

THE VOTE,  
DECEMBER 26, 1919.  
ONE PENNY.

**DARE TO BE FREE!**

# THE VOTE

**THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.**

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FRIDAY, DEC. 26, 1919.

**OBJECT: To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.**

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## CHRISTMAS MESSAGES FROM OUR MEMBERS.

### Dr. Knight.

"A very happy Christmas to every reader of THE VOTE, with best thanks for the Christmas present doubtless even now upon its way, and warmest greeting to all the keen hard working members of our splendid League, where we rejoice to work together to establish Women's Freedom."

### Mrs. Whetton.

"As a reader of THE VOTE from its first copy, I send you greetings, and the old, old wish, 'A happy Christmas!' May this time next year see our numbers doubled, and the power and usefulness of our splendid little paper correspondingly increased."

### Miss Agnes Husband.

"We Northern readers of THE VOTE rejoice in its steadfast support of the claim for women's opportunity in every sphere of life. The need grows ever more urgent . . . and our message is 'Press on' till women are thoroughly awakened to the great responsibility the past has laid, and the future demands them to fulfil."

### Miss Jeannette M. Tooke.

"It is an old saying that if 'Wishes were horses, beggars would ride.' That being so, wishes seem to me rather futile things. My best wish for the coming Christmas and New Year is that all the indifferent and lukewarm people—those whom the Athenians punished for taking no side in a quarrel more heavily than those who took the wrong side—might awake to a sense of the necessity for all to help on the building up of the new world. Help, too, by realising that rights imply duties, and that every talent lying unused is a direct loss to ourselves and our age."

### The Hon. Mrs. Förbes.

"I have been invited to send my Christmas greetings, which I do very sincerely, and with very real pleasure

too, because I feel that most of my fellow-members accept the seriousness of the Festival, and feel it is sacred to the ethical, higher intention of practising and experiencing that most difficult of all virtues—good will towards all. To all the members of the Women's Freedom League I plead for pause to think of what we owe one another in love, charity and good will—at the same time incorporating my best wishes for a real and peaceful Christmas to you all."

### Miss M. Ballard Dawson.

"To all members of the Women's Freedom League who have shared service and fellowship in the past; to all who will join her ranks and know her comradeship in the coming year; to all who love humanity and press towards the highest; to these of goodwill may Christmas bring true joy."

### Mrs. Margaret Wynne Nevinson.

"This is not the time for conventional Christmas greetings. After more than a year of so-called peace the world is still rent with hatred and bitterness, with unrest and indignation at a sense of much injustice, with class jealousy and the spectre of starvation in Central Europe. We were promised a New World, and those of us who believed it are disappointed to find the same old world—only much worse, for slaughter and destruction do not make for righteousness. Men and women have lost grip and honour and chastity, and common honesty are forgotten. We must hold together and strive to heal the sores of humanity with much sympathy and patience and goodwill, helped by the prayers of the faithful as they kneel in spirit before the manger in Bethlehem."

### Miss Anna Munro.

"My message to THE VOTE in past, present and future activities of the League is: 'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more—deserve it.'"

## WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

### Christmas Mummings.

The revival this Christmastide, in the streets of London, of mediæval carol-singing and ancient Mummings plays is a delightful inspiration of the League of Arts, akin to the joyous note of activity which this Society touched on Peace Day, when it set hundreds of staid Londoners to practising Folk Dances in the public parks. It must be quite a couple of hundred years since a Mummer's play was seen in London, although this old custom still lingers in remote country districts, particularly in Wales and Cornwall. The text used by the League of Arts has been edited by Mr. Patrick Kirkwan, the well-known actor, and is literally based on texts of mummer's plays which were performed in England from the fifteenth century onward.

### Christmas Boxes.

That hoary British institution, the Christmas Box, which is now being threatened by the postmen's protest, has been known to cause perplexity to visitors from other countries where the custom is not followed. The *Manchester Guardian* reminds us of a puzzling experience which befell Miss Elizabeth L. Banks, the American journalist, on her first visit to London. The day after Christmas her coloured maid, Dinah, reported, in a high state of indignation, that she had been insulted by a number of people calling to accuse her of keeping things that didn't belong to her. First, the postman had asked her if she had his Christmas Box, to which Dinah had replied that they did not carry on an "express office" (what we should call a delivery agent's) in that flat. There followed the baker's boy, the laundryman, the milkman, the paper boy, and the telegraph boy, each of them apparently desiring to retrieve some piece of luggage that had been left on the premises and that poor Dinah believed herself to be charged with fraudulently retaining. Miss Banks herself could suggest no explanation, except that possibly her flat had at one time been occupied by an express company, and it was not until the policeman—that guide to all the perplexed—appeared that the mystery was cleared up.

### Christmas Miracle Plays.

There is a decided movement on foot to bring Christmas Miracle Plays within reach of dwellers in the East End. Miss Lena Ashwell, who is producing Miss Cicely Hamilton's miracle play, "The Child of Flanders," at the Excelsior Hall, Bethnal Green, has invited over a thousand children from the elementary schools to witness its performance. The prices of admission ranged from 6d. to 2s. 6d. At the "Old Vic" Father Andrew has retold the story of the nativity in his simple, human play, "The Hope of the World." At Kennington, next Monday, still another "Story of the Nativity" will be presented, at the Assembly Rooms, the Horns, Kennington, S.E., by the Kennington Mystery Play.

### Two Interesting Women.

The two women elected to the Beit Memorial Fellowships for medical research have both done important and strenuous work during the war. Miss Herdman Lepper comes of an old Irish family, and holds the O.B.E. She served as a bacteriologist to the R.A.M.C. in both Malta and Salonica. Dr. Helen Mackay is much better known of the two owing to her connection with the Endell Street Hospital, the Royal Free, and Queen's Hospital for Children in Hackney.

### Watch Committee.

We are pleased to learn that Mrs. Dorothy T. Stevenson, who was recently elected to the Cambridge Town Council, has now been appointed a member of the Borough Watch Committee—a very important body in a University town, and on which no woman before has been allowed to sit.

### Economy in High Places.

Members of Parliament, the Press, and the Public have been very insistent that in the interests of economy all girls and women shall be dismissed forthwith from all kinds of war service and from all Government Departments. We learn that the lower ranks of men in Government offices are not quite pleased at the way in which the dismissals of their sex are being arranged. It appears that there were 5,764 such dismissals in September from the Munitions, Pensions and Labour Ministries, but only 163 of these were officials receiving over £400 a year. We are told also that discharged soldiers and junior officers who are still in search of work are not favourably impressed with the fact that on the active list, December, 1919, appear 195 major-generals and lieutenant-generals, compared with 105 of these ranks on August 4th, 1914.

### "Nuestra Causa."

We are pleased to receive a copy of this excellent little woman suffrage paper, the headquarters of which are at Buenos Aires; and we are especially interested to note that one of our own members, Miss Udny, is supplying it with a page of News from Abroad. On this page we find an account of Madame Montessori's visit to London, a note to the effect that women are to be permanently employed in banks in England, that an American woman, Mrs. Anna Fisher, has been offered a post as a permanent member of the Department of Public Works in Damascus, that women may now be admitted to the Hamburg Stock Exchange, as well as important news regarding the suffrage movement in Iceland, Italy and Spain. We offer Miss Udny our very best wishes for the success of her work in connection with the women's movement in Buenos Aires.

### The Woman Clerk.

We welcome the first number of *The Woman Clerk*, the official organ of the Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries, and wish it long life and prosperity. The paper is a monthly issue, price 2d., and will be devoted primarily to the affairs of the Association. The copy we have received is attractively arranged with clear type and good paper, and includes an instructive article on "Friendly Societies," from the pen of Miss Charlesworth, some interesting historical and literary reminiscences of Buckingham Street by A. E. Elliott, and various topical notes dealing with Local Government, Music and the Drama, and Women's Work generally. Details of some literary competitions are promised for the January number.

### Chinese Woman Editor.

The Feminist movement is making headway in China. There is to-day, according to Miss Katherine Walsey, of the Y.W.C.A., at least one Chinese lady who not only manages Y.W.C.A. work, but edits an illustrated woman's magazine, a thing hitherto unknown.

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## IN PARLIAMENT.

### Officers' Wives (Desertion).

On December 17th MR. RENDALL asked the Prime Minister whether he is aware that there are numbers of officers' wives who have been deserted by their husbands and are entirely without means of support, and that no Order of Court can be enforced as there is no jurisdiction under War Office Regulations; and, seeing that a number of the men in the country still come under War Office Regulations and that the Courts have no power to enforce their orders, will he propose the necessary legislation to enable officers' wives to obtain alimony from their husband's pay or pension, as no officer's wife has ever been able to obtain alimony from her husband's pay or pension?

MR. BONAR LAW: I am advised that the number of cases is small, and the Government are not prepared to adopt the course suggested in the hon. Member's question.

We should like to state that we are advised that the number of cases of desertion of their wives by officers is not so comparatively small as Mr. Bonar Law indicated, and that some of these women are in great distress through having no means of subsistence. In any case, it has always been urged that legislation is necessary to protect men and women not from the great majority of law-abiding citizens, but from the small minority of folks who cannot behave honourably and decently. No matter how small may be the number of officers who desert their wives and leave them penniless, these women have as much right as the wives of civilians to be protected by legislation.

### Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps.

Mr. Churchill informed Mr. Lyle in the House of Commons that there are at present approximately 1,264 members of this Corps serving in France. They are engaged on clerical and domestic work. All personnel of the Corps will be sent home for demobilisation before December 31st, except sixty members who are employed on work connected with Graves Registration.

### Sexual Offences (Select Committee.)

On December 18th MAJOR HENDERSON asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the fact that the Joint Select Committee appointed in July 1918, to consider the Sexual Offences Bill and the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, was unable to complete its enquiry owing to the dissolution of Parliament, the Government propose to take any action in regard to further enquiry being made into this important question.

MR. SHORTT: The question of reconstituting this Committee so that their enquiry may be completed is now under consideration.

### Solitary Confinement.

Mr. A. Herbert asked the Home Secretary whether, in view of the testimony of British officers and men who have been prisoners of war with regard to the torture caused by solitary confinement, he will consider the advisability of abolishing this form of punishment?

MAJOR BAIRD: Solitary confinement has long ago been abolished. Close confinement is a punishment occasionally imposed for breaches of prison discipline, but it does not mean complete solitude, and it can only be imposed for very short periods, not in any case more than fourteen days.

We should like to know the precise difference between solitary confinement and close confinement. Does "close" confinement actually mean 23 out of 24 hours "solitary" confinement?

### Old Age Pensions.

On the 17th and 19th December pressure was brought to bear upon the Government from all parts of the House of Commons to increase the Old Age Pensions to ten shillings a week. It was pointed out that the sum of seven shillings and sixpence was wholly inadequate for the needs of these pensioners, in view of the continued high price of living, and that from day to day many of them were getting into debt. Both

the Prime Minister and the Leader of the House at first declared that the matter was impossible at this stage of the session; it would involve the adoption of a Finance resolution, and the various stages of the Bill could not be taken quickly enough. The House, however, expressed its determination to deal with the matter, with the result that the necessary Finance resolution, as well as the first, second and third reading of the Bill which secures this increase were all agreed to by the House Friday afternoon. We congratulate our Old Age Pensioner friends in securing this necessary support for a measure which is long overdue.

F. A. U.

## MOVEABLE FEASTS.

The First of January has not always officiated as New Year's Day. Numa Pompilius was responsible for fixing the date of the commencement of the civil year, when he added on two new months to the Roman Year, which originally extended from March to December. The first of these, with which the year was made to open, he called Januarius, in honour of Janus, the deity supposed to preside over the opening and closing of doors, and the second February.

