

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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Edited by C. DESPARD.

**OBJECT:** To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men.

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## The New Government.

The following Members of the New Government have been announced:—

### THE WAR CABINET.

<b>Mr. D. LLOYD GEORGE</b> .....	<b>Prime Minister.</b>
<b>Lord CURZON</b> .....	<b>Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Lords.</b>
<b>Mr. HENDERSON</b> .....	<b>Without Portfolio.</b>
<b>Lord MILNER</b> .....	<b>Without Portfolio.</b>

Mr. Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has been asked by the Prime Minister to act as Leader of the House of Commons, will also be a member, but will not be expected to attend regularly.

### OTHER MINISTERS.

Lord Chancellor .. .. .	<b>Sir Robert Finlay, K.C.</b>
Home Secretary .. .. .	<b>Sir George Cave.</b>
Foreign Secretary .. .. .	<b>Mr. Balfour.</b>
Colonial Secretary .. .. .	<b>Mr. Walter Long.</b>
Secretary for War .. .. .	<b>Lord Derby.</b>
Secretary for India .. .. .	<b>Mr. Austen Chamberlain.</b>
President Local Govt. Board .. .. .	<b>Lord Rhondda.</b>
President Board of Trade .. .. .	<b>Sir A. Stanley.</b>
Minister of Labour .. .. .	<b>Mr. Hodge.</b>
First Lord of the Admiralty .. .. .	<b>Sir Edward Carson.</b>
Minister of Munitions .. .. .	<b>Dr. Addison.</b>
Minister of Blockade .. .. .	<b>Lord Robert Cecil.</b>
Food Controller .. .. .	<b>Lord Devonport.</b>
Shipping Controller .. .. .	<b>Sir Joseph Maclay.</b>
President Board of Agriculture .. .. .	<b>Mr. R. E. Prothero.</b>

President, Board of Education .. .. .	<b>Dr. H. A. L. Fisher.</b>
First Commissioner of Works .. .. .	<b>Sir Alfred Mond.</b>
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster .. .. .	<b>Sir Frederick Cawley.</b>
Postmaster-General .. .. .	<b>Mr. Albert Illingworth.</b>
Pensions Minister .. .. .	<b>Mr. George Barnes.</b>
Attorney-General .. .. .	<b>Sir F. E. Smith, K.C.</b>
Solicitor-General .. .. .	<b>Mr. Gordon Hewart, K.C.</b>
Secretary for Scotland .. .. .	<b>Mr. Munro, K.C.</b>
Lord Advocate .. .. .	<b>Mr. J. A. Clyde, K.C.</b>
Solicitor-General for Scotland .. .. .	<b>Mr. T. B. Morison, K.C.</b>

### IRISH APPOINTMENTS.

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland .. .. .	<b>Lord Wimborne.</b>
Chief Secretary for Ireland .. .. .	<b>Mr. H. E. Duke.</b>
Lord Chancellor of Ireland .. .. .	<b>Sir I. J. O'Brien, K.C.</b>

### MINISTERS AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Ministers have voted as follows on the Woman Suffrage Bills of 1911 and 1913:—

	1911.	1913.		1911.	1913.
<b>Mr. David Lloyd George</b> .. .. .	For.	For.	<b>Sir Edward Carson</b> .. .. .	Absent unpaired.	Absent.
<b>Mr. A. Henderson</b> .. .. .	For.	For.	<b>Dr. Addison</b> .. .. .	Against.	For.
<b>Mr. Bonar Law</b> .. .. .	Paired for.	Absent.	<b>Lord Robert Cecil</b> .. .. .	(Backed Conciliation Bill)	For.
<b>Sir Robert Finlay, K.C.</b> .. .. .	Absent unpaired.	Against.	<b>Sir Alfred Mond</b> .. .. .	Absent unpaired.	For.
<b>Sir George Cave</b> .. .. .	Absent unpaired.	Absent.	(On Conciliation Committee.)		
<b>Mr. A. J. Balfour</b> .. .. .	Paired for.	Absent.	<b>Sir Frederick Cawley</b> .. .. .	For.	Absent.
<b>Mr. Walter Long</b> .. .. .	Against.	Against.	<b>Mr. George Barnes</b> .. .. .	For.	For.
<b>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</b> .. .. .	Paired against.	Absent.	<b>Sir F. E. Smith</b> .. .. .	Absent unpaired.	Against.
<b>Mr. J. Hodge</b> .. .. .	For.	For.	<b>Mr. J. A. Clyde, K.C.</b> .. .. .	Absent unpaired.	Absent.
(On Conciliation Bill Committee.)			<b>Mr. H. E. Duke</b> .. .. .	Absent unpaired.	Absent.



## Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.  
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 Hon. Head of Literature Department—Miss MARGARET HODGE.  
 Political and Militant Organiser—Miss C. NINA BOYLE.  
 Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

#### LONDON AND SUBURBS.



#### DARE TO BE FREE.

Friday, December 15.—CROYDON BRANCH ANNUAL MEETING, 32A, The Arcade, High-street, 3 p.m. All members are asked to attend. W.F.L. "At Home," Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 6 p.m. Political speeches at 7 p.m. by Mrs. Schofield Coates, Mrs. Whetton, Mrs. Mustard. