

THE VOTE,
NOVEMBER 10, 1916.
ONE PENNY.

"OUR DAILY BREAD."

MARGARET HODGE.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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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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OUR OPEN COLUMN. MISS BOYLE'S FAREWELL PARTY.	FAIRY TALES AND FOLK SONGS.	BRANCH NOTES, &c.	

Why British Women Need the Vote NOW

BECAUSE the Government has called women out of their homes to work for the State, and they must have effective control by means of the Vote over the wages, hours, and conditions of their labour. Men must not be allowed to arrange everything for voteless women as the Trades Union recommendations to Parliament are attempting to do.

BECAUSE Women and children are the first to suffer in health and efficiency by the high prices of food, which men alone control. Women must be able to bring strong pressure to bear by means of the Vote on a masculine Parliament, which makes laws and allows injustices and evil conditions to grow.

THEREFORE Women demand the Vote
NOW

WHERE WOMEN VOTE

THROUGHOUT AUSTRALASIA the conditions of women's labour have been greatly improved. Their wages may not fall below a certain minimum; their hours of work may not exceed a certain maximum. Women receive 10/- a week Old Age Pension at 60. Men and women in Government service have equal pay for equal work.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Friday, November 10.—CROYDON SEWING PARTY, 9, Morland-avenue, 3-5 p.m.
 Saturday, November 11.—CROYDON WHIST DRIVE, 31, Fairfield-road (by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Cox), 5.15 p.m.
 Sunday, November 12.—HYDE PARK. Miss Beatrice Kent on "Self-government for Nurses." Chair: Miss Nina Boyle. 3 p.m.
 Wednesday, November 15.—"AT HOME," Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: The Rev. Hugh Chapman, "Woman the Liberator," and Mrs. Mustard, "Population and Power." Chair: Mrs. Despard. Tea 4.30 (6d.).
 Friday, November 17.—PUBLIC MEETING at 32a, The Arcade, High-street, Croydon. Speaker: Miss Lakeman.
 Saturday, November 18.—LONDON BRANCHES COUNCIL, Jumble Sale, Tolmer's-square Institute, Drummond-street, Hampstead-road, N.W., 3 p.m.
 Wednesday, November 22.—"AT HOME," Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Mr. Cameron Grant, on "The Fleishpots of Egypt," and Mrs. Mustard, "Women's Patriotic Work." Chair: Mrs. Cobden Sanderson. Tea 4.30 (6d.).
 Friday and Saturday, November 24 and 25.—Green, White and Gold Fair, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m.—9.30 p.m. Admission 1s. 2d. After 5 p.m. 7d. (including tax).
 Wednesday, November 29.—"AT HOME," Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Miss Zabelle Boyajian, "Women of the Near East," and Mrs. Despard. Chair: Miss F. A. Underwood. Admission Free. Tea, 4.30 (6d.).
 Wednesday, December 6.—"AT HOME," Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Miss Esther Roper, "Women's Liberty in the Economic World," and Mrs. Mustard, "Every Fit Woman Needed." CLAPHAM BRANCH PUBLIC MEETING, Clapham Public Hall (Lower Hall). Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Mr. Laurence Housman. Chairman: Mrs. Samuel.
 Friday, December 8.—Lecture by Mrs. Despard on "East and West," to be followed by Questions and Discussion. Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Chair: Mrs. Corner, 7 p.m. Tickets, 1s. and 6d.
 THE MINERVA CAFÉ, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Open every day except Sunday to men and women. Vegetarian lunches from 12 to 2 p.m.; teas from 3 to 6 p.m. Smoking-room. The large room is available for meetings. Apply to Mrs. Fisher.
 WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W. 1d. and 4d. meals, weekdays at noon. Children's Guest House and Milk Depot for Nursing Mothers
 THE DESPARD ARMS, 123, Hampstead Road, N.W. (five minutes' walk from Maple's). Open to all for refreshments (dinners and suppers from 6d.) and recreation. Weekdays, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sundays, 4 to 10 p.m. Bedrooms for women at work. Social evenings.

PROVINCES.