Before that time the duration of the year was treated somewhat drastically, compared with our present modes of reckoning. The favourite plan was to include a certain number of lunar months, usually twelve, and add on enough extra days to make the months correspond with the seasons. Added to this somewhat arbitrary arrangement, the Pontiffs, who had sole charge of the Calendar, were not above lengthening or curtailing the civil year on occasions, to suit their own particular ends.

Curiously enough, the Roman arrangement was comparatively slow in being adopted by the rest of the world. Until many centuries later the various countries not only made indiscriminate choice between Christmas Day, the Annunciation, Easter, and January 1, but some of the nations even rang the changes on each date in turn! It was not until late in the sixteenth century that January 1 became universally accepted as the first day of both the legal and popular year.

England, from the sixth century to the Norman Conquest, divided her New Year favours between Christmas Day and March 25th. She then changed over to the Roman method of keeping January 1, and maintained this date rigidly up to 1155, when March 25 was again substituted. The Annunciation was adhered to without any variation until the last day of 1751, when January 1 was finally adopted.

Scotland kept March 25 as New Year's Day until 1599, after which date January 1 was permanently substituted. The alteration was the cause of the curious dispute as to the date of Charles I. execution, the confusion arising from the fact that Scotland's New Year dated from 1600, whilst England still retained the date of the Annunciation for another 170 years.

France, under Charlemagne, used December 25, Easter, and January 1 indiscriminately till 1563, when she, too, came into line with the Roman arrangement, except for a brief interruption of thirteen years, during the midsummer madness of the French Revolution, when the National Convention decreed that the New Year should begin from the foundation of the Republic on September 22, 1792. The restoration of the New Year to January 1 was resumed in 1806 by command of Napoleon. Holland, Protestant Germany, and Russia made the change in 1700, and Sweden in 1753.

Of all these dates, March 25, the day of the Annunciation, was undoubtedly the favourite choice, and lingered on in many of the countries, as the first day of the legal year long after January 1 was adopted as the beginning of the popular year. Its use still survives in England in our annual Treasury accounts, and in the custom of keeping Lady Day as a quarter day.

## THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26th, 1919.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—  
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To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.  
To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.

Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

### EDITORIAL.

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

### SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

At Home and Abroad ... Post free, 6/6 per annum.

## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE.

The Women's Freedom League sends Greetings and a message of goodwill to all those women of the British Empire, and of every country, who are striving to secure equal opportunities, rewards and responsibilities for women and men. Throughout the world women of every race and colour, appalled by the wastage of life and effort under the old condition of things are uniting to raise the status of womanhood; they are conscious of a new dignity, a wider outlook, a keener vision and a deeper sense of responsibility than their grandmothers possessed, as well as a growing determination to have as full a share as men in moulding a world in which it will be fit for their children to live and work out a better scheme of life than their ancestors could plan. Women are taking their places in national legislative and judicial assemblies, and will not rest until they are at least equal in numbers with the men in those assemblies, and until they wield an equal influence with them in all branches of our national life. Men, too, are beginning to realise that women cannot be permanently treated as helots, and that freedom of action and equality of opportunity are as much the birthright of women as of men. After a terrible holocaust of five years the world is now trying to organise itself for Peace—a permanent Peace, we earnestly hope. We are convinced, however, that a permanent Peace is only possible if women can secure their full weight of influence in the counsels of every nation, and also in the inmost counsels of the League of Nations, whose object is to make the declaration of war as difficult as possible. No one can maintain that the world is at present attuned to Peace; or that the gods of war have ceased to inhabit the earth. Wars, rebellions, political and industrial strife continue throughout the world; and the speeches of some of our legislators and the articles in some of our newspapers convey the impression that these orators and writers have no intention whatever to make the paths of Peace easy. Women as guardians of the race cannot be reckless of the lives of men or women, or heedless of the wounds inflicted by a devastating war; they must insist on the high value of human life, give full expression to their unshakable faith in the triumph of the cause of humanity, and envisage a world of Peace in which every man, woman and child shall have the greatest possible chances of full and free development in the life of the community. Before women can work fully and effectively for such a future they must shake off all fetters and win for themselves complete freedom. So, our message to the women of all nations is the motto of all members of the Women's Freedom League **'DARE TO BE FREE.'**

