

THE VOTE,  
AUGUST 4, 1916.  
ONE PENNY.

# "Let the Women Try"

C. NINA BOYLE

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 1916.

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.

### PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

"LET THE WOMEN TRY" - - - - C. Nina Boyle.	Y.W.C.A. MILITARY CENTRE WORK - - - - C. P.
CHILDREN AND THE WAR - - - - Paterfamilias.	WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW.
OUR SETTLEMENT GUEST HOUSE - - Kathleen Holmes.	OUR POINT OF VIEW.

### AN INTIMATION.

In the House of Commons on Tuesday, Sir Edward Carson condescended to inform whoever it might concern that:—"He believed the House would be willing to give every facility for extending the life of Parliament, but that they would not do so unless the Government really applied themselves to the question of registration. The way in which the matter had stood over was almost a public scandal."

There are those who hold that Sir Edward Carson ought to be a good judge of "public scandals."

Mr. Asquith said:—"He did not know who would be responsible for the Government next Session; he had not the faintest idea. At any rate, he was not in a position to make any announcement on the subject. The Government had hoped that they might be able to move the adjournment about the 17th of this month. If the motion as amended were carried, two days would be added, and it would not be possible to adjourn quite so early. He hoped the adjournment would be for a substantial time. It might be for six weeks, or possibly longer. As to the use of the time, apart from that allotted to Supply, there was one Bill which it was absolutely

essential to pass, the Bill, namely, for prolonging the life of the present Parliament."

Clearly, from his point of view, such a Bill is "absolutely essential."

He proceeded to say:—

"He had been asked whether that proposal would be accompanied by a measure dealing with registration and the arrangements for preparing the register. The House undoubtedly would be entitled to ask the Government when they brought forward their Bill for the prolongation of the life of Parliament to disclose in principle and outline their proposals in regard to registration. On the other hand, it was impossible that these proposals should be the subject of legislation before the adjournment."

But will not the consideration of what is in store for them somewhat spoil their holiday?

We remember other occasions upon which the Prime Minister has tactfully broken to his devoted followers a touching intimation of his possible withdrawal from the common scene of their Parliamentary labours. Like too oft-repeated farewells, such intimations, in Parliamentary as in social life, are apt to leave us cold.

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### OUR POINT OF VIEW.

#### Never Jam To-Day.

In reply to the "Jam To-morrow" policy of *The Manchester Guardian*, Miss Margaret Ashton, in a letter to that journal of August 1, points out that the present affords a really good opportunity of doing justice to women since the Coalition Government contains a majority in favour of their enfranchisement. She writes:—

To the unwilling reform is never opportune. As individual citizens we take our share in the nation's life and duties, and, in any alteration or extension of the franchise, we have the first, because the most vital, claim to be considered and set free to protect our homes and work in the coming days. Old conditions will be swept away, and direct representation alone will be able to secure that our needs are understood and pressed in the general reconstruction—industrial and social—which the war has made necessary. We had looked to you to help to clear the obstacles from our path and to press for this long overdue reform, not to take up the opponents' cry that justice is impossible, and that, while a Government can consider possible such a novel idea as military franchise, a perfectly understood and constitutional demand is impossible when changes are in the making.

In a note to the above, *The Manchester Guardian* takes the same attitude as that adopted by Mrs. Fawcett and the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies:—

If, it says, the franchise is extended for men—certainly if it is so widely extended as it would be by introducing military service as a new qualification—women must be included, or the extension resisted. We have said so and repeat it. If, however, the proposal should be merely to provide that absence on service abroad or on munition work shall not disqualify any person otherwise qualified the case would not arise, though women might still plead war service as a new and strong ground for enfranchisement.

It has frequently been pointed out that women do not claim the vote as a reward for services rendered in war. At the same time, it would be difficult to controvert the statement embodied in a Resolution passed by a joint conference of Women's Suffrage Societies at Birmingham on July 26 that "by their share in practically every phase of national work, women have completely justified their long-standing claim for representation."

*The Manchester Guardian* would be glad if the Government were converted to Woman Suffrage, but it doubts "if anything would be gained by pressing the point." In a letter to the issue of July 31 Miss Sylvia Pankhurst pertinently asks:—

How, except by pressing, is anything to be gained? You will perhaps reply that after the war this may be done, but that at present only changes of which every section of the Coalition is in favour can be made. But have we not seen over and over again during the war that changes to which sections of the Coalition have been supposed to object most strongly have been carried, in response to outside pressure by one section of the Press? Is the pressure always to come from the same organs? Does the Liberal Press, does *The Manchester Guardian*, recognise no duty of agitation on behalf of the causes to which it is pledged?

