

# THE VOTE

(THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE).

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ONE PENNY.

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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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## WHAT WE THINK.

### While We Wait.

M. Pichon, speaking of the triple *entente*, is reported to have said that you cannot judge in times of peace of any *entente*, or of the feelings of those apparently favourable to you. What is true of the triple *entente* is true of most political and diplomatic situations. Peace time is the time for fair words which, as we know, butter no parsnips. Our time of peace, or rather of quiescence, may soon be at an end, and then we will know who are our allies and who are not. Last week we published a list of those members who supported the Conciliation Bill in the House, and in previous numbers of THE VOTE we printed the names of candidate M.P.s, most of whom were returned, who mentioned women's suffrage in their election addresses. Of the latter, some were adult suffragists and some disapproved of the Conciliation Bill; but in the coming Parliament we shall have an excellent opportunity of seeing how far promises and protestations made in time of peace carry us when the need for the allies is apparent. From the drafted Parliamentary preamble it is likely that questions of reform and amendments dealing with matters concerning the other House will prolong this Parliamentary business indefinitely. After February 6 we will know where we stand. In spite of criticism from whatever quarter it may come we have before us work to be done, and we will do it in our own way, so that the time of our waiting need not be unnecessarily prolonged. If we are not granted time in an early session we will use such methods as may seem good to us to bring Mr. Asquith and his colleagues to a sense of their duty towards a large portion of the community.

### State Logic.

The Women's Co-operative Guild and the Women's Labour League applied recently to the London County Council asking that they might by means of a deputation directly express to the London County Council the opinions and experience of the mothers of the children on the better organisation of the Medical Inspection of London School Children. These two organisations represent married working women, whose children are or have been attending elementary schools. The Women's Co-operative Guild has 26,000 members

connected with Industrial Co-operative Societies, and the Women's Labour League includes the women members and wives of members of Trade Unions, Trade Councils, Co-operative and Socialist Societies.

The reply sent to them was a refusal on the grounds that "the whole question of the medical treatment of school children was at present under consideration, and the Council did not think that any useful purpose would be served by receiving a joint deputation from the Women's Co-operative Guild and Women's Labour League on the question of School Clinics." Writing to the Press with reference to this refusal Miss Margaret Llewelyn Davies and Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald, the respective secretaries of the two societies, say:—

"Both of our organisations have worked for Medical Inspection and the establishment of School Clinics, as the only means of securing the regular daily treatment needed for so many of the diseases of childhood. This treatment cannot be given in the crowded homes of the workers by mothers who have neither the time, skill, nor appliances needed.

"The attempt to deal with the children through hospitals is found both ineffective and costly. A woman from Woolwich writes: 'The inconvenience of attending London Hospitals is serious. The return railway fare is 1s. 2d., with many hours of long weary waiting, and where children have mothers who go out to work it means another 2s. or more. It also means that in many cases the children are not taken to hospital at all, but are thoroughly neglected. . . .

"The following case shows the difficulties met with when a child had not been medically inspected. A mother was advised by the teacher to ask advice for adenoids. The mother took it to a hospital, and was there refused treatment because the child was at school, and was told to go to her proper hospital. At the second hospital she was told it could not be seen unless she brought a blue card—given as result of medical inspection. After much trouble she got one, and went a third time to the hospital. Then the London County Council sent in a charge form in the usual way. So the actual result of the London Council arrangement with the hospitals is often to make it more difficult to obtain medical treatment and advice, and the advice formerly given free may have to be paid for."

After quoting some further cases where the need for criticism from working mothers was apparent the signatories very pertinently remark:—

"Women are told that they do not need political power because their sphere is the home. Yet here we have an instance of refusal to give attention to their views on a question of which they have first-hand knowledge, and which is of vital importance to them. Is it because so few married working women have votes for the London County Council that 'no useful purpose can be served' by hearing their views on Medical Treatment, while the whole question is under consideration?"

We think the reason suggested is the right one. It is the crux of every question on which women who have special knowledge are silenced and the value of their knowledge is lost to the community, because, lacking representation, they are regarded as unworthy of attention.