## HOW NOT TO DO IT.

The longer we study the question of Prostitution the more clearly we see that no one measure must be carried to extremes, and that with the best intentions, well-meaning people, in concentrating on one particular part of the problem may create fresh and terrible evils. A new Police Regulation coming into force this month in the Argentine Republic will close all disorderly houses where two or more women live. This regulation, interpreted by the police who carry it out, results, writes one of our members residing in the Argentine, in the women living in clandestine houses being thrown out into the streets, forbidden admittance into hotels, etc., and left helpless and stranded without a shelter, at the mercy of all the reckless men of the country, to endure every cruelty and horror.

The Abolitionist Party and the Argentine Feminists have worked hard, but so far in vain, for a Municipal Farmstead to which these girls should have the chance of going.

In North America, too, the authorities are proceeding cheerfully upon the witch hunt. Denounced by a special police officer, the agent "provocateur," paid for every conviction, who first makes sure of the offence and then gives evidence against them, girls said to be prostitutes are had up in the local police court, where no importance is attached to their own protests, and their guilt is brought home to them by a woman official quaintly called the prisoners' "Defender," they are compulsorily examined and if thought advisable are sent for three years to be shut up in hospital. Of course this makes the streets almost impossible places for any decent girl, but then in many parts of America, the land of Freedom, new meanings have been given to old words, the eagle is a male without a mate, and public thoroughfares are intended not for the public, but for men only.

## MILITARY KNIGHTS OF WINDSOR BILL.

Mr. Churchill explained that under the will of Henry VIII. a sum was set apart to provide approximately £126 per year for thirteen retired military gentlemen. This £126 was in addition to free quarters in Windsor, and that was the Upper or Royal Foundation of the Knights of Windsor. Under the will of Charles I. other funds were made available for five other retired military gentlemen, who did not get free quarters but received £55 per year, and these were the Knights of the Lower Foundation. The purpose of the Bill was not to replace the Knights of the Lower Foundation when they died, and subsequently to add their pensions to their more fortunate military brethren of the Upper Foundation, the reason being that the Government did not think that £55 a year was quite good enough for a knight—they were sweated knights and as such ought not to be encouraged! Subsequently the King's consent was signified to this Bill, but not without vigorous opposition from some members. Mr. Macquisten wanted to abolish the thirteen knights of larger salary and to add their remuneration to that of those with the smaller pittance, declaring that it was far better to have five well-fed knights than thirteen half-starved ones. Mr. Wallace resented the fact that he had never before heard of the Military Knights of Windsor, though he had heard of the "Merry Wives of Windsor"; and Captain Elliott complained that the hour was late, that the House had recently had several late nights, that some Members fell asleep on the benches, and that he himself wanted to get to bed the same as everybody else! At that late hour Mr. N. Maclean could only suggest the establishment of an Industrial or Whitley Council for these poor sweated Knights of the Upper Foundation. We should like to have read some contribution to this debate by Lady Astor.

## FOLK DANCE AND SONG REVIVAL

Few movements of recent years have been more deservedly popular than the now familiar revival—after centuries of relapse—of England's Folk Songs and Dances. The movement in itself is unique for this reason, that no other country in Europe has ever forgotten its native arts: its people are taught them from their childhood upwards.

Nobody seems quite to know what gave the death blow to the old ballads and dances of which England as a nation was at one time renowned throughout Europe. Probably several causes were at work. Puritan severity, climatic changes, the rise of industrialism, the crowding into towns and the consequent decay of rural life; above all, the increasing complexity of civilisation, with the circulation of debased "modern" forms of dancing, and the rise of the so-called "popular" song, have one and all contributed their quota during the last two or three centuries to the gradual disintegration of these national arts.

