30 there will be a reception to our Conference delegates at the Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead Road, N.W. Tea will be served on the premises, and we extend a very cordial invitation to all our many friends in London. Omnibuses 24, 27 and 29 pass the door, Euston Road omnibuses pass within 4 minutes.

Wednesday Afternoon Meetings.

Next Wednesday afternoon, we shall have the pleasure of listening to our old friends, Mrs. Sproson and Mr. Cameron Grant, the title of whose address will be "Things Fit and Unfit." We urge our members and friends to rally in force on that occasion to give a very cordial welcome both to Mrs. Sproson and Mr. Grant. The chair will be taken by Miss Nina Boyle at 3.30. The following Wednesday, Mr. Laurence Housman will speak on "What Price Salvation Now!" and on Wednesday, November 3, Mrs. Montefiore will speak on "Women and the Food Supply."

Green, White and Gold Fair.

As announced last week, arrangements for the Fair on November 26-27 are going forward. A special feature is to be made of a stall, provided with comforts for sufferers in the war. Not only wounded soldiers and sailors are to be catered for but their dependants at home if in want, also refugees, nurses, and prisoners of war. We want an unlimited supply of suitable articles, and we appeal to all readers of THE VOTE to send at least one. Mrs. Fisher or Miss Mitchell will be very glad to receive promises of goods for this stall at once. Further particulars next week.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN WORKERS IN CONFERENCE.

IMPRESSIONS OF WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE DELEGATE.

The Conference was held this year at the Central Hall, Westminster, from October 4 to 8, and the subject of its deliberations was "Woman's Share in the Work of Re-construction after the War." The proceedings opened on Monday afternoon with a meeting for girls, at which Mrs. H. B. Irving and Professor Gilbert Murray made speeches that were both wise and witty. They were followed by Miss Thurston, who spoke from first-hand experience on "Red Cross work in Belgium." The large audience was greatly moved by her account of the sufferings and privations endured by the unfortunate Belgians in the early days of the war, and the courage and self-sacrifice of the devoted women who went to their succour. There was also a meeting for club workers.

On Tuesday the real business of the Conference commenced. After the President's opening remarks and the election of officers and executive for the coming year, we had the reports of the secretary and treasurer, and passed two amendments to the constitution. Then we proceeded to discuss and vote on the resolutions, of which fourteen appeared on the agenda. We only got through six in the time at our disposal; some of the most interesting—e.g., those dealing with the control of the liquor traffic, Local Government, Segregation, and two referring to the political disabilities of women—did not come up for discussion. In previous years only three resolutions have been placed on the agenda, but this year for the first time (in accordance with the revised constitution) all the resolutions receiving the requisite support were printed. To make this alteration effective, more time should be devoted to discussing and voting upon the resolutions.

Two resolutions in support of the appointment of women police were passed. I made a short speech in support of the wider of the two, which was moved by Miss Lilian Dawson and seconded by Miss C. Tite in a very clear and well argued speech.

A resolution was proposed by Miss Clementina Black on behalf of the Women's Industrial Council asking for equal payment for men and women employed on piece work. I moved an amendment to this in favour of equal payment, both for time and piece work. Mrs. Froke, of the Women's Pharmacists' Society, seconded, and, to my great gratification, Miss Margaret Ashton supported. The

amendment was carried by a large majority.

Miss Haldane made a very interesting speech in moving a resolution on Poor Law Nursing, which was passed, as was also one in favour of State Registration of Nurses, moved by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick. To my surprise, there was considerable opposition to the latter.

On Wednesday evening a large public meeting was held, and on Thursday the Conference discussed what will be needed after the war in education, industry, legislation, and care of public health.