Women have been urged to leave their homes to do war service; the Munitions Act compels them to remain out of their homes, forces them to work on night shift, and punishes them for bad timekeeping. Women have had their bread-winners and those who are dear to them taken away from them, either to serve in the Army or to be imprisoned in internment camps. Is there no war urgency in their claim to enfranchisement at this time?

It is the old story. Agitation is a duty when the rights of men are to be fought for. But women's interests can wait.

### The Lords and Education.

The Lords discussed education on Wednesday in last week. Speaking for the Government, Lord Crewe said that it was "agreed that education was a matter upon which they did not dare to restrict expenditure," and, further, that it was proposed "to set up a committee to review generally the whole field of national education, composed partly of members of the Government and partly of public men who had Parliamentary experience." Judging by some of the speeches, it might be supposed that the youth of the country were exclusively of one sex. Since it is clearly the duty of the women of the country to safeguard the education of the coming generation, it might be well for suffragists to consider whether, in the interest of both boys and girls, they have any recommendations to urge upon the proposed committee.

### Patriotism: What Things are done in thy Name.

We heartily endorse the protest of Mr. Frank Briant, L.C.C., against the action, which is said to be contemplated by the War Office, of taking over some of the Council schools and using them as hospitals. He recommends that clubs and other buildings should be employed by the War Office before any more schools are requisitioned. Already six Council schools have been taken over for hospital work, and, in some neighbourhoods, it has been necessary to institute "a double-shift system," which means that a considerable number of the children are having their all-too-short school life curtailed by nearly one-half. In prosperous homes, it is possible that the deficiency might be made up by mother or elder sister, but in working-class families this would clearly be impossible, and the loss remains incalculable and irredeemable. It is difficult to believe that patriotism demands the sacrifice of the next generation.

### All Things Move.

So much is said of the inadequacy of elementary education that it is well to be assured of the truth of the postulate of the Greek philosopher that "All things move." Mrs. Burgwin is described as "the most energetic, enthusiastic and experienced of the London County Council's women inspectors." At 65, she is retiring under the age limit, which, she considers, might well have been abrogated in her case at a time when the labourers in the field of social work are few. She was a pioneer in school feeding—one more example of voluntary effort affording an object-lesson, afterwards embodied in national legislation and local administration. Though her eyes have ever been bent on the future, by a reference to the past she is able to estimate the progress made during her lifetime.

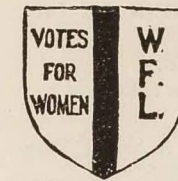
When the war is over, she said, there will be great national and international problems to be faced. That is why I think we should tackle social problems now. Since the days of my girlhood a tremendous change has come over the poorer classes. In education and manners they are to-day incomparably superior. But much remains to be done in social reform, particularly in housing.

It seems unlikely that there can be any serious "tackling of social problems" while women like Mrs. Burgwin are considered unworthy to have any direct influence on the making of the laws under which social reform becomes possible.

### Reciprocal Coddling.

Not long ago an evening paper pilloried the work of the Friends' Emergency Committee for the Relief of Germans, Austrians and Hungarians in Distress. It was urged that no similar work was undertaken in Germany to that which was being performed here by the "Hun Coddlers." Incidentally, it may be remarked that a large proportion of the "Huns" who were supposed to be coddled were the British-

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



### DARE TO BE FREE.

Friday, September 22.—CAXTON HALL. Mrs. Despard's Return Party, from 7 to 9.30 p.m. Invitation cards from W.F.L. Office. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss E. Murray, Miss Evelyn Sharp and Mrs. E. Zangwill.  
Sunday, October 1.—HASLUCK'S ACADEMY, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, Miss Clara Reed, Recital "Becket," 4 p.m.  
Wednesday, October 4.—CAXTON HALL. Speakers: Mr. Laurence Housman and others. 3.30 p.m.  
Friday, October 20.—CAXTON HALL, Political Meeting.  
WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W. Closed until August 28. Children's Guest House and Milk Depot for Nursing Mothers.  
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there is such a person in existence, except sometimes to transfer the title of "Mummy" to the member of the staff it fancies most. Occasionally, the clean, cold bed seems to inspire a little awe. "I never 'ad a 'ole bed afore," explained one little visitor; "I use ter sleep with Lily, but since the King's birthday we sleeps four in a bed, 'cos Daddy says 'tisn't safe upstairs 'cos of bombs, so we all 'as to sleep downstairs." (The connection with the King's birthday has never been clear to us!) But the pillow, or a dolly, or a fleecy animal toy is hugged for company, and the little feeling of loneliness soon wears off. In fact, we sometimes wish our little friends did not make themselves quite so much at home; nothing is sacred to them, and their little fingers are in every pie. (Literally—I have just discovered the poker in to-morrow's soup, which has apparently been thoroughly stirred!) One four-year-old in departing invites us with a certain air of condescension to "my other 'ouse," and another says he is coming back when Mummy is ill again. One whole family, I regret to say, is waiting for that event with joyful anticipation, and inviting itself meanwhile to tea on Sundays to the number of five, to make sure we don't forget its claims. The greatest compliment we have had was from one of our present party, who told the nurse, to whom he was sent to have a wounded finger attended to, that it was "like Heaven" being here, one reason being probably that toys are a rarity in Nine Elms homes. We are often told the children have never had any—"on'y rags to make a doll." The children like the food, too, and one mother wrote to say Jean would not eat her dinner that day, she said, "More dinner at Mrs. Tippett's," which was the longest sentence, Jean, aged 2½, had been known to produce.