The old English Folk Dances were of two kinds—

### Country and Morris Dances.

The country dances consisted of figures, rounds, squares for 8, in one line, and for two, three or four couples. They are the less intricate of the two, and so form a useful stepping-stone for the beginner to the more complex Morris dances and jigs. Their natural spheres were the village green, the farmhouse, or the dancing booths at country fairs, but in the latter half of the seventeenth century they became adopted by the upper classes as a refreshing contrast to their own more formal Minuets and Gavottes. So long as these products of the peasantry were treated as alternative dances by the wealthy, they suffered no injury by their introduction into polite society, but when, at a late period, the country dance was forced into open competition with the developments of the drawing-room, and an attempt was made to graft the fashionable steps of the latter on to the native simplicity of the rural dances, these speedily deteriorated.

Mr. Cecil J. Sharp, the pioneer of the new movement, and the patient excavator of so many of these ancient dances, has also done more than any single authority upon the subject to rescue England's old

### songs and ballads

from the oblivion into which they, equally with the dances, had so undeservedly fallen. Twenty years ago, in spite of the fact that prior to Purcell musical England held a proud position amongst the nations of Europe, it was generally assumed, not only by our own country, but abroad on the Continent, that England had no folk songs of her own, and that the English peasant was the only one of his class in all Europe who was unable to express himself in terms of dance and song.

So unwarrantable an assumption has now been successfully dispelled owing to Mr. Sharp's unwearied activity during the past few years. Every available moment of his leisure has been spent in country lanes, fields, and villages, in quest of both folk dancers and singers, the two arts, as is well known, being very intimately associated. To the astonishment of the sceptics, an extraordinarily rich harvest has been reaped, although the larger part of rural England is still unworked. Folk songs, genuinely and demonstrably English, have already been gathered in their hundreds. Between twelve hundred and thirteen hundred tunes have been captured in Somersetshire alone, noted down from upwards of 350 singers and instrumentalists.

The folk singers of the present day are usually quite old people, "the last of a long line that stretches back into the mists of far-off days," who jealously guard their treasures from any but the "understanding." Many of the repertoires of these old singers are very extensive. As many as a hundred genuine folk songs have been obtained from a single singer, and often thirty or forty. Mr. Sharp tells a story of a Sussex

singer who knew four hundred folk songs, and kept a list of their titles. He once sang his entire collection to a gentleman, and it took him a month to get through! All the old folk singers whom Mr. Sharp interviewed agreed that forty or fifty years ago "everyone sang in their own young days. They went to their work singing, and sang in the fields, and trudged home in the evenings to the accompaniment of song."

Apart from the natural beauty of its melodies, the Folk Song has recognised

### educational features

with the Folk Dance. The necessity of teaching some form of art in elementary schools as a counteracting influence to purely intellectual studies is generally admitted, and not only is melody the best musical education for young children, but singing is the only art which a child can practise without previous study. Folk music for these reasons is ideal artistic fare for children up to ten or eleven years of age. Not only are the songs learned quickly and easily, supplying a source of pleasurable excitement which more than justifies its own ends, but genuine patriotism is indirectly fostered.

D. M. N.

## THE TROJAN WOMEN.

It cannot be by any mere coincidence that Euripides' famous play, skilfully rendered into English by Professor Gilbert Murray, is becoming so much in evidence lately. Its tragic portrayal is one of the most terrible indictments of war we possess in any classic contribution to literature, and its almost simultaneous reappearance on the English stage with the launching of the League of Nations converts it into a most powerful ally with the new Peace ideals. It is, of course, well-known that the recent Royal Matinée of "The Trojan Women" at the Alhambra was presented under the auspices of the League.

During the last fortnight the play has been running in a series of special matinées at the Holborn Empire. Last Saturday afternoon saw the close of the series, and was an unusually notable performance. Miss Sybil Thorndike's personation of Hecuba is dignified and heart-breaking. Though old and broken with grief and misery, she still maintains the pride of her upbringing, and stands a veritable tower of strength to the little company of high-born women, who share her suffering.