Monday, November 13.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Public Meeting, Suffrage Club, 231A, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge on "In Lands where British Women Vote." Chair: Mrs. Schofield Coates. Music, refreshments, collection. PORTSMOUTH. Public Meeting, Suffrage Rooms, 2, Kent-road, 3.15 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Tanner. Chair: Mrs. Whetton.
 Tuesday, November 14.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Sewing Party, Suffrage Club, 3 p.m.
 Thursday, November 16.—IPSWICH. Sewing Meeting, 22, Queen-street, 3 p.m.
 Friday, November 17.—READING. Whist Drive, Lodge Room, Palmer Hall, 7.30 p.m. Tickets 6d. each from Mrs. Penrose, 100, Hamilton-road.
 Monday, November 20.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Business Meeting, Suffrage Club.
 Monday, November 27.—MIDDLESBROUGH. "At Home," Suffrage Club, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Aldridge (other engagements permitting) on "Serbia."
 SCOTLAND.
 Saturday, November 18.—EDINBURGH. Open-Air Meeting, Hope-street, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Eunice Murray.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

SHALL WE GET THE VOTE NOW?

Suffragists have long urged upon the Government the need for courage and commonsense in dealing with the question of votes for women; now the chorus sounding in the Government's ears after the fiasco of last week with regard to votes for fighting men is: "A Bold Step Wanted." The advice is urgently needed for nothing in the debate is so striking as the absence of boldness and commonsense.

Mr. Speaker, in those dim and distant days before the war, ruled women out of a Parliamentary Reform Bill; now the men are the sufferers; his action has shown the weakness of makeshifts, and is compelling the Government to face the question again. It has tossed the ball backwards and forwards so many times that women may well wonder if ever it will be able to hold it. The Speaker himself has proved vacillating in his rulings. Before the recess he informed the House of Commons that votes for fighting men and for women could be included in the Special Register Bill by means of an instruction to the House; now he has reconsidered his decision and says: Impossible. The airy manner in which he swept away amendment after amendment and then gaily vacated the chair moved the House to mirth. Mr. Whitley, chairman of committee, finished off a few remaining items, declaring only the proposal to substitute a three-months' residence qualification for six or twelve to be in order. This point aroused no enthusiasm, and because fighting men were out of it no one wanted to go on with the discussion. Yet it took about two hours to say so, and for the Prime Minister to climb down with grace and ability and end by falling on the neck of Sir Edward Carson.

How Not To Do It.

As an instance of how men manage the affairs of the nation the debate is illuminating; it would be comic if it were not tragic, and drives home the statement of an anti-suffragist member of the House that "we should be all the better for the presence of some women as members, and their practical help in making laws." Women certainly would have done better than to bring about such a fiasco, such a waste of time, effort, words, in addition to the nation's money in the printing of pages of useless amendments in the Order Papers of the House.

No Mention of Women.

There was no mention of votes for women throughout the afternoon except Sir Edward Carson's cynical statement that very little attention would be paid to the report of the Electoral Reform Conference, and his contemptuous protest against referring the constitution of the country to a committee, not appointed by the House of Commons, but which would tell the House how to vote on votes for women and fighting men. It is significant that it was the Prime Minister who kept harping on the case of munition workers, no doubt with an eye to the future, to be able to point to his determination to do justice to fighters at home in view of the Tory championship of fighters abroad. He must not be allowed to forget that women are munition workers, that they have been acclaimed as "winners of the war," and that if the men workers receive the vote as a reward for service women must be included.

Where is the Voteless Man's Enthusiasm?

In spite of the time and energy given to the question of votes for soldiers and sailors there is no sign of enthusiasm among the fighting men themselves. The few sparsely attended meetings have been remarkable for the almost complete absence of the men in khaki. Who has heard voteless men protesting against their unenfranchised conditions? Have they demonstrated in processions or in great meet-

THEY SUPPORT US!

ings in Hyde Park? No! Votes for fighting men is simply a political move by politicians who desire to stand well with Jack and Tommy, and pose as patriots to the people at home.

The picture as the curtain rang down at Westminster on November 1 of the Prime Minister and Sir Edward Carson going off together to see how votes for fighting men could be managed, and Sir John Simon feeling left out in the cold is not particularly inspiring.

The House of Lords discussed in academic fashion last Tuesday Lord Salisbury's Bill for enfranchising fighting men and giving opportunity for voting in the trenches. No mention was made of women; their existence was only indicated by Lord Lansdowne's oblique reference to "many other applicants" if the franchise gates were opened wide. Injustice to fighting men loomed large; there was no champion demanding justice to women. We have no objection to enfranchising fighting men; but in any case their disfranchisement is only temporary. Within a few months of their return most of them will automatically reach the voters' lists. Women have not the right to get there under any conditions.

Join the Women's Freedom League in the Big Push!

The moral for women is that they must rely on their own work to keep votes for women to the front; they will only get what they are prepared to wrest from politicians. Last week's debate should mean great accession of strength to the suffrage societies. No woman can afford to stand outside; not only her interests but the interests of the nation are at stake, for no true national progress will be made if the service and gifts of women are cast aside as negligible.