### Sex Prejudice.

When we remember the decision recently come to by the Institut de France over the election of women to its ranks we are not surprised at the decision of the General Council of Glasgow University. A resolution was submitted to them to the effect that the word "professor" should be interpreted without distinction of sex, so that any lady duly qualified might be a candidate for any chair in the University. Though the motion had considerable support it was rejected by a majority of two. Here these learned gentlemen who carried their objection had not even the excuse that the ladies they objected to were married teachers. But sex prejudice has no use for reason.

## PROPAGANDA.

### Preparation.

There is no more fruitful time for active propaganda than during the first four months of the year, and on our efficiency and energy now depends the success of the difficult Summer campaign. It is therefore hoped that branch officers are working at high pressure, and that every member will support and help the local executive with the round of public meetings, At Homes, debates, and lectures now being organised.

### King's Speech Meetings.

The most important matter for the moment is the working up of public interest in the meetings to be held on February 6 and the following few days. Every Branch throughout the country is holding one of these meetings, and in London there will be several, of which the principal one will be held at Caxton Hall, at 8 p.m., on February 6, when important matters of policy will be announced.

### Battersea and District Municipal Referendum.

This is progressing very well, and is likely to prove of the utmost interest and value to the Cause. There is a good deal of loose talk and loose thinking as to the popular feeling towards the ballot, and it is desirable to get down to cold facts. Some say that the majority of women want the Vote; others, that women are indifferent. These theories are more or less worthless until they are tested. In Battersea they are being tested, for we are carrying out a careful house-to-house canvass of the women on the Municipal Register. The value of this work is very great, and its educational virtues also for those who participate can scarcely be over-estimated. Not a little of the altruism which has developed among the "idle rich" owes its birth to the slumming campaign of twenty years ago. Using this merely as an illustration, we can claim that in our case, and in a similar way, the by-product of municipal canvassing promises to be a deeper sense of community with the life of our fellow-citizens, and a more insistent feeling of responsibility for the economic and social wrongs. It is not right that one half of the world should be so ignorant of how the other half lives and what the other half feels and thinks, and I am not sure but that it is presumption on the part of anyone to try to legislate or to modify legislation without actual knowledge of conditions as they are. Therefore it is really worth the while of every sincere and earnest Suffragist to help us in this campaign in Battersea, or in others elsewhere. Volunteers are gladly welcomed.

### Sunday Social Meetings at Our Offices.

The view has been expressed that the weekly Members' Meetings should be held on Sunday afternoons, and therefore the first of these will be held, for members of all London Branches, at 1, Robert-street, on February 5, when Mrs. Despard will be present. This, being held on the first Sunday in the month, will be a social meeting, to which members can bring their friends, as will be those on the first Sunday of every following month. On the other Sundays of each month the meetings will be for members only.

### London "At Homes."

Our first "At Home" at Caxton Hall was quite a success, and we are confidently looking forward to a large attendance on Thursday, the 19th inst., when Sir John Cockburn will speak on "Women under the Southern Cross," and Mrs. H. W. Nevinson, L.L.A., on "The New Parliament and Women's Vote." On the following Thursday the speakers will be Mrs. Despard, who will speak on "Woman and the Changing World," and Miss Edmée Manning, on "What Lancashire Thinks To-day."

### National Delegates' Reception.

On Saturday, January 28, the Annual Conference will be held, and following it, on Sunday, the 29th, a public reception will be given at Caxton Hall, at 3 p.m. Last year this was one of the most interesting meetings, and we hope this time also to have a large attendance. Reserved tickets can be had for 1s. each, but admission

will be free. Several delegates will speak on the growth of the movement and the work in the provinces.

B. BORRMANN WELLS.

### Jumble Sale.

We intend to hold a Jumble Sale on Wednesday, January 25, in aid of the funds of the Battersea Centre. Will members and friends make a point of looking out articles for this sale *at once*, and sending them *before* Tuesday, January 24, to Mrs. Sutcliffe, 58, Sister's-avenue, Clapham Common, S.W., or 316, Battersea-park-road? We are urgently in need of every kind of saleable article for this sale.

This week we have had help from Mrs. Sutcliffe (who is indefatigable in her efforts), Mrs. Yaldwin, Mrs. Gatty, Mrs. McCabe, and Miss Munro; and several others have promised to help. But there is work for many more. I shall be glad to hear of helpers for the Jumble Sale on January 25.

Mrs. Despard is holding a meeting on January 24 in the shop for women municipal voters and other interested women. MADGE TURNER, Organiser. Battersea (S.W.), London Propaganda District, 316, Battersea-park-road.

## POLITICAL AND MILITANT.

### Canvass of Municipal Voters.

Mr. Winston Churchill, among others, has cast doubts on the statement that most of the women who would be enfranchised by the Conciliation Bill are working women. In order to provide accurate information on this point, a canvass is being made in Mr. Churchill's own constituency by the three Suffrage Societies jointly. It will be ascertained how many of the municipal voters are wives and widows, and a classification will be made under four heads:—(1) Women of leisure; (2) professional and business women; (3) wage-earning women; (4) working-class housewives. As there are 5,700 women to canvass it is easy to understand that the two requisites are time and money. The Dundee women are giving their time; those interested in the carrying out of a solid piece of work like this canvass should send subscriptions without delay.

### North-Eastern District.

Miss Neilans reports enthusiastic meetings at the branches she has visited. This week she goes to Harrogate, the Potteries, Wolverhampton, and Cheltenham.

EDITH HOW MARTYN.

## THE BRIGHT SIDE OF STREET-SELLING.

This weather does not make street selling altogether a delightful occupation, but I can still recommend any who would like to spend an interesting hour to try it.

For a study of character alone it is well worth doing, and although one almost despairs at times when met by the indifference and apathy of men and women who appear to take no interest in the things that matter, still now and then cheering incidents occur which compensate for all the rest. Many a pleasing chat have I had with those who, perhaps, have never read or even seen THE VOTE before, and never attended one meeting. A paper sold, an invitation given, a pleasant "Au revoir," and then a return to our cry, "THE VOTE, one penny"! Sales may not always be brisk, but as a gentleman said to me after buying one the other day, "You are doing a splendid work, even if you don't sell one all day."

And so I would encourage all to try it for a short time. Also, don't forget to always carry two or three copies of THE VOTE about everywhere you go; an opportunity is sure to arise for selling, and many a customer is lost through our neglecting to be always supplied.—ETHEL FENNINGS, VOTE Organiser.

At the Members' Meeting on Friday last Mrs. Borrmann Wells announced that she had already sent in her resignation, as there is a probability of her going to America. At its meeting on Saturday the National Executive Committee unanimously refused to accept her resignation until the probability of her departure becomes a certainty.

E. H. M.

## THE IDEALS & FUTURE OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

BY C. DESPARD.

There comes a moment in the life of societies, as in that of individuals, when it is wise and well to see where we stand. We started with a certain hope, a certain promise. Neither society nor individual can venture at any specified moment to say that the promise has not been fulfilled, that the existence has not been justified. But it is fair to ask, Does the promise still bind us? Is the hope of its fruition still the guiding star of our activity?

For the society this is still more necessary than for the individual, because of the difference in consciousness. Each separate human being thrust into physical life without, so far, at least, as we now know, any conscious volition of its own, is but dimly conscious of the whence and the whither. A society, on the other hand, is conscious; those who found it, those who join it, have a definite purpose. They set before themselves an aim which they desire to achieve, an ideal of that which is not, but which, as they maintain, may be in front of them. It forms the very reason of their existence. At first, with the lofty enthusiasm of converts, they convince themselves that their object is new, that it will soon be accomplished. With hope deferred comes a measure of discouragement, and some inevitably fall away.

That is a moment when a society should look back and look forward, making certain of itself. I believe that this is necessary to our League—a retrospect, a looking forward, a few plain questions, addressed not to those outside, but to ourselves.