Our aim is to make the place as little like an institution as possible, but rather a change of homes for the child. There are no rules, no uniforms, and though the children have a playroom of their own they are happiest when we let them come and "help" us with whatever we are doing—which we do when we are not *very* busy! Imagine the pride of our eldest, aged nine, when he was entrusted with the writing of the day's menu on the wall of our Penny Dinner Restaurant! It took all the time between school and bed, and was the most picturesque yet produced here.

In the hot summer weather our children have a still better time, for we try, if possible, to send them down to the country, and some day, when we grow rich, it is our dream to have a home of our own right out of London, where we could do better for them than, with the best intentions, is possible in Nine Elms.

KATHLEEN HOLMES.

born wives of alien enemies. The evening journal in question will be interested to learn that there is also an Alien Coddling Society in Berlin, the Secretary being Dr. Elisabeth Rotten, formerly a lecturer at Newnham College. This Committee send consignments of clothes and food to the civilian prisoners' camps, and local committees have sprung up in Wiesbaden and other towns—the women members visiting the prisoners and the wives and families of interned men. A more extensive organization is now being formed, modelled on work which has been done in England, and British prisoners are to be helped first. Men and women repatriated from this country often spontaneously offer to help British prisoners in their own country. The wife of a German doctor, who is "Captain" in one of our internment camps, has formed a committee of her own in Germany to help British prisoners, in return for what has been done for the men in her husband's camp. These are the kind of Reprisals of which neither side need be ashamed in the future.

### OUR SETTLEMENT GUEST HOUSE.

The Guest House for Children was started by the Settlement to supply a want that seemed to have been hitherto overlooked—a home where mothers could send what have been called the "dowager babies" to be cared for while they themselves were laid up during the advent of a new baby, or in hospital for an operation. The workers here watched the results in our street, where new babies arrive with alarming frequency, and their elders, often only just able to crawl, spend their time on the doorstep, eating frequent but unvaried meals of bread-and-margarine, or taking adventurous walks in the gutter, which often end in disaster to the small person, and howls which the mother's sometimes rough, but comforting, hand is not there to calm. The "lady next door," it is true, does her best, but she is a busy person, and has more than enough of her own affairs to attend to; she sees the neighbour's children do not go hungry, and there her helpfulness must needs end.

The Guest House takes in children between the ages of two and ten for the whole time their mothers are unable to look after them; it is, in fact, a sort of extension of the crèche idea, the children being kept not only in the daytime, but altogether. When they come to us their own clothes are taken off, washed, and put away until they leave, and they wear our own clothing while with us, so that the mother has no trouble when sending them away, and no anxiety about the adequacy of their wardrobe. The sad part for the Settlement workers comes at the end, when the neat, pretty clothes are taken off and the babies dressed up again in their poor little Cinderella garments, minus, sometimes, so many tapes, buttons, and hooks and eyes, and always either much too warm or not half warm enough!

But, in other ways, it is a satisfaction to see the difference in our children when they leave us—it is astonishing to note the effect, even in this small street, which open windows day and night, nightly baths, wholesome and regular meals, and a long sleep at night have on the little guests; they seem to blossom out both physically and mentally after the first week. People ask us if they do not cry for their mothers. We can say with perfect truth, never once! When a new child comes its attention is diverted by the most fascinating toy we can command, the father or mother slips out by the side door without a good-bye, and, after a casual look round, the young person seems to forget

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## THE VOTE.

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### EDITORIAL.

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

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## LET THE WOMEN TRY!

The Prime Minister has made another pledge. He has, in point of fact, made several. In answer to Major Hunt (the military or ex-military enthusiast who desires to bestow the vote on all seamen and soldiers), Mr. Asquith stated on Thursday, July 27th, that the Government would introduce "proposals on the subject of registration." He could not "anticipate the scope" of these proposals; but he promised they should be laid before the House before any Bill was brought in. Having committed himself to this, he refused to say whether his proposals would be embodied in a Bill or a resolution. "I would not like to pledge myself," he is reported to have said, with dignified caution.