From all over the country pressure must be brought to bear on the Electoral Reform Conference, on Members of Parliament, and on the Government that now is the time for a bold step, and that justice to voteless women can no longer be postponed.

Let every reader of THE VOTE who is not already a member of the Women's Freedom League come and join us in the Big Push now. The barbed wire of prejudice and blindness must be battered down. Delays are dangerous.

PRESS COMMENTS.

The *New Statesman* this week, advocating "adult or citizenship suffrage" as the "only way out of the suffrage tangle," says of the justice of the women's claim, recognised by Mr. Asquith as a claim of servants of the State:—

But this is no new claim, it is the oldest and primal claim upon which the case for woman's suffrage has always rested—the claim that woman is a citizen of the State and has therefore a right to a voice in the ordering of the State. What is new is not the claim, but the fact that the war, by heightening the public consciousness of citizenship and by showing clearly that women are both able and willing to perform the obligations of citizenship, has made people regard the old claim from a new point of view. It is felt to be impossible, if the vote is to be accorded of right to the man who has shown that he performs the duties of a citizen, to refuse it to the woman who has performed her duties as a citizen.

The *Observer*, writing on "The Basis of the Franchise," says:—

Let every man and woman obtain the vote automatically on attaining the age of five-and-twenty, and every sailor and soldier as soon as he dons the King's uniform. If he is old enough to fight he is old enough to vote. And the right thus allowed ought never to be lost or suspended by the accident of a change of residence or temporary absence from the Realm. We submit this as a simple plan by which the Government of the country would be really and truly "broad-based upon the people's will." We particularly insist on the necessity of including women in the scheme. They have won the right by their devotion and assistance during the years of trouble; their aid will be indispensable in the settlement of the great social and industrial questions which confront the nation in the future.

Electoral Reform Conference.

The People's Representatives and Women's Suffrage.

The Glasgow Centre of the Northern Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage has been in correspondence with Mr. A. MacCullum Scott, Member for Bridgeton, who is a member of the Electoral Reform Conference, with regard to women's suffrage. The first letter, signed by D. Perry, J.P. (ex-Provost), R. Charlton (Councillor, Glasgow Trades Council), Hamilton Brown (Magistrate, Glasgow), R. Ferguson (Hon. Sec. N.M.F., Glasgow), points out that, in view of the universal recognition of the right of women to a political voice in national and imperial affairs, the time has arrived when those who represent public opinion in Parliament should be asked to make their constituents acquainted with their present attitude towards the question. They request a statement from Mr. Scott. Their representative, however, replies that since the beginning of the war he has so far tried to avoid all questions of domestic politics of a controversial character. A second letter expresses the dissatisfaction of the Northern men who are electors in the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow and asks for a reply to the following questions:—Are you in favour of the principle of equality of voting rights for men and women? and Will you work and vote for the principle?

Mr. Scott replies as follows: "I believe that the electors of Bridgeton are chiefly concerned with winning the war, and I see no reason at present to alter my decision to avoid the discussion of controversial political questions."

The Northern men declare that when people are taxed for the privilege of representation it is peculiarly galling to be treated in this manner.

SUPPORT YOUR LEAGUE AND WIN THE VOTE.

Some months ago the Women's Freedom League decided to raise a sum of 50,000 shillings.

We already have 14,965. Franchise reform is in the air; it is the work of the League, as the Suffrage Society which has continued active suffrage work from the first day of the war, to insist that women, the majority of the nation and the mothers of the race, shall be enfranchised at once.

Please enable us to do this. A great deal of money is necessary, and we must complete our 50,000 shillings to carry us to victory.

There are 35,035 shillings still needed, and needed at once, and the help of all our members and friends will be most gratefully received and acknowledged. E. KNIGHT.

Best thanks to Miss Eunice Murray for £9 collected in a Scotch drawing-room, to Clapham Branch for £1 10s., to Lady Rhondda per Montgomery Boroughs Branch for one guinea, to Mrs. Kate Thomson and Mrs. Sargent Florence, who each sent 100 shillings, to Mrs. Walter Carey for £2, to Mrs. Murray for £1, to Mrs. Dawson Clark for 11s., to Mrs. Mallaloe for 8s., to Miss Husband for 5s. from Scotland and Mrs. McCracken for the same sum from Ireland, and to Miss Bell, Miss Payne and Miss Rumsey for 1s. each.