We started with certain definite ideals. These are set out, with perfect clearness, in the name we chose, "Women's Freedom League." We, a little body of much discredited people, desired to reconquer the independence which through untoward circumstances, on the one hand, and our own want of faith on the other, woman had lost. We knew that women, ourselves as well as our sisters, required education in the large life of the nation, and we took democracy for our flag. It has not been easy to bear it aloft, for women trained through long ages to subjection have even to learn to think independently. Moreover, there is a spurious kind of democracy—shall we call it the last infirmity of strong minds?—very difficult to conquer; namely, that certain persons' will and opinion being necessarily right ought to be accepted by the majority of people. I wonder if it has ever occurred to those lofty souls that great issues are wrought out slowly. Let them look back to history! Let them note the easy way in which old annalists told of such things as wars, reforms forced upon unwilling authorities, great cities built and inhabited. All passes like a flash. But when cold chronology faces us, we find that the processes so lightly recorded have moved through hundreds of years.

For my own part, as one who has been closely in touch with League workers, my wonder is not at the slowness but at the rapidity of their development. But, do let it be understood by those who criticise us, we are not perfect yet.

We are democratic I have said. I do not mean by this that we are clever in building up constitutions and in tinkering them after they have been built. Rather, our democracy consists in complete recognition of the truth that everything which concerns the life of the nation—marriage, parenthood, industry, education, housing, sanitation, transit, foreign relations, is our business. It is true we are demanding the "Vote," but this has never narrowed us down to politics merely. Independence, that royal gift which we have lost, we have constantly been setting forward as the goal we must attain if ever we are effectually to serve the world.

And here, again, I venture to say that its progress has been extraordinarily rapid. It is my own personal experience that I can now speak freely in public, as formerly I could not have ventured to speak except in the

presence of a few interested friends who could not misunderstand me.

Another of our ideals is tolerance—not, be it understood, a weak acceptance of the theory and practice of those whose ideals may differ from our own; rather a recognition of the fact that we, no less than they, are subject to error, and that it is better work to strengthen our own foundations than to seek to demolish. At the same time, we are bound in duty and honour to state our own position with clearness and accuracy that leaves nothing in doubt. If thereby we seem to cast criticism upon those who have taken up a different position, we are not to blame.

I have spoken of our ideals; I must give a word to our policy. We are militant, and as, from now a little distance of time, I look back upon our militancy, it is not with regret, it is with the deepest satisfaction, that I remember them—the police-court protests, admirably conceived and carried out; the breaking of the grille, and the ballot-box protest—both of these symbolic in the highest degree—above all, the picketing, in its silence, in its dignity, its militant quality, its passive endurance—these were not only effective, but original. They have truly reflected our ideals.

And now it remains for me to ask whether, or how far, we have followed the ideals which, when this Society was founded, we put before ourselves; whether, in fact, we have justified our existence and deserve to go on. I desire also to forecast the future of our League, or, at least, to tell my fellow-members what I see when I look forward. But as this would take up more space than THE VOTE can spare, I will reserve it for the next issue.

## AT HOME AT CAXTON HALL.

There was a good attendance at the Caxton Hall on Thursday last. Mrs. How Martyn was in the chair, and Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Francis were the speakers. Mrs. Francis spoke on "Race Suicide" (her address will be found on another page). Mrs. How Martyn gave a brief outline of our preparations for the opening of Parliament, and spoke of the encouraging accounts received from all the branches to which members of the N.E.C. had been sent on a special mission.

Mrs. Despard took Edward Carpenter's words, "The mighty world, past, present, and to come, unfolds thee" as a text. Chancing on these words, she looked on them as a symbol. She tried to follow them out. "Our human ancestors," she said, "and those who preceded them in the pageant of life, and those yet to come live in us." Speaking of woman in the present time, she alluded to the results of her usual upbringing, her subtlety, her cringing deference, her love of personal adornment, and her over-self-sacrifice, and in recent times her loyalty, her persistence, her initiative. This strange mixture of qualities would be perplexing if, casting back into the past, one could not find the reason for them. She visualised the woman of the past ranging the woods side by side with her partner, and her subjection gradual and arising out of the long immaturity of the human infant. And the care of this infant may have been the first beginnings of civilisation in the comforts she demanded for him as she realised that the hunter's wild game would not suit him, and so, to give him at all times fruits and the early cereals, the earth near his cave would be brought into subjection.