Mr. Asquith's caution on this point appears excessive. In the first place, the point is in itself not of first-class importance. In the second, the Prime Minister's pledges are not what they were. They have come to resemble the cherries on the barrow—of promising appearance on the outside of the pile, but with a great deal of rot and maggot and unripeness at the back, where they help you from. The public is still taken in by the outside display; if it were not so, the coster would be driven either to honesty or to the choice of another trade. Mr. Asquith still displays his pledges, with all the old assurance; and the display still hypnotises the House of Commons. He has promised registration "proposals," and to let the House know what they are before debating them. If these registration proposals turn out to be merely a fresh appeal for release from his pledge because of the difficulties involved—such as that with which he angled for the Special Committee a week or two back—no one need be surprised. It is hardly likely that the registration proposals will amount to much more than a lengthening of the life of Parliament, and a more or less eloquent exposition of the difficulties and anomalies of registration revision.

The greatest anomaly of all, as has been said many times, is that the register contains no names of women. This is the only anomaly with which voteless women need concern themselves. It is not our business yet to devise methods for removing or smoothing the other anomalies. We believe that the societies who claim that the demand for adult suffrage would give a clearer and easier issue are deceiving themselves woefully. We see nothing to make us fancy that the proposal to enfranchise all women at once, with the overwhelming female majority that the ordinary man un-

doubtedly dreads and abhors the thought of, will be more warmly welcomed in 1916 than in 1913. We believe that this "widening" of the just demands of suffragists is more truly a "narrowing," and that it will act on our chances exactly as the "wider" demand of Mr. Lloyd George and the People's Suffrage Federation acted on the Conciliation Bill in the days gone by. That astute "supporter" boasted of the torpedoing of the smaller measure; we are still without the larger one. The torpedoing to-day is coming from within, not from without. The adoption by us of Adult Suffrage is, in our eyes, neither expedient nor politic. It is, as it always has been in the complex civilisations of the European nations, a danger and a stumbling-block to women suffragists. It is adult suffrage, not women's suffrage, that should wait. It is for women's suffrage, not adult suffrage, that there is the clamour, the urgency, the passion. It is nothing short of robbery to filch any of the energy and the organisation devoted to the one to serve the purpose of the other. And many women suffragists who are not adult suffragists are disheartened and alienated by the introduction of an element which is a party matter and therefore one on which women, like men, are acrimoniously divided. Even were it politically expedient, it would not be morally so, for the first duty of suffragists in the non-party leagues and unions is to be loyal to the understanding upon which all non-party work is based.

There is a curious fallacy that is being put forward in regard to the present register—that it is not even representative of men! This is so remarkable a straining of fact that one is compelled to deal with it; for it is one of those phrases that get caught up and repeated unthinkingly. Full though it is of anomalies, at the last revision the voting system of this country caught in its meshes about eight and three-quarter millions of the eleven and a half adult male population. And there is no one of all the remainder who, by some change in his residential, wage-earning, or occupation conditions, may not at some time find himself in a position to register, save and except the incurable lunatic or the convict with a life sentence. If women were able to register on such lines and in such numbers, it would be a bold statement to advance that it was not representative!

There can be no further room for doubt that it is the question of women, quite as much as that of military exigencies, which makes the Government unwilling to rouse the sleeping dogs of controversy by revising the register. Apart from the snarling of Lord Cromer and the petulance of Sir Edward Carson and the arrogance of Mr. Samuel, thoughtful anti-suffragists cannot see their way to avert disaster if a decision has to be made. They fear that the tide has turned; they know that suffragists are "keeping quiet," but they do not know how much of that quiet is due to strength and how much to weakness. They do not know what the results of another affront, another betrayal, in the present strung-up state of the people, might bring forth. Ominously they hear repeated, from the most unexpected quarters, the opinion, "Let the women try. They couldn't make a worse mess!" Mr. Asquith is said to be "softening," the House of Commons sympathetic. The Antis are palpably uneasy. Mr. Asquith and the House of Commons are the last hopes of the party of prejudice, and we believe that, in the altered mood of the country and the decided disgust at the orgy of waste and muddle made with our resources, there is—and the Antis know it!—a growing tendency to "Let the women try."

C. NINA BOYLE.

NOTICE.—The office will be closed on Monday, August 7.