SINCE OUR ADVERTISEMENT PAGE (8) WAS SET UP, the Cabinet Bath, Green Cloth Coat, and Squirrel Muff and Boa have been sold; but we have pretty new light blouses, blouse lengths, etc., which may be seen at the hours specified.

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 8.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, November 10th 1916.

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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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THE CLOVEN HOOF.

There are those—we wish there were more of them—who are penetrated with an insatiable desire to get at the roots of things. The bald answers that are given by heads of Departments in the House of Commons, when questions are asked, act upon them like gall and wormwood. Further information, more light, is their demand. When something is wrong they maintain with fatiguing persistency that someone is responsible for the error or the crime and must be made to answer for his folly. Sometimes it is not an individual, nor even a group of individuals: it is a tendency, a motive, a massed emotion, innocent and praiseworthy to the untutored eye that has to be unmasked. Satan has not given up his old trick of wearing angel's clothing, and a keen instinct is required to detect the cloven hoof under the shining raiment.

Never was that keenness of insight more needed than it is to-day. If we are to follow a certain section of the Press, we shall be persuaded that war is a cult, the faithful observance of which is ennobling our nation: that, until they are killed or mutilated, soldiers and sailors are little gods, whom it is a privilege and honour to serve: that fathers and mothers have rights over their sons and should offer them up freely on the altar of the country: that women, because they can serve the military in nursing, cooking, provision of necessities, and munition-making have risen out of their low estate, not indeed to be the equals of these heroic beings, but to be almost worthy of them, are splendid: that certain members of the Government are always wrong, and that the better part of wisdom for the whole nation is to turn their attention as, we are told, our enemies have done, to the swiftest and most diabolic methods of destruction. In the meantime, for the sake of the endangered country, the right attitude for the nation is to be submissive, to give uncomplainingly, to pay high prices for everything, to agree tamely to such restrictions on individual liberty as the war authorities choose to impose and to believe that when the war is over, conscription, high prices, industrial oppression, and other necessary evils will pass away and everything will be normal again.

Let us try to see what all this means. It sounds reasonable enough. Are we women, with chastened minds, to accept the situation and make the best of it, or shall we dare to rend the veil of illusion and look behind?

If, looking back to the days before the war, we try to remember our own battle and what drew us into it we shall see that the forces against which we threw ourselves then were actually of the same character as these which are responsible for the war

horrors of to-day. They hark from the spirit of domination. In that little classic, John Stuart Mill's "Subjection of Women," the evolution of that fatal force is traced with relentless power. It is nurtured at home; and, in the days when that treatise was written, the man at home, husband and father, had nothing but his own possible good will to check him. Wife and children were his chattels. This force went out strengthened to do its inhuman work. Then it found trade competition; out of this grew national and international unrest, and, finally, the clash of arms and the wanton destruction of what to women is so inexpressibly dear—the human life that they have borne and reared.

This is how it stands, and we know it, and they bid us be patient. The state of things that has been, we are told, will never be again. Deeds, we answer, speak more loudly than words. Let us have but one evidence of sincere effort on the part of male politicians to accede to our demands, and we may be able to believe that the spirit of domination which has wrought such desperate mischief, is passing away. As it is, we cannot but feel that the foot is still upon our neck.

What is happening? Women, as all the world knows, have, at the demand of their country, poured into all manner of unaccustomed industries. For their alacrity, skill, and cheerful endurance of hardship, they have been praised and befattered. The reckoning-time has come, or seems to be at hand, and men are busy devising after-war schemes whereby, with certain differences, Trade Unions' laws and regulations, broken through emergency, may be re-enacted. One of the most important matters to be discussed is woman's position in the new industry. Yet no women are consulted; it is to be settled by men. What does that mean? The cloven hoof not even skilfully disguised.

The recommendations of the Labour Commission cannot be effective until they are brought before the Houses of Parliament. There, too, as yet, women are unrepresented. It is true that many notable persons in the House of Commons, including Cabinet Ministers, have acknowledged the justice of their claim, and this is one of the points to be discussed by the Speaker's Conference; another is the rights of fighting men. An effort is being made to give votes to soldiers and sailors by special resolution of the House of Commons. If this were done, it is highly probable that the women's claim would be shelved until that more convenient season which never seems to arrive. Cloven hoof again.

Exceedingly serious is the effort that is being made to introduce new and drastic legislation on a question of more than vital importance to women, but without reference to them—venereal disease. That a few women, said to be leaders—a word the meaning of which is often misinterpreted—should have signed a memorial in favour of such legislation is no evidence of women's desires. Give British women the power possessed by their sisters in Australia, New Zealand, part of Canada, and elsewhere, and the nation will know how they feel on a matter that concerns their health, sanity, and honour.