Troy has fallen after ten long years of siege, and the conquering Greeks are loading their ships with the spoils of war and preparing for the long voyage home. Hecuba, the Queen, and other high women of Troy, are awaiting the lots which will portion them out as slaves among the Grecian Kings and Princes. One by one they learn their fates, and hour by hour the long drawn-out Greek tragedy intensifies in gloom, unrelieved even by a faith in immortality, which has been one of the most conspicuous incidences of our present war. Wave after wave of sorrow and degradation sweeps over Hecuba's grey head. Her beloved daughter, Cassandra, the prophetess, and the holy virgin of Opollo, vowed to lifelong chastity, is driven from her presence into forced marriage with one of Troy's conqueror's; Andromache, wife of Hecuba's son Hector, and mother of the little Astynanax, shares a similar fate, whilst her baby son, lest he should grow up to be as powerful as his famous father, is dashed headlong from the battlements of the city. There is an indescribable pathos in the scene where Hecuba receives with her aged arms the little still form of the murdered child, and croons her anguish to the mute figure before laying it for burial in regal splendour on Hector's shield.

The chorus of Trojan women are called for by name, and depart one by one behind the grim sentinels of their fate. Finally, Hecuba departs, and Troy itself passes away in the wind and the smoke, leaving calamity and ashes as the only sign of its former splendour.



FRIDAY,  
DEC. 26,  
1919.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

## BRANCH NOTES.

### MIDDLESBROUGH.

The Social Evening held on Monday, December 15th was an unqualified success. Even before the artistes arrived the Suffrage Cafe, which was prettily arranged with flowers, etc., was crowded, and fresh supplies of chairs had to be brought to accommodate the people.

Councillor Alice Schofield Coates, from the chair, very ably and briefly outlined the work of the League, and appealed to all women to take their share in the work that still remained to be done, both by the League and other women's organisations. Although a great deal had been gained for women, especially during the last few years, and one woman was in Parliament, there was still much to be done before complete equality with men was achieved.

Miss Winifred Jones's play, "Gain and Loss," was greatly appreciated, and the wish was expressed from the audience that her play should be published. It was often when such opportunities were forthcoming that genius was discovered.

We are greatly indebted to the artistes who so ably contributed to the musical part of the programme. Miss Ruth Dawson and Mrs. Walker, both members of the League, sang beautifully. The String Quartette was composed of Mr. and Mrs. Pelmeur, Mrs. A. C. Pelmeur and Mr. E. J. Dunn, first and second violin, viola and cello. The audience was delighted with the items rendered from Tschalkovsky and Dvorak. Mr. Jock Baily, in his usual delightful style, gave a humorous recital entitled "Punch, Brothers, Punch," from Mark Twain.

A few of the members of the League who had undertaken the duties of handing round "light refreshments," with sinking hearts wondered if they were equal to the task, but very creditably

"the multitude was fed," and our warmest thanks are due to those who stepped forward and helped in this necessary but arduous work.

New members were made and a good collection taken. A stall of Christmas presents was artistically arranged, with a bright Christmas Tree in the centre. The sales were quite brisk towards the end of the evening, and helped considerably in making the evening a great success.

Hon. Sec.—MISS BARRS, 231A, The Arcade.

### SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.

A meeting of the W.F.L. was held at the Southend Branch on December 15th, when the subject of education came under discussion. Mrs. Carpenter occupied the chair, the speaker being Mr. Hoysted.

The present system of elementary and secondary education was adversely criticised on the ground that it tended to produce a uniform mediocrity, that it failed to engender or foster individuality or originality, and, instead of inculcating a love of learning and a desire for knowledge, superimposed the opposite by its hard and fast rules and regulations in every form of its organisation.

Mr. Hoysted's views on the question of increased salaries for teachers came as a surprise, and his suggestions as to the provision of meals, for other than the necessitous cases, with the object of training the children in social manners met with little support. In the opinion of the mothers home should be home and school should be school.

Mrs. Carpenter voiced the opinion of the majority when she pointed out the dangers and drawbacks attendant on overstudy. Many a nervous condition or habit in children can be traced to overstudy, and, above all, to excessive homework.

(Mrs.) E. M. NAUGHTEN, Leigh-on-Sea.

[Other Branch Notes unavoidably left out this week owing to lack of space.]

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