Some very interesting papers were given, though all the speakers did not take so broad a view of many social problems as we are accustomed to in the Women's Freedom League. For instance, one lady (I think she was speaking about Women Patrols) quoted a soldier as saying "Men are very much what your women make them," which I thought pretty cool from a member of the sex which has called itself the superior for generations. Another lady spoke of the drinking among soldiers' wives as if it were an undisputed fact. She said she feared we would see a repetition of what happened after the Boer war, when "so many men came back to find shattered homes and their wives living with other men." Mrs. Creighton, who was a most gracious and dignified chairman throughout the proceedings, dissented very emphatically from this view, as did Dr. Mary Murdoch. I could not help feeling that there was an air of depression throughout the whole Conference. I never once saw much sign of enthusiasm, although such well-known women as Miss Margaret Ashton, Mrs. Fawcett, Lady Frances Balfour, and, of course, Mrs. Creighton received very cordial greetings on rising to speak.

KATHLEEN S. TANNER.

ORGANISATION FOR THE FUTURE OF LIFE.

At a time when women are being called upon by European Governments to organise and work for the destruction of human life, it is a relief to turn to the record of the organisation and work of women, whose clear-cut object has been ever since the war began, to nourish, sustain and nurture life, and to encircle the world with a live wire of ministering pity and love. The work during the war of the British Dominions' Woman Suffrage Union, a comparatively new organisation (founded in 1913 by Miss Newcomb and Miss Hodge at the instigation of the New Zealand women, and since consolidated by their devoted work) has during its short but eventful life given convincing proof that the true suffragists, the world over, are those who have asked for and obtained, or, who are still asking but have not yet obtained, the right to do their public duty in the State as well as their private duty in the home. Suffragists the world over only needed linking up into a spiritual as well as a material organism in order to set flowing from the remotest parts of the British Dominions to the Motherland of Britain a stream of gifts, of money and of mother-thought from the women of Overseas to the helpless victims of the fury of the most terrible war that men have ever waged.

In immediate response to Miss Newcomb's appeal South Africa sent free of charge 38 great cases filled with the work of Dutch and of English women for the relief of Belgian and of English sufferers. One South African mother sent with her gift the message: "The love that can bridge over 7,000 miles of land and sea." The Australian and New Zealand Governments, where women possess political power, brought free of charge in their own transports the gifts of the New Zealand and Australian women, and of their children, who had been taught to co-operate in the work of mercy.



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A five hundred yard roll of New Zealand made flannel was among the gifts, and this has been made up into shirts for wounded men, and into clothes for Belgian, Serbian and English poor. In the pockets of little garments made by Australian women were placed treasures such as children love—toys, coins and sweets; whilst cheering and sympathetic cards and messages were pinned on to the clothes destined for the poor or wounded. The gift of "lovely layettes for the babies of the Allies" proves, as Miss Newcomb writes in her report, that "the motherhood of the world is speaking. The cry of the women to save the world on behalf of the coming race cannot be silenced."

In the distributing of gifts Miss Hodge and Miss Newcomb have not forgotten the educational value of interesting our own population in the life and purpose of our Overseas fellow-subjects; and this has been done by showing pictures of the places and of the people from whom the gifts came.

"In the reproof of chance lies the true proof of men."

And of women also!

If the suffragist Cause needed one more proof of its absolute integrity, this war has indeed given it. In asking for political suffrage, we have ever asked that the same woman influence which has made the home a synonym for peace, beauty and fragrant, restful happiness shall be allowed to stretch out into the world, and bring with it the same moralising and peace-giving influences. We ask that co-operation shall take the place of competition; that distrust and hatred shall be rooted out by the love that casts out fear. Suffragists throughout the British Dominions have, through the good offices of the B.D.W.S.U., put their hands and seal to this covenant, and their strength and power for future peaceful co-operation has thereby been increased, and will continue to increase.

DORA B. MONTEFIORE.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, October 15th, 1915.

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To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote
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EDITORIAL.

The Editor is responsible for unsigned articles only. Articles, paragraphs or cuttings dealing with matters of interest to women generally will be welcomed. Every effort will be made to return unsuitable MSS. if a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed, but the Editor cannot be responsible in case of loss.