## CHILDREN AND THE WAR.

"They had to do their utmost to prepare the future generation intellectually, morally, and physically to endure the strain they would have to face." So spoke Lord Haldane in the House of Lords last week, and, in referring to our future armies, he stated: "We should be much the better if we attended to the physical side. It was essential, if we were to have a complete system of elementary education, that physical training should be looked to." (See *The Times*, July 13.)

During the past fortnight, education has been much in the air, but empty words are of no avail unless they lead to sane action and sound common-sense reforms in the administration of laws affecting children. For those reared in our cities, which too often are streets of houses packed together, there should be given special consideration, the laws safeguarding them be more rigorously enforced, if they are to endure the strain that life in a city brings in its train.

Lord Haldane speaks of our future armies. A wise horsebreeder is always most particular about the sires he favours, and it would be well for the future of our race if we took to heart some of the lessons to be learned from the breeders of noble stock. A nation gets just that sort of breeding which it encourages.

His Grace of Canterbury is reported in *The Times* as saying:—

"We should not be able to advance in the field of education without a corresponding advance in other fields of life, for education was not a subject standing by itself in isolation, but was coloured by social, economic and religious traditions and aims. The returning soldier would not be satisfied with some of the old conditions. There was the housing question in town and country, the wages question, the population question and the decline in the birth-rate, which were all stirring the minds of our men."

John Stuart Mill put all that in his incisive way long ago when speaking of the residuum of our cities. "Unless you deal effectively with the residuum in our cities and towns, what you spend on education will be like so much waste water running to the sea."

War is a testing time of nations and of peoples. We have, heedless of Mill's famous warning, gone on creating and fostering the residuum, multiplying the unfit. The hour of our trial is upon us and, whilst many workers have responded nobly, there are too many incapable of sustained effort and continuous application. Ruskin has said that a nation or an individual may be guilty, "not in that you have caused it, but in that you have not prevented it."

Let me show you how we are now creating a residuum in that we are not preventing it, and are breeding sires unfit to beget, and unworthy of any nation.

Through the kindness of a friend, who has had a long experience in social investigation, I was able to look at some interesting particulars taken from a large school in a fairly well-to-do neighbourhood. The facts recorded will bear careful, if painful, reflection. In one large class of boys, 10 to 13 years old, 10 per cent. had been absent for months, and were known to be working. Forty per cent. were working in their spare time for numbers of hours incredible to all but those who know the whole facts. (I am unable to give full figures, as I understand they are first to go to some Department, but I sincerely trust they will be made public in a short time.) However, a few examples will indicate the gross state of lax administration to which these matters affecting children has dropped.

N—, a child of eleven, very small for his age and thin, works at least two hours on all schooldays and longer on Saturdays and Sundays.

M—, a similar child and shortsighted, does three hours and more on schooldays and at least twelve on Saturdays. Age 11.

P—, hollow-chested, often tired, frequently has days off. P— has two jobs and works five to six hours on schooldays and full time (i.e., 8 to 8 or 9) on Saturdays.

Are such to be the sires of our future armies? In discussions in the past on race suicide, too often has one sex only been blamed. Surely a nation is measured by the potentiality of its fathers.

Girls, in the corresponding class to the one mentioned above, were also found to be working for wages out of school hours. Another interesting fact, noted in the report, was that, although there was a large number of Jews in that school, none were to be found on the lists of the child workers. Evidently the Jew values education and does not wish his children to be mere hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Among the effects noted was the obvious one that such children could not possibly do justice to the education provided, as many of them had no proper mid-day meal, but brought "something in a piece of paper," and had returned to school straight from work. In addition to the facts connected with the hours of work and the money earned, investigations of the family incomes showed that the boys were not working because of lack of money at home. On the contrary, the facts proved that those boys who were earning the most belonged to families which could well afford to allow their children to take full advantage of school life. The families of many of the boys who were attending regularly, and who were not working out of school hours, valued education and were making sacrifices on behalf of their children. Therefore, there is no reason why the Acts dealing with children should not now be rigorously administered, as the number of families suffering from loss of family income would be very small.

Finally, the present state of affairs is having disastrous effects on the young workers in giving them a wrong idea of the value and uses of money and of the worth of their labour, from which there will be a rude awakening after the war when boys' wages are likely to drop from their present abnormally high level to the normal 6s. per week. "What of the employers of such children?" may be asked. Most of the details are known but cannot be given. The war is made to cover a multitude of sins, both of commission and omission. The employers may be said to be in the same boat as a very large employer of labour who promptly sacked most of his girls on the outbreak of the war, but whose name appeared for a considerable amount among the subscribers to the Prince of Wales's Relief Fund.

The present urgent educational need is *Rest*, both for children and for meddling legislators and faddists. Administer the present laws relating to children, so that they may be able to respond to the efforts of the teachers, and the future armies of the nation will be as sound and as well-bred as properly-reared horses.

