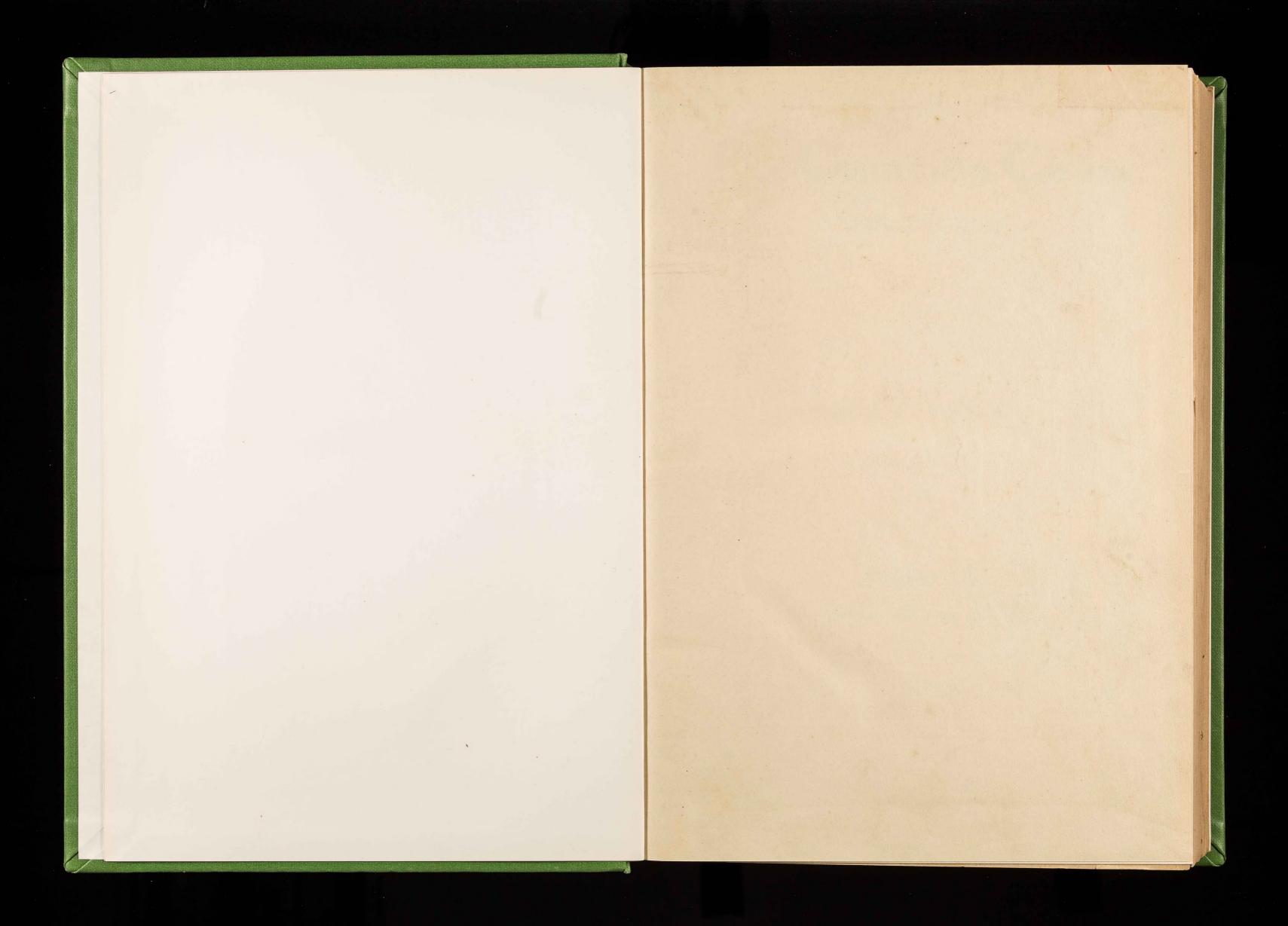


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The Common Cause.

THE ORGAN OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

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Miss I. B. O'MALLEY.

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[The National Union does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed in signed articles.]

Notes and News.

The Enfranchisement of Russian Women.

In reply to a wire asking whether the universal suffrage proclaimed by the new Government includes women's suffrage, the Secretary of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance has received a cablegram from Madame Schischkinn-Yavein, President of the National Society for Women's Rights, saying that in the liberties proclaimed, women are excluded. The message continues:-" We demand, we protest, we demon-

According, however, to Mr. Harold Williams, The Daily Chronicle's correspondent in Petrograd, the Russian women are to have votes. Writing on April 1st, he says: "The Government has not yet officially announced its views on Women's Suffrage, but Ministers say it is decided that women shall vote later in municipal and rural council elections, and in elections for the Constituent Assembly." He adds that the chief newspapers have adopted the principle, and the chief parties have it on their programme.

The Health of the Nation.

During last week three documents were published which throw into glaring relief the urgency of greater expenditure of money and energy on child-saving and the problems connected

The Registrar-General states that the year 1916 will probably show the lowest birth-rate ever recorded; Sir Arthur Newsholme, the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, shows that 575,078 children under five died during the years 1911-14, while the "Health of the People: A New Policy," which is the report of a Committee of Unionist M.P.s which has been sitting under the Chairmanship of Mr. Waldorf Astor, points out that our present system whereby the care of public health " is distributed among six Government depart-

ments is a guarantee of practical waste and inefficiency."

These documents give valuable backing to the scheme for a Ministry of Health, which it is understood will be provided. for in Lord Rhondda's Bill dealing with the nation's health.

The Destruction of Food.

In an article in The Daily News of April 4th, Dr. Saleeby shows that Lord Milner was mistaken in his statement in the House of Lords that no food is now being used in brewing. It

been prohibited, a large stock of malted barley being now in the brewers' hands; but, states Dr. Saleeby, brewers are still destroying maize and rice and grits. "They are further destroying nearly a thousand tons of sugar a week, and vast quantities of sugar are now lying at the docks which no mere caterer for the food of the people may use, because Lord Devonport has forbidden its release except for the brewers.

"The brewers tell us that the sugar they use is unfit for human consumption, and so they put it into beer. But they libel themselves. The sugar, and the only sugar, from which alcohol is made is glucose. . . . Brewers' sugar has been purchaseable at the shops for months' past; I have kept myself

going on it, in large degree, for a long time."

Dr. Saleeby also points out that malt-cake is an excellent food for cattle, and can therefore increase the supply of milk and meat, of both of which there is a shortage.

Wages of Women Munition Workers.

In reply to a question by Mr. Anderson on April 3rd, Mr. Kellaway, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions, stated that the Minister of Munitions had considered the recommendations of the Committee on Production with reference to the wages of women, and had decided to issue a new series of orders which would raise the time rate of women now working in men's work by four shillings a week, and that of girls under eighteen who were doing men's work by one

The time rate of women over eighteen who were not doing men's work, said Mr. Kellaway, would be increased by one penny an hour, and three-farthings an hour when employed on piecework, while girls of over seventeen and under eighteen would receive an increase of a halfpenny an hour and a farthing an hour when on piecework.

The Women's Land Army.

Up to Saturday last, 5,500 women had joined the Land Army, but many more are still wanted. Women who enrol now will be able to follow the growth of crops from the time when the land is ploughed and ready for the seed until the harvesting, and will, therefore, be of more use to the farmers and the country next year than those who join up later. Those who show themselves efficient will be put in charge of parties of workers, and receive a slightly higher rate of pay. are urgently wanted at once, and arrangements have been made

Forms for enrolment can be obtained from any post office.

Women Shop Assistants Underpaid.

At the Conference of the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Clerks, at Leeds, a resolution was passed noting with satisfaction that the Government was considering the extension of the Trades Board Act to the retail and wholesale distributive trades, and calling for immediate legislation. It was stated that women members of the Union over twenty-one years of age were being paid the following weekly rates in the trades named:—Mantle trade, 10s.; pawnbroking, 8s.; boot trade, 8s.; grocery, 16s.; drapery, 7s. 6d.; millinery show-rooms, 12s.; and fancy leather goods, 17s. Rates earned by women not members of the Union nust be considerably lower. While some women substituted in trades hitherto confined to men were able, by means of organisation, to demand from £3 to £4 a week, there were is true that the further destruction of barley for brewing has women in the distributive trades earning as little as 7s. 6d.