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and at the Bookstalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son.

THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE.

The Women's Freedom League is not represented on the International Alliance of Women Suffrage Societies, and has only the privilege of sending "fraternal" greetings and delegates when the biennial conference of that great federation is held. The National Union of Women Suffrage Societies is the only suffrage body in Great Britain which so far is entitled to National representation at that important international event; and other British societies have no say whatever in determining the rules and obligations by which representation is accorded and by which order is maintained in the international body. It is, nevertheless, recognised by all suffragists that the International Alliance is the most important, and almost the only possible machinery for connecting up the scattered elements of the movement throughout the world; and its organ, "Jus Suffragii," the only authoritative vehicle of International suffrage views and events. And so, to all suffragists of whatever organisation, nationality, or opinion, the welfare and the standing of the Alliance is, or should be, a matter of supreme import. Therefore we need not apologise for devoting time and space to some discussion of the present position of the Alliance, and of its official organ.

The Board of Control of the Alliance, at the outbreak of war, found itself in England for a business (not a public) conference. It is not probable that at that date any idea could have been arrived at concerning the position the movement would occupy during the course of the war. We believe we are right in saying that, neither then nor at any subsequent time, has any pronouncement been made by the Board for the guidance of earnest suffragists, as might have been expected would be made from time to time during the progress of the conflict which threatens to involve the whole civilised world. And yet there never was a time when suffragists, perplexed and torn between the claims that assail them on all sides—claims of patriotism, philanthropy, industry; claims personal but none the less imperative for that; claims rooted in the national longings for revenge for losses or desire for service—so urgently needed the help and inspiration which has not been forthcoming from our central institution.

The organ of the Alliance, whether with or without instructions from the Board we are not in a position to say, has chosen rather to specialise in a new direction than to maintain and consolidate the position already won and which may be seriously jeopardised by the introduction of new and highly contentious opinion. "Jus Suffragii"

has in fact, become the mouthpiece of the promoters of the Hague Conference, at which British women were not present and at which an immense programme, in which Women's Suffrage figured very slightly, was discussed. Instead of maintaining the stability and the unity of the Cause for which alone it exists, "Jus Suffragii" devotes its principal space to articles from the pens of pacifist writers; and a strong protest has been addressed in the form of an open letter to the President, (signed by Mmè. de Witt Schlumberger, president of the French national suffrage society, and a number of other French ladies) and published in the last issue of the international paper.

We would like to make a very clear point on this matter. There are many pacifists in all the suffrage bodies, just as there are temperance reformers, social workers, people who wish to break up the marriage laws, others who desire to strengthen the power of the churches, imperialists, socialists; and in fact, all shades of opinion. There is room for us all; respect and tolerance for all; welcome for all, so long as we are suffragists. Our organisations do not exist to support temperance, socialism, imperialism, free-love, or religion; they are formed to obtain votes for women, not anything else. We have no more concern in the suffrage movement, except as individual persons, with peace propagandum than we have with the spread of Esperanto. We have with each other the most complete freedom of opinion in all matters, and every suffrage speaker has found herself at liberty to use the arguments most near her heart when setting forth the good results that she believes will accrue from the enfranchisement of women. But it has been officially observed, so far, that to link up the Movement to other Causes, saving only those matters that mean justice and equality before the law for women, is to lay suffragism open to the danger of being exploited for the benefit of other Causes. There is a marked tendency of late to secure the support of suffragists for a number of mushroom growths, on account of the well-known energy and organising ability so constantly displayed in our public work; and we cannot too carefully guard against this insidious danger. It is distressing to find that the organ of the Alliance has fallen into the snare and allowed itself to be led away on a false scent.