### PATERFAMILIAS.

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### WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW.

Mr. Anderson asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that his action in permitting the South Wales Coalowners to advance the price of coal by 2s. 6d. beyond the limit fixed by the Coal Prices (Limitation) Act has been resented by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and the general public; that it is interpreted as an invitation to coalowners in all parts of the country to put forward similar demands; that it is bound to lay additional burdens on the poorest people; that it is causing unrest among many of the workers; and whether, in view of these considerations, he will reconsider his decision in this matter?

Mr. Harcourt: I received a deputation from the Miners' Federation on the subject, and pointed out to them that the increase was given in respect of a proved increase of working costs. The Price of Coal (Limitation) Act of last year provided that, if the Board of Trade are satisfied as regards the coal mines in any district, that, owing to special circumstances affecting those mines, the standard amount of 4s. should be increased, the Board may substitute for that amount such higher sum as they may think just. In these circumstances, if it can be shown that the working costs of raising coal for home consumption in any district have increased, the Board can hardly refuse to entertain an application under the Act.

#### Registration (Soldiers and Sailors).

Major Hunt asked the Prime Minister whether he can say when the new registration will be begun; and whether the Cabinet has yet decided to include in it all soldiers and sailors who are serving or have served during the War?

The Prime Minister: The Government will introduce proposals on the subject of registration. I cannot at the moment anticipate their scope.

Mr. Churchill: Of course, those proposals will be before the House before any Bill is brought in?

The Prime Minister: They will be before the House.

Mr. Wardle: Will they be introduced in the form of a Resolution?

The Prime Minister: I would not like to pledge myself—either a Resolution or the Bill.

[Experience appears to be making the Prime Minister somewhat cautious of formulating further pledges!]

#### War Office Women Clerks.

Colonel Lord Henry Cavendish Bentinck asked the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that the temporary women clerks employed by the War Office work forty-eight hours a week for 25s. instead of the forty-two which is the practice in other Departments, and that, with overtime, their hours are from nine till seven every day, including Saturdays, whether, in order to preserve their health and to increase their capacity for work, he will consider the advisability of giving them one half-holiday a week, without loss of pay, as is done in the Ministry of Munitions; and, if not, why this step is not to be taken?

Mr. Foster: The hours of work of the temporary women clerks employed in the War Office vary according to the branch in which they are serving, and are by no means always as long as the noble Lord suggests. Pressure of work and the needs of public business prevent the grant of a general half-holiday, but every endeavour is, and will be, made to secure such a grant when possible.

Colonel Lord H. Cavendish Bentinck asked the Secretary of State for War by what method temporary women clerks in the War Office are judged

to be entitled to receive 30s. a week as the result of a satisfactory probation, whether by length of service, by examination, or on a report by their superior officers; and whether he will give the number still employed by the War Office who have failed to pass this test?

Mr. Foster: Advancement to the rate of 30s. a week is made on the recommendation of the head of the branch in which the clerk is serving. I do not think that it would serve any good purpose to state the number still employed in the War Office who have been judged ineligible to receive a higher rate.

#### Political and Militant.

The Secretary of the Glasgow Branch of the Women's Freedom League has received the following letter from the Scottish Liberal Association. It is a reply to the request of the Glasgow Branch that the Association should oppose any legislation having for its object the compilation of a new Parliamentary Register, unless such a register should include women.

(Copy.)

#### Scottish Liberal Association.

95, Princes-street,  
Edinburgh,  
6th July, 1916.

DEAR MADAM,—I submitted your letter of the 10th June, asking the assistance of our Association to petition in favour of women being included in any new register of voters, to a meeting of my Executive to-day. The meeting had special reference to the question of registration, and it was unanimously agreed that it was unnecessary, inexpedient, and a waste of public money to compile a register of voters at the present time. The members were strongly of opinion that public opinion saw no necessity or urgency for this at the present moment, and, therefore, there was no use of making any petition in the direction you desire meantime.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) W. WEBSTER,  
General Secretary.

Miss Scrymgeour,  
Women's Freedom League,  
212, Bath-street, Glasgow.

#### Women's Freedom League Settlement.

Acknowledged with thanks: Miss Riggall, 1s.; Mrs. Brend, a baby's chair; Miss Sykes, buns; the Fargo Hostel (per Miss Preston), children's clothing. Now that the sales are almost over and household necessities selling cheap, friends are reminded that the constant washing up at the restaurant wears out our kitchen cloths very rapidly. Some bath-towels for the use of the children in the Guest House would also be most welcome. So would overalls, boys' knickerbockers and tops, vests, feeders—indeed, garments of various sizes to suit children under ten. Mothers will understand that we have an ever-present need for shoes, socks and stockings.