Speaking of the change in the relationship of human beings to each other, she dealt with the fall from perfection, of which the serpent, the early picture-word for the senses, was the symbol. Of the woman to come, she said the recovery of her royal independence was her objective, and with it the power to bring about the regeneration of the world that was to be. This woman of the future would regard a loveless marriage as worse than prostitution. She would seek out a remedy for every social evil,

## RACE SUICIDE.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MRS. EDWARD FRANCIS, N.E.C., AT CAXTON HALL, THURSDAY, JANUARY 12.



Mrs. Edward Francis.

It is a commonplace on Suffrage platforms to say that the human element in legislation has been forgotten—crowded out by the material and commercial aims which appeal more strongly to the average masculine mind. Women are clamouring for entrance to the legislature because, amongst other reasons, they are weary of being castigated for a condition of things over which they have little or no control. Specially violent abuse is flung at them because it is alleged that they are responsible—their laziness, love of pleasure, &c.—for a recognised factor in modern life—the volitional limitation of the family. This applies, however, only to women of some means and education. The great mass of women less comfortably circumstanced are blamed with equal bitterness because they fail to keep alive the children that, often most unwillingly, they have brought into the world. These two problems, the limitation of the family amongst what we may term “awakened” women and the death-rate of infants amongst their less awakened sisters appear to the outside world as two distinct problems. To Suffragists they present but two sides of one whole and are intimately bound up with the Women’s Suffrage Movement.

A one-sided legislation has done little or nothing to solve or mitigate either problem. Race improvement cannot be effected without the direct co-operation in legislation of mothers—actual and potential and a general raising of the status of their sex.

What are the conditions of things at present? Need they be emphasized? Infanticide is treated as murder, yet we tolerate an appalling death-rate of babies in our workhouses. Our National Church bids a man endow his wife with all his worldly goods—our national legislature refuses her legal right to one penny of his money—housing conditions prevail which make decency, morality, healthy births or nurture absolutely impossible; a masculine Board of Education decides what our girls shall or shall not be taught, and has made such blunders in doing so as will take more than one generation to remedy. Last, but not least, the god of commercial prosperity has laid such burdens on the girls and women of the race as are a standing disgrace to civilised Europe. Low starvation wages with consequent lowered constitutions—cause and effect in direct line—these are responsible for the many signs of degeneracy seen around us.

### Infant Mortality—Its Causes.

At the last Sanitary Congress held in Brighton, 1910, special attention was devoted to infant mortality, a subject which the late Medical Officer of Health for that borough, Dr. Newsholme, has made very much his own. In his report on the subject he brought to notice a fact of great interest to those who believe that the very worst way to set to work to improve the race is to diminish the wage-earning opportunities and capacities of the mothers. He pointed out that the two counties with the highest rate of infant mortality were Glamorgan and Durham. In these two counties the women are not industrially occupied. The wages of the men are comparatively high, but the unpaid drudgery of the home is particularly laborious and the heavy washing and mangling of a miner’s home, coupled with infamous housing conditions, acts with disastrous effect upon the lives of the mothers and their offspring.

At this same Congress it was remarkable what a consensus of opinion there was amongst the women doctors, health officers and sanitary inspectors drawn from all parts of the land that the chief reason for infant mortality was the malnutrition of the mother. Case after case was brought forward showing how all too frequently the very last person considered—and certainly the last to consider herself—was the mother, whether it was a question of food, clothes or recreation.

### Race Suicide.

“Race suicide” is, I believe, the direct outcome of the mental and spiritual starvation permitted and even advocated during the past three or four centuries. It is only within the last fifty years that any real advance has been made on the ideas of the eighteenth century which denied to women the exercise of any other faculties than those deemed necessary for the performance of one function, and one function only. Indelibly stamped in our legal code, in the precepts of the Church, and in current literature may be seen—first, the doubt as to whether woman had a soul or not; second, whether she had a mind or not; in any case, not giving her any training which might develop intellect if she had any; and a whole sea of ink has been used to prove that she was an inferior being and would eternally so remain. Out of this slough a great advance has been made. The problem we know as “race suicide” is, I believe, a part of that advance. It marks an increased sense of responsibility on the part of women and is an outward sign of revolt against the degradation of the highest and holiest of functions. We are passing, I believe, through a transitional period out of which will arise a placing of motherhood on such a pedestal of honour as it has never yet occupied outside the realm of poetry—but this can only be achieved through the emancipation of the mother-sex.