Finally, let us keep our eyes open, so as to be ready for action when the moment for action comes. The more deeply we consider the present position, the bigness of the issues that confront us, and the imminent danger to our nation of taking the false step that will lead us away from enduring peace without and abiding harmony within, the more determined should we be not to slacken in our efforts to establish our womanhood on a firm basis.

"In vain is the net laid in the sight of any bird."
We have seen.

C. DESPARD.

"OUR DAILY BREAD."

[This week the price of bread in London has gone up to 10½d. per 4lb. loaf and is expected to go higher.—*Daily papers.*]

"Half a loaf is better than no bread." There is no more pathetic saying in our language than this, implying as it does a resignation to evil conditions only from a fear of creating worse ones. While we feel the pathos we are up in arms against the helplessness of a plea that might come from an enslaved people—but not, surely, from those who are taught to shout with fervour that they never will be slaves. It is one of the many proofs that the "fat," complacent poet Thomson, when he penned these defiant words, had no knowledge of the poor in the nation to which he belonged, for in his day there were slaves in every form of work, in every department of life, and that same slavery has continued down to our own day, in spite of our pompous and ostentatious acts of emancipation and our officious and condescending advice to other countries to respect the freedom of their peoples.

The worst form of slavery is the servitude of the mind, and the sweated wage-earner, who has not the courage to protest against his condition and yet boasts of his freedom is in a thralldom more complete than were the negroes in the plantations or the rowers in the Roman galleys. In the latter cases the men fretted against their condition, and pined to alter it. They could dream of possible emancipation and its attendant benefits. The wage-slave of to-day boasts that he is in the land of the free, and does not realise that the worst feature of his condition is not his poverty, nor his continuous toil, but his servile mind. He laughs even while he rattles his chains. "Half a loaf" means the under nourishment of the rising generation, and the consequent weakening of the stamina of this free and mighty nation. Yet protests against the dearness of bread are few and faint, and resignation to the inevitable is the almost universal attitude of the sufferers.

At the close of the 18th century, Louis XV., the worst king of a bad dynasty, gambled with his nobles in the people's food, and formed what was known among the starving peasantry as the Famine Pact. This king is said to have lived under the shadow of a great fear of death, and when, on one of his hunting expeditions, he saw some peasants carrying a corpse in a roughly-made coffin, he asked them how the man had died. "Hunger, your Majesty," was the reply, and he was comforted. Kings do not die of hunger. He persisted in his "Famine Pact," and the French Revolution avenged the starving peasant, for his great grandson perished of want in a prison of the Republic. Why is no protest raised throughout the British Isles against the continually increasing price of the chief necessary of life? Do we not know, all of us, that bread is the only food of a large number of our population? A bed-ridden woman, over 70, who struggles along upon a tiny pension for herself and her blind daughter, said: "If prices continue to go up, we can but starve, and we have nearly starved so often; we know it is not so bad after the first two days." Yet we must all of us have read something of the desperation of the "Hungry Forties," when bread riots were frequent in all our great cities, and the song of the rioters penetrated to the ears of those in power.

"What is bad government, thou slave, whom robbers represent?
What is bad government, thou knave, who lovest bad government?
It is the deadly will that takes what labour ought to keep;
It is the deadly power that makes bread dear and labour cheap."

We must in some way cheapen the food of the poor,

and, if representations were made to the Government by the great mass of the people, this could be done. Let the well-to-do pay more if necessary, let the food profiteers and all war profiteers be heavily taxed. Since the Government has taken over the wheat supply, they could surely see that poor neighbourhoods obtained cheap bread, if the sale were thus subsidised by the rich. If we had a conscription of wealth as well as a conscription of human lives, the starving of one section of the community would be impossible, while the rest were in the enjoyment of plenty.

"Give us this day our daily bread." How many of us realise that to a large proportion of our people this petition is the only one with any real meaning in the prayer that Christ has taught us, because to multitudes in our great cities starvation is such an ever pressing danger, such an ever threatening doom? Let us help those who cannot help themselves, because through ages of fancied freedom and real servitude they can imagine no alternative but submission and resignation. MARGARET HODGE.

To Help "The Vote."

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To Readers of "The Vote."