#### GET READY FOR VICTORY.

Next week we shall print the third list of contributions to our FIFTY THOUSAND SHILLING FUND.

This sum of money is being raised by the Women's Freedom League entirely for direct Suffrage work.

**Women cannot wait any longer for the Vote. Our Country cannot afford any longer to do without our help.**

We urgently appeal to all old friends and to the many new ones now interested in the question for the first time to rally round the Women's Freedom League, and support us in this last phase of the long struggle.

**Come and help us now, before it is too late.**

Contributions will be included in next week's list, and will be gratefully received and acknowledged by the Hon. Treasurer, Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

### Y.W.C.A. Military Centre Work for Girls in War-Time.

Our title is rather misleading, for we are not now limited in any way to military centres, but go wherever the girls need us. Still, the name sticks to us, and has its uses. The Y.W.C.A. originated the whole Patriotic Club Movement in those black three months which followed the outbreak of the war, though many other societies have also followed up the idea with great success. In answer to the almost despairing wails of clergy, ministers and workers of all kinds—facing the opposition of certain workers—the Patriotic Clubs have been started up and down the country near large camps, in towns where large numbers of men have been billeted, and in other places where abnormal conditions arose. There are now upwards of seventy clubs. Through the opposition of some of the workers of all the churches, many of the difficulties were experienced which we in the Suffrage Movement have always had to face from people who on the surface were more or less on our side. It was a revelation of the tragic one-sidedness of the masculine outlook in preacher and congregation when it became evident that they really thought nothing ought to be asked for or was needed by girls, and that it was only original sin which made them require any care or recreation. When we remember that the only way which men could suggest of solving the problem of the natural excitement and effervescence of the unutilised patriotism of girls was to issue a pamphlet ordering them to stay at home, we cannot wonder that there were difficult conditions to be met and hard words used about the unfortunate flappers.

But things have now altered in many ways; the girls are no longer over-excited and disgusted at having no special work to do for their country in her hour of need; they are being drawn more and more into the constructive work of the nation. The khaki fever has abated, and on every hand employers speak with admiration of the women workers. We know quite well now that if, in the autumn of 1914, girls had had real work to do for their country, and recognised as such—just as the young men had—most of the distressing sights of flappers hurling themselves at soldiers' heads would not have happened, for the girls would have had wholesome outlets for their energies. The blame should be placed on the right shoulders—those who have created an unnatural, man-organised social condition.

Patriotic Club work is nominally war work, but we know the conditions we are meeting are chiefly pre-war. And war, hideous as it is, has this advantage—that it will not allow the needs of the worker to be poohpoohed; they come into proper proportion as the worker becomes more rare and valuable. For instance, before the war, business men in important industrial towns would not have supported large schemes for clubs for their girl clerks, but now are glad to be asked to do so; nor probably would those girl clerks have entered the doors of anything run by the Y.W.C.A. Now in Manchester, Liverpool and elsewhere, magnificent Business Girls' Clubs have been opened, and the very plants have to be moved from the platform to make room for the girls who crowd in at the opening meetings. This is entirely the result of increased human understanding all round. The aims of the various clubs, whether for business girls, servants, factory hands, or any other kind of girl, are not to give expression to the prejudices or sentimentalities of the organisers, but to provide what the girls really want, and by giving them as large a measure of self-government as they will respond to, in order to ensure that it is what the girls really want. The human element of their men friends is

not forgotten, for they come in on the "open nights" as the girls' guests. These open nights vary in numbers, but two or three a week are quite usual, and the men coming in as the girls' guests puts things on the proper basis.

We know that until the housing question is settled Girls' Clubs will be a necessity, and perhaps even then they will be wanted. Perhaps, too, something better will be evolved in time to take the place of clubs and their ideals in the young life of the nation, but as things now stand there is nothing else which teaches so thoroughly the three great needs of modern life—self-control, self-reverence, self-respect—as the schools of citizenship for our girls. C. P.


#### Our Advertisers.

Members are requested to patronise our advertisers, to keep their receipted bills, and to send them to the Advertisement Manager of THE VOTE. Many papers, besides our own, have found it difficult to obtain advertisements during the war. Some papers live entirely on their advertisements. We do not. We live on the esteem and co-operation of our members and of the friends of Woman Suffrage. But we do not forget that those who advertise in our pages support our cause and we have a feeling of goodwill towards them, which will prompt us to deal with them when practicable. In particular, we commend the scheme of "The Essential Library," advertised in our last week's issue. The books are classics—of the company of the elect who have entered and dwell in the world of thought—books for edification, for consolation, for laughter and for tears—holiday books, reading-in-bed books, books for every day, and the kind you can only read when you "feel like it." One shilling for the first week and 1s. 6d. for ten weeks will procure a varied feast of mental pabulum which will form a wholesome change to the incessant consumption of war news and novels.