The Women's Freedom League, a militant society which has expressed and acted upon the belief that peace may be bought too dear, that life is not the last value, that there are things worth fighting for, stands to-day as the one of the great national societies (i.e., with established branches throughout the kingdom) which did not find it necessary at the outset of war to lower its standard and concede to the anti-suffragists the ground that women's suffrage was a principle which it was right to thrust aside in any great crisis. We therefore examine with caution the dogma that it is woman's true mission to abolish war. We prefer to say, with a writer in the Church League magazine, that it is the business of civilised humanity, not of women only, to abolish not only war, but other evil things. We will also look with some concern on the ambitious programme of international and diplomatic reforms outlined by the Hague Conference on which "Jus Suffragii" lays such stress. We will remember how our League refuses to ask for more legislation—even reform legislation—until women can help to control and administer it. We remember the cynical results of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1912. We remember that our own Prime Minister will not receive deputations from British women, and ask ourselves why other Chancellories should show us more consideration. We remember that without

votes, we have not been able to get so slight a reform as a law raising the age of protection for girls in any of the great western countries; and we marvel that, seeing we have no national power, standing, or machinery of action, there should be suffragists who can imagine that they can nevertheless be an international power, and set in motion reforms, vaster and more quixotic than any body of men with franchise, representatives and Cabinet ministers in their pockets, would venture to attack at the present moment. And above all we deplore the introduction of alien aims and interests, at a time when, from circumstances over which we have no control, the Suffrage Movement has suffered severely and is in need of all the concentrated loyalty of all its organisations and institutions.

C. NINA BOYLE.

Our National Service Organisation. THE REVIVAL OF FAITH AND HOPE.

Dr. Jacks, Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, in an interesting and inspiring article in the *Daily Chronicle* for October 11, contrasts vividly the unrest that prevailed among us as a nation in the years that preceded the war, with the calm that rests upon us now that we are engaged in the greatest struggle in the world's history. The moral chaos, which existed two years ago, has been replaced by a strong faith in a noble cause, a unity of aim and of purpose such as has not actuated our people since the days of Elizabeth. Faith has lighted for us the lamp of hope, and the slothful mind has been stimulated to construct day dreams not of the might-have-beens but of the may-bes. A woman who, up to the age of 65, had been a cook, awoke the other day to the consciousness that there were other and more interesting occupations, and felt moreover that she was capable of engaging herself to work in one of them. What a wholesome change this is from to the clinging up to extreme old age to one kind of work which has ceased to be in any sense an inspiration, and has become a mere mechanical grind.

The opportunity, too, has been given to women to turn this energy and vitality to account; many new occupations have been opened out to them by the departure of men to the Front. Some of these I have mentioned recently. I spoke of the old have been advertising for women workers. It is to English word "hlaedig," and its meaning "loaf-kneader," and regretted that we had now a "baker man" in our Pat-a-cake rhyme, instead of the "baxter" of an earlier time. Quite lately bakers be hoped many women will avail themselves of this offer and thus come into their own again.

As the Queen of Hearts, so will the women of to-day make the tarts, and I feel sure that they will produce quite as delectable confectionery and be as economical of the sugar (the Queen of Hearts used honey) in these hard times.

Another industry that was essentially a woman's in the days of our ancestors was that connected with the dairy, and the fresh complexion of the milkmaid, due to the immunity from the then almost universal scourge of smallpox, caused her to be regarded as a beauty among her disfigured sisters. "Where are you going to, my pretty maid?" the popular nursery rhyme, is a tribute to her charms. After all, milking is not a very strenuous occupation; I tried milking a goat the other day and found

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it was not a very hard task; it is almost as easy as it was to record my vote in Sydney. Let us hope the dairy will soon be woman's domain again. The Aylesbury Dairy has made a beginning by employing women as milk carriers. There are twenty of these now, big, sturdy girls, two together march along with their milk carts; their uniform is quite smart, long cream coloured coats, with scarlet collars and cuffs. This conservative old land is getting accustomed to novelties in war time, and all of us are learning that woman's part in time of crisis is to work and not to weep, for in work lies the only panacea for an aching heart.