Undoubtedly, though we have already got rather weary of hearing and reading of race suicide, we may as well be prepared to hear and read a great deal more about it in the immediate future.

### The New Census.

This year for the first time an entirely new element is to be introduced into the census paper. For the first time in British census-taking questions are to be asked concerning the number of children born in a family with duration of marriage.

The new questions appear in Cols. 6, 7, 8 and 9, under the general heading, “Particulars as to marriage,” their precise wording being: “State for each married woman entered on this schedule the number of completed years the present marriage has lasted. The questions being: Total children born alive? Children still living? Children who have died?”

This is a direct attempt to ascertain whether, as is so frequently stated, the family decreases with the ascent in the social scale.

Personally, I feel sure there will be no doubt as to the result. Such facts as that the number of births per family in Hampstead is three, and that the average number of children in the families from whence our mentally deficient come is nine, will not only be reaffirmed but the proportion will be shown to be even greater. I don’t think we can be surprised at that. Awakened woman is learning the supreme and foundational fact that God has given to her control of the fountain of life. She is learning that quality is at least as important as quantity; she is learning that among the conditions which go to the making of a healthy child the economic independence of the woman, with its consequent abolition of marriage as a trade, and an absolutely free disposition of herself in the married state, is vital. This secured, we may be perfectly sure that the maternal instinct will for ever prevent the race from dying out.

Equally the world will be free from any danger of reckless overcrowding.

### Feeble-minded Mothers.

Is it not a significant fact that at present it is from our weakest and most ignorant mothers that the largest families are springing? In one workhouse we read of five feeble-minded women having given birth to fifteen feeble-minded children. In another sixteen feeble-minded women have brought 116 feeble-minded babies into the world. In the Annual Report (1905) on inebriate homes it is stated that ninety-two habitually inebriate women had given birth to 850 children. To give some idea of the actual cost to the community entailed, a careful investigation into the history of two degenerate girls and their descendants has been made, resulting in the astounding discovery that they had cost the State £260,000!

Could anything more wasteful, more extravagant, more wicked and cruel be imagined than the policy of *laissez aller* which allows these things to continue. We cry out about the increase of the unfit, yet we allow the pauper, the criminal, the insane, and the feeble-minded to propagate the evil tendencies of their progenitors. Surely masculine legislation in this respect needs the co-operation of the woman! And here I would emphasize the great importance and close connection between the uplifting of women and the question of race-improvement.

### The Marriage Age.

It is amazing, looking back upon the past, to find how utterly neglected has been the science of eugenics. Infinite trouble has been taken to improve the stock of animals of all kinds—and even of such grains as wheat, oats and barley. Upon the human mother less pains have been expended and more burdens laid than on many kinds of four-footed creatures. How terrible a burden has been laid upon the mothers of men! In just one single instance—the age at which marriage has been forced upon girl-children—what untold evil has been done to the race! History tells us of numerous marriages in the Royal Family of children of ten, eleven, and twelve, but even outside the Royal Family it was considered two centuries ago that fourteen was no unusual age for a girl to take upon her the responsibilities, the pains and pleasures of motherhood. Mrs. Pepys was married at fifteen; Rachel, the daughter of Lord Russell, the patriot, at fourteen. Mrs. Evelyn, was married at twelve; and of the six sons born to her five died before they were three. Comment is needless! No wonder the next two generations showed a marked decadence in manners, morals and physique! In legalising married slavery male legislators have acted suicidally for the nation’s interest, and so it has been all along the line. Every injustice to women has reacted upon the sons as well as upon the daughters of the race. Some eugenic reformers profess themselves as fearful lest the Woman Suffrage Movement should lead to measures of mistaken charity tending to still further increase of undesirable stock. Others—and these include the majority of women still wavering as to whether they will join the Suffrage ranks—fail to grasp the intimate relationship between legislation and the problems we have been considering.