DEAR READERS,—Some time ago I appealed for £500 to help THE VOTE. We have received £381 6s. 10d., acknowledged to-day. In view of the present time of crisis, which we hope will lead to victory, will you make up the £500 to enable us to keep going our Women's Freedom League paper which, week by week since the beginning of the war, has steadfastly kept the Suffrage Flag flying? Do not lose the honour of sharing our victory! C. DESPARD.

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* * Letters intended for publication must be written on one side of the paper only, and authenticated by the name and address of the writer. It must be clearly understood that we do not necessarily identify ourselves with the opinions expressed.

WANTED: A BIG CAMPAIGN.

DEAR EDITOR.—In reply to Winifred and Granville Giles's letter, may I say that the Women's Freedom League is in entire agreement with their suggestion that this is the moment for a campaign on a large scale in favour of Votes for Women. We ought to be in all the great industrial centres forming new branches, but the one reason that prevents us is lack of funds. We want new organisers, and for this we require funds. As honorary organising secretary, may I make an appeal through the columns of THE VOTE for money to start one organiser at once. As soon as we have £150 in hand we shall start working up a new district, and when the first £150 is completed we shall ask for a second. We want the Vote; we want it now. Without it women cannot protect themselves in the labour market. Without women to help in the nation's counsels national matters are muddled and left undone. The need for the Vote is urgent. Therefore, in the name of the National Executive Committee of the League, I appeal to our fellow-members to help us to organise an immediate campaign. Send anything from £100 to 1s. for this special fund, and it will be gratefully acknowledged and well expended by Dr. Knight, our treasurer.—Yours sincerely,

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

The Women's Freedom League called an emergency Conference on Friday last to discuss the question of compulsory notification of venereal diseases. The chair was taken by Dr. Knight, and the speakers included Mrs. Despard, Miss Maude Royden, and Miss Boyle.

It was unanimously decided that a manifesto, signed by representatives of women's societies, making clear the views of organised women on this question, should be sent to the Press. This will appear in our next issue.

It was also decided that the President of the Local Government Board and the Home Secretary should be asked to receive joint deputations; and that we should then approach the Chairman of the London County Council and the National Council for Combating Venereal Diseases with a view to a joint deputation waiting upon them.

Miss Gwynneth Chapman, in the course of a long letter, writes:—"I read with renewed hope the protests in THE VOTE against the Government's proposal to introduce compulsory medical examination and treatment of the unfortunate children and girls infected by our soldiers with the most horrible of diseases." She suggests definite action as follows: "Surely, those suffragists who have given such great support in money and service to the Government, and the war will now see that it is a duty to refuse to continue to do so unless we are given an immediate and satisfactory assurance that no legislative or administrative action affecting the interests and personal liberty of women shall be initiated until either women have the franchise, or the war is ended and the emergency legislation is repealed."

MISS BOYLE'S FAREWELL PARTY.

In spite of bad weather a good many members and friends of the Women's Freedom League found their way to the Despard Arms last Saturday evening to the farewell supper-party given to Miss Nina Boyle before her departure with a hospital unit. The supper itself was excellent, and the service at the Despard Arms beyond all praise. In a brief speech Mrs. Despard expressed the sentiment of all present when she said how sorry we

all were to lose Miss Boyle even temporarily, but we looked forward to her return in a month or two's time when we would arrange another and a bigger party. Short speeches of appreciation of Miss Boyle's work were also given by Miss Eva Christy, Miss A. A. Smith and Miss Beatrice Kent, and, in replying, Miss Boyle, after warmly thanking her colleagues and the workers of the Women's Freedom League, promised that when she returned she would have so much to tell us that she would probably never cease talking!

OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

Mrs. Zangwill's address on "Picking up the Pieces," on November 1, at Caxton Hall, went to the heart of everyone who heard it. The long list she gave of the breakages of the war led up to her insistent demand for votes for women as vitally necessary in making good the overwhelming smash. She pointed to the destruction of inanimate things—fields, crops, trees, houses, the homes of the people; of the works of human genius; of economic progress; of political liberties; of moral ideals; of accumulated virtue. Because the present generation of men had not been compelled to fight for their liberties they had let them go easily. "You cannot deny liberty to women and keep it for men." She hoped men who see that the war cannot be carried on without women will also see that peace cannot be carried on without them. No living creature was harmed when women were carrying on war for political liberties; but those who condemned women's militancy glory in the appalling and destructive militancy of men. To-day women are fighting—and dying—that men may live. Women demand the vote as a right, not as a reward; it is the weapon which they need for their fight. Women are always an active service for humanity. Mrs. Mustard gave an interesting account of an address by Dr. Mary Scharlieb on the ravages of venereal diseases; 50,000 of our fighting men are said to be incapacitated by them, and after every war there is always an outbreak in which women suffer. On the question of compulsory notification, Mrs. Mustard insisted that women must first be enfranchised, and urged the need for military officers by example and influence to restrain the men under their command. Miss A. E. Jacob presided, and an interesting discussion took place.