MARGARET HODGE.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Apply or write to National Service Organisation, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

HEATH.—The baskets have to be made exactly to measure.

MABEL.—Temporary Christmas work.

J.S.R.—It is difficult to secure a post for you in London while you are in the country. Employers naturally want a personal interview before engaging anyone.

KING.—The works are not opening for another month.

DISTRICT.—Only voluntary work is done by the Women's Ambulance Reserve.

THISTLE.—Very glad to hear you are getting on so well.

What are YOU doing for the
Green, White and Gold Fair ?



FRIDAY,
OCT. 15,
1915

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

Woman Suffrage National Aid Corps.

WORK AT NINE ELMS.

Mrs. Tippett gratefully acknowledges the following gifts for Nine Elms Restaurant and Guest House:—Mrs. Young, clothing for the Guest House; Overseas Dominions, per Miss Newcomb, a sack of clothing; Miss Riggall, flowers and washing-up cloths; Mrs. Delbanco, washing-up mop and lamp-glass cleaner; Fruit and vegetables from the Harvest Festival at Wetherden (Suffolk); Miss M. Holmes, 10s. She will be grateful for gifts of jam, scrubbing brushes, brooms, pudding cloths, large pudding basins, large baking tins, apples; home-made jam is specially urgent; and any gifts of groceries are always welcome.

A deserving case.—Who will save the possible broken legs and necks of the helpers at Nine Elms? The step-ladder (borrowed) has lost steps, hinges, and is generally decayed. Our windows must be cleaned, and we need a step-ladder. Who will give us 10s. towards a new one?

OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

The first Wednesday in October saw the resumption of our weekly gatherings; many friends found their way to the Vestry Hall, St. George's, Hart Street to welcome Mrs. Despard and Miss Nina Bayle, who were the speakers and Miss Eunice Murray, who presided. Our President gave a stirring address pointing out that in these dark days of war, things might have been much worse if it had not been for the watchfulness of the Women's Freedom League. Miss Boyle, dealing with the present situation, said that the woman who does not want the power of the vote is like the woman who will not use improvements in her house. Miss Murray's telling remarks from the chair were much enjoyed and her appeal for funds to send W.F.L.

cigarettes and THE VOTE to men at the front met with a good response.

THE DESPARD ARMS.

Business continues to increase; applications for accommodation for large and small tea parties have been received. Grateful thanks are given for the following welcome help: Miss Gertrude Tait, bedroom furniture on loan; Mr. Winter, large filing cabinet; Miss Eunice Murray, £3; Miss Boyle, 10s. and linen aprons for helpers.

BROCKWELL PARK.

Another good meeting was held in Brockwell Park on Sunday afternoon, when Miss Eunice Murray kindly spoke for us again. Mrs. Watson took the chair, and both speakers were listened to with interest and attention by a very large audience. Miss Murray explained the policy of the Women's Freedom League, and appealed to the women present to join the League, and asked the men to support us in our fight for freedom. Many questions were asked, and THE VOTE was sold out.

BOOKS! AN APPEAL.

Will members who have books to spare—fiction or miscellaneous—send them to the secretary of the W.F.L. Lending Library, 144, High Holborn, by whom they will be gladly accepted for the benefit of the growing membership?

VALUABLE HELP.

The Professional Classes War Relief Council has opened a private maternity nursing home of seventeen beds at 13 and 14, Prince's-gate, with a voluntary medical and nursing staff, matrons and sisters excepted. Maintenance charges only are made. Those eligible are the wives of professional men who have been hard hit by the war.

THE EAST LONDON FEDERATION OF SUFFRAGETTES has opened a West Central Branch at 8, Hart-street, Bloomsbury. Miss Forbes-Robertson, the hon. treasurer, is in charge, and will be glad to furnish particulars to all interested.

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