### Possible Reforms.

If women had votes how could they help to improve matters? they ask. Of course, it is quite impossible and most undesirable that any one individual should presume to suggest or prophesy how women would vote, but as to some of the measures which could be considered and voted either for or against, let me just first suggest possible legislative helps towards decreasing the birth-rate among the unfit:—

Segregation of all children at present in our feeble-minded schools.

Segregation of all lunatics temporary or permanent.

Segregation of all confirmed drunkards.

Surely, public opinion is at least ready for these measures of reform! Any initial expense would be recouped by the gradual but certain diminution of the

number of gaols, asylums, workhouses, and the elaborate paraphernalia of justice now needed for dealing with these classes. Legislation on the constructive side presents more difficulty, but still something could be done if women were called in to co-operate in framing it. In matters of taxation a small step has been taken in relieving certain incomes of 7s. 6d. per child. This is certainly a beginning. The taxation of the unmarried and even of the childless married might be considered; maternal endowment, already long advocated by progressive thinkers—with payment made to the mother as the administrator of the family budget, the amount to be dependent on the quality of the home—is surely not impossible of realisation.

It might be considered whether all money spent on education should not be treated as life insurance premiums are treated, and exempted from income-tax; whether death duties should be levied not as at present on what a parent leaves, but on what a child receives, so that divided among several children a fortune should pay on a lower scale than if left to one or two. In education too, when women as well as men are responsible for the syllabus of instruction drawn up for the education of the young, sexual hygiene will, perhaps, find a place. Boys and girls need preparing for the battle of life in no way so specially as in a knowledge of the nature and meaning of sex and of its place in the life of the individual and the nation.

A great campaign to educate people in a knowledge of the laws of heredity and to inspire greater reverence for the human body is needed, and will, I trust, be soon forthcoming. Most important, perhaps, of all, we must see to it that a minimum living wage is assured to all men and women alike. When we have done away with the economic marriage we shall have gone a long way towards solving the difficult problem known as race suicide.

### MARIE SPIRIDONOVA.

In Akatoui, the penal colony, is one Marie Spiridonova, whose beauty is so great that the reports always read: “That though showing proofs of all she had undergone, her great beauty is not really marred.” This young girl had taken it upon herself to mete out justice to the Governor-General of Tambov for having gone through that province with fire and sword. He would order peasants to be whipped, keeping them tied for two or three weeks lying on the floor in barns, and taking them out next day to be whipped again, until death relieved them. The bench where the whipping was done would invariably be next to the barn where the men lay, and thus the blows and the cries of the tortured man were heard by the victims within. Spiridonova went to meet the Governor-General at a railway station, drew out her revolver, which she carried in her muff, and shot him dead at a distance of thirty feet. Before she had time to use the revolver on herself she was jumped upon by the guards and officers, beaten, dragged by the hair, burned with cigarettes, and so horribly maltreated in prison for days that even her lawyers could not, for decency sake, make public the things that were done to her.—*Rose Strunsky, in the Forum.*

THE “AT HOME” to be given by the Women Writers’ Suffrage League at the Little Theatre, on the afternoon of January 24, promises to be a most interesting one. A special feature of the programme will be songs with instrumental accompaniment by Dr. Ethel Smyth, who will herself conduct. Dr. Smyth draws attention to the interesting fact that the Flautist and Percussionist will be women.

“A WOMAN who applied for a judicial order at the Marylebone Police-court had been deserted by her husband three months after marriage. This scoundrel, by name of Eastoe, is now living with a woman who was his mistress before marriage, and the reason why he left his wife was because her health had given way under the stress of working to support her rascal of a husband and herself.”—*P.I.P.*







## FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

## LONDON.



DARE TO BE FREE.