Fairy Tales and Folk Songs.

That all the world loves a story was clearly shown by the entranced interest with which as much of the world as could get into the Bijou Theatre last Sunday afternoon, despite desperate weather, followed Miss K. Raleigh's recital of "Fairy Tales, Old and New." From the moment she began to tell of the Swineherd (Hans Andersen) and his wonderful performances; of the Mill (Richard Leander) which ground old women quite painlessly into young ones on the understanding that all their follies, duly tabulated and signed for, should be committed again at the same time and place; of the Buddha as a hare (Jataka Stories); of "A Whitewashed Uncle" (Kenneth Grahame), to the very last word about the Queen who could not bake gingernuts and the King who could not play a Jew's harp (Richard Leander), the audience listened spell-bound. The wit and wisdom of the stories and the delicate charm of Miss Raleigh's vivid portrayal of variety of character and swift changes of feeling won enthusiastic appreciation. The able co-operation of Miss Anne Squire, who gave, with the special and characteristic skill and grace of a trained musician, French, English and Irish Folk Songs, made the afternoon a delight from beginning to end. When Miss Underwood, in thanking our talented members for the most enjoyable entertainment, intimated that there might be a repetition, her words were almost lost in applause.

London Branches Council.

The London Branches Council held its annual general meeting on November 1. The report presented showed that the Council has done a good year's work in assisting the Branches and in co-operating with headquarters, and it is hoped this will prove an incentive to those branches which have not already affiliated to do so. The following were elected as officers for the year November, 1916-October, 1917:—Chairman, Mrs. Pierotti; hon. treasurer, Mrs. Tritton; hon. organiser, Mrs. Mustard; hon. secretaries, Miss Reeves and Miss Ada Mitchell. The Council has successfully organised drawing-room and open-air meetings; also sewing meetings at Headquarters, and helped the work of the League in many ways. Two discussion meetings are to take place shortly. In June the Council accepted with regret the resignation of Miss Clayton as hon. secretary, as she was leaving London. Miss Ada Mitchell kindly took her place.

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WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

Woman-Power Board.

Replying to Mr. Jacobsen, who asked for a Woman-Power Board to be set up to advise on the national organisation and utilisation of the woman-power in the country, the Prime Minister said that he did not think it necessary to adopt this suggestion. The terms of reference to the Man-Power Board included the utilisation of woman-power, and the Board were taking active steps to carry out this part of their duty. The Central Committee had been at work for some time, and steps were being taken locally throughout the country to promote and organise the employment of women.

The Government's method of dealing with women's services does not inspire confidence. The only way is to further the existing voluntary organisations of women for women.

Railway Women's Bonus.

J. H. Thomas, M.P., speaking at Aberavon on November 5, said he anticipated within a few days the announcement that railway women's claims for a bonus had been fully recognised, and the settlement, he believed, would be retrospective, dating back to the day when the men got their bonus. Associated and National Union of Railways Societies had agreed upon joint proposals, regarding the rises in necessities, to be considered by the companies.

To be effective and just the women's bonus should be the same as the men's.

BRANCH NOTES.

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

The next and last sewing party before the Fair will be held at 9 Morland-avenue, on Friday, November 10, 3 to 5 p.m. By kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Cox a whist drive will be held at 31, Fairfield-road, on Saturday, November 11, at 5.15 p.m. Will every member help to make the "drive" a great success? The secretary would be glad to receive more promises of preserves and other home-made provisions for the provision stall at the Fair. The social for the wives of soldiers and sailors will be held on Thursday afternoons, at the Office, from 3 to 4.30 p.m. The Committee thank Mrs. Eagle and Miss Grover for gifts for the Fair. Will all members who have not contributed please send something, however small, by November 20?

Edinburgh Suffrage Shop, 90, Lothian-road.

An "At Home" was held on Saturday afternoon, when Miss Eunice Murray delivered one of her racy and stimulating addresses dealing with the Registration Bill and other matters. A resolution demanding that no change in the franchise be made which does not include votes for women was passed and sent to the Speaker's Committee. The branch is greatly indebted to Miss Murray for her most interesting speech, and also for so kindly consenting to speak at an open-air meeting on November 18, when members are asked to meet at Hope-street at 3 p.m. Miss Nannie McLaren was in charge of the tea on Saturday afternoon, and expenses were much reduced by the kind contributions of Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Stevens, Miss Tennant and Miss Stirton. The Christmas Sale has been fixed for December 16, and contributions will be gladly received at any time.