#### Contingent of Healing from Overseas.

The Australian Red Cross Society is sending women from each of the States of the Commonwealth to England to help in military hospitals.

"I KNOW NOTHING OF MY NEW DUTIES; I shall have all these things to learn," said Newton D. Baker, recently appointed Secretary of War in the United States Government. Why refuse women the right to learn politics by giving them political responsibility—the vote?



**ELEGANT  
EYE-GLASSES**  
At Very Moderate Prices.

Mr. McCLEAN will be pleased to test the eyes of readers of this paper entirely free of charge and advise thereon. By our method of testing the sight and fitting the individual face, perfect satisfaction is assured, both with regard to sight and comfort in wear.

**Gold-filled Spectacles and Pince-Nez from 5/- per pair.**

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**A. E. McCLEAN,**  
Ophthalmic Optician,  
37, ALDWYCH, W.C.  
(Under the Waldorf Hotel.)

### HAND-WOVEN MATERIALS MADE IN THE DAUNTLESS HALL WORK-ROOM. Artistic Dress Fabrics

In Linen, Cotton, Wool, &c. Send for price list, or 2s. for sample Towel, to help the Women Workers, or call and see the goods at **The Alston Studio, 8, New Bond Street, W.** Children's Jumpers and Frocks from 6s. Sports Coats from 13s. 6d. Lessons in SPINNING and WEAVING given. Terms on application. Free Demonstrations every Tuesday from 11.30 to 1 p.m.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 1132.



FRIDAY,  
AUGUST 4,  
1916.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

## BRANCH NOTES.

### Glasgow, 212, Bath-street.

Special meetings have been held to discuss Compulsory Service for Women and Registration Reform. Our members were strongly opposed to any measure of compulsion for voteless women, and also to the compilation of any register on which women were not included. Adult Suffrage and Human Suffrage were also discussed, and dismissed as being out of the question at the present time.

### Reading.

A Jumble Sale will be held in September. Will members kindly send contributions to Mrs. Wilkinson, 179, Ords-road, Reading, or a postcard asking that articles may be called for?

### Swansea.

A successful branch meeting was held at Miss Kirkland's on July 19, at 7.30 p.m. Miss Kirkland took the chair. An appeal for handkerchiefs for the Green, White and Gold Fair was read, and most of the members present readily promised to supply three handkerchiefs each—an example which we should be very pleased to see others follow. All kinds of handkerchiefs and articles made of handkerchiefs would be very acceptable. We had the great pleasure of listening to an interesting address by Miss Neal, who dealt with the subject of "Equal Pay for Equal Work." Mrs. Wheatley spoke a few words, and expressed our thanks to Miss Neal. A letter, appealing for a contribution towards the expenses of the local Tipperary Club, was read, and, after discussion, it was decided to send one guinea. Miss Neal proposed that the branch should send a contribution to the 50,000 Shilling Fund, and a sum of £3 was voted for the purpose.

## For IDEAL PRESENTS

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2. WHITE SERGE COSTUME. Full, pleated skirt, trimmed white silk braid; tailor-made. Waist 25½in., length 40in.; 12s. 6d. Perfect condition.
3. WHITE FLANNEL TROUSERS (boy 14), two pairs; 4s. 6d. and 2s. 6d.
4. GREY SERGE CAPE WRAP; waistcoat front; ¾-length; 10s. or offer. New.
5. HANDSOME PURPLE FIGURED SILK OPERA WRAP, lined primrose satin. Worn few times. £2.
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7. VERY DARK NAVY CREPE DE CHINE FROCK. Waist 26in., skirt 44in. New. 28s. 6d.

All above articles can be seen in "THE VOTE" Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

**BARGAINS.**—Two new coloured silk gowns, 14s. 6d. each; hand-made and hand-embroidered white cotton voile gown, price 11s. 6d. Can be seen at "THE VOTE" Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

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at reasonable prices. Suitable for present  
and early Autumn wear.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

A MEMBER of the W.F.L. would be glad to assist a lady daily in her domestic duties.—Apply Mrs. L., c/o "THE VOTE" Office.

TO LET, a Small Furnished Flat, 1st floor. Plate and linen.—29b, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. Apply 10 to 12 and 6.15 to 7.30.

64-PAGE BOOK ABOUT HERBS AND HOW TO USE THEM, free. Send for one.—TRIMMELL, The Herbalist, 144, Richmond-rd., Cardiff. Est. 1879.

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