- Thurs., Jan. 19.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches, 3.30 p.m. *Speakers*: Mrs. H. W. Nevinson, Sir John Cockburn.
- Fri., Jan. 20.**—1, Robert-street, 7 p.m. Central London Branch, members' meeting.  
Open-air meeting—weather permitting—at corner of Amhurst Park, at 7.30 p.m. *Speaker*: Mrs. Wheatley.
- Mon., Jan. 23.**—3.30 p.m., The Hermitage, Croydon-road. Miss Fenning.
- Tues., Jan. 24.**—Acton, 8 p.m. Miss Tite. 1, Robert-street, 7 p.m. Central London Branch, members' meeting. Finchley, 8 p.m. Mrs. How Martyn. 3 p.m., Battersea Shop, 316, Battersea Park-road. Mrs. Despard.
- Thurs. Jan. 26.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches, 3.30 p.m. Mrs. Despard, Miss Manning, B.A.
- Fri. Jan. 27.**—1, Robert-street. National Executive Committee, 11 a.m. Caxton Hall, 8 p.m. VOTE meeting, members only. *Chair*: Mrs. How Martyn.
- Sat., Jan. 28.**—Caxton Hall, 10 a.m. Annual Conference of Branches.
- Sun., Jan. 29.**—Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Reception to delegates. Reserved seats, 1s. 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, 11 a.m. National Executive Committee.
- Wed., Feb. 1.**—Gothic House, Stoke Newington. Whist Drive and Dance.
- Sat., Feb. 4.**—S.W. London Propaganda Centre, Jumble Sale. Please send contributions to Mrs Sutcliffe, 58, Sisters-avenue, Clapham Common.
- Sun., Feb. 5.**—1, Robert-street, Members' Social Meeting, 4 to 7 p.m. Mrs. Despard.

## LOWESTOFT PROVINCES.

- Thurs., Jan. 19.**—L.W.S.S., Royal Hotel, 3 p.m. Mrs. How Martyn. *Chair*: Dr. Mary Bell.
- WOLVERHAMPTON.** Miss Neilans.
- SITTINGBOURNE.**
- Fri., Jan. 20.**—Trinity Hall. Miss Fenning.
- URMSTON, NEAR MANCHESTER.** Hughenden's Rooms, Flixton-road, 8 p.m. Lantern lecture on Florence Nightingale. Miss Manning.

## BRIGHTON.

- Fri., Jan. 20.**—Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Francis, 8 p.m.
- ECCLES.**
- Sat., Jan. 21.**—King-street Mission, Eccles, 3 p.m. Eccles Branch Jumble Sale.

## CHELTENHAM.

- Fri., Jan. 20.**—Miss Neilans.
- Mon., Jan. 23.**—Town Hall, Cheltenham, 8 p.m. Miss Neilans, Mrs. Despard.
- SALE, NEAR MANCHESTER.** Temperance Rooms, Cross-street, 8 p.m. Sale Branch Whist Drive.

## DUDLEY.

- Sun., Jan. 22.**—6.30 p.m., Labour Hall, Dudley. Mr. Frank Sproson on the Revolt of Woman.

## MANCHESTER.

- Wed., Jan. 25.**—Congregational School, Levenshulme, 8 p.m. *Chair*: Rev. W. Fry. *Speakers*: Miss Neal, Miss Janet Heyes.

## GLASGOW.

## SCOTLAND.

- The Glasgow Branch of the W.F.L. meet in the Suffrage Centre, 302, Sauchiehall-st., on first Thursday of each month at 8 p.m.
- Fri., Jan. 20.**—Alexandra-parade, Primitive Methodist Church. *Speaker*: Miss Shennan.
- Sat., Jan. 21.**—Scottish Council Meeting, 3 p.m. All W.F.L. members are invited to hear the discussion, and to meet the delegates from the other branches.
- Mon., Jan. 23.**—8 p.m., Partick Youths' Own Hall, Partick West. *Speaker*: Miss Gibson.

## EDINBURGH.

- Tues., Jan. 24.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. "At Home," 4 p.m. *Speaker*: Miss Marguerite Sidley.
- Wed., Jan. 25.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. Branch meeting, 8 p.m. "Josephine Butler," Miss McLaren.

## WALES.

- CARDIFF.**
- Fri., Jan. 20.**—Royal Hotel, 7 p.m. Mrs. Cleaves.
- CALDICOTT.**
- Sat., Jan. 21.**—Ivy Lodge, 2.30 p.m. Mrs. Cleaves.

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