Glasgow Suffrage Shop, 212, Bath-street.

The monthly meeting was held at above address on November 2, when there was a keen discussion on the prospects of adult suffrage. Mrs. Wilson, hon. treasurer of our branch, presided, and Miss Shennan, who is always ready to help in anything connected with the League, opened the discussion in an able manner. Miss Eunice Murray and Miss Bunten eloquently set forth their views. Other members took part in the discussion. To make sure that women shall obtain the vote, the Glasgow branch feel they must continue to ask for the enfranchisement of women on the same terms as it is now or may be granted to men.

Middlesbrough. Suffrage Shop, 232a, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

At a public meeting on October 23 the subject for discussion was "Compulsory Service for Women." Mrs. Schofield Coates presided, and said that, in her opinion, attempts would be made to impose compulsory service on the women of this country. Conscription already exists, as women and girls working in munition or controlled establishments cannot leave or change their employment without permission from employers or munition tribunals. The

meeting considered that women should oppose any compulsion imposed by a Government which was not representative of the whole of the nation. Mrs. Coulthard called attention to the fact that men taken for the Army were being replaced by women at a lower wage, and emphasised the necessity of women workers being organised. A resolution was unanimously passed and sent to the Prime Minister calling upon the Government to take measures to ensure equal pay for equal work to men and women. Owing to the storm, the meeting called for October 30 was not held, but Mrs. Morrish kindly promised to give her paper on "The Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases" at a future date. All members should bring friends to hear Miss Margaret Hodge, who lived for thirteen years in Australasia and voted in Australia for five years. Her lecture will be specially interesting, as the women as well as the men of Australia are now voting on the important question of conscription. An important meeting is called by the Middlesbrough and District Women's Council on December 4, at the Wesley Hall, to hear Councillor Margaret Ashton lecture on "Why women should be on Town Councils." Alderman Bruce will preside.

Portsmouth.

A public meeting has been arranged for Monday afternoon, November 13, at the Suffrage Rooms (2, Kent-road), at which Mrs. Tanner (London) will speak on "Woman: Man's Comrade or Competitor?" The chair will be taken promptly at 3.15 by Mrs. Whetton. Members are earnestly requested to come and bring friends—non-suffragists, if possible. Our treasurer, Mrs. Speck, 17, Duncan-road, Southsea, wishes to remind those members who have not paid their annual subscription, that it is now due.

Reading.

A whist drive will take place on November 17 at 7.30 p.m. in the Lodge Room, Palmer Hall. Tickets, 6d. each; refreshments at moderate charges. As the number of tickets is limited, will members please apply early to the branch secretary, 100 Hamilton-road?

Scottish Scattered.

Thanks to the kindness of Mrs. Kennedy, an excellent drawing-room meeting was held in Falkirk. Miss Eunice Murray spoke upon the present situation, and her audience heartily agreed when she said that she did not know whether Mr. Asquith's position to-day in regard to woman suffrage could be better described as dishonest or merely ludicrous. £9 was raised for 50,000 Shilling Fund, and a good collection was also taken for "VOTES," literature, and Women's Freedom League cigarettes for our sailors and soldiers.

Women's Freedom League Settlement, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W.

Very grateful acknowledgments to friends and sympathisers at the Central Telegraph Office for £2 7s., result of a collection made by Miss Milly Alder; W. R. Snow, Esq., £1; Mrs. Geo. Young, children's clothing and shoes; Messrs. Glaxo, a 5s. tin of dried milk; Mrs. Presbury, spoons; Mrs. P. H. Miller, vegetables and flowers; per Mrs. Despard, children's clothing and toys; Miss Holman, fruit for guest children; Mrs. Ashby, books and toys; Miss Riggall, 2s.; Mrs. Delbanco, horsehair for cushions, two bath mats, and 2s. for Boy Scouts (rent of playground). We are hoping the next week or two will bring us in many contributions for our Stall at the Green, Gold and White Fair. Every little helps, and a small gift from each reader would enable the Settlement to pay its way well into the New Year. We are specialising in provisions (tea, coffee, Christmas fruits, crackers, sweets, jams, fruit and nuts, pounds of groceries, butter and cheese, cakes and biscuits), but useful gifts of all kinds will be most welcome. We do the work—won't you help to provide the funds to carry it on?

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 8.

FRIDAY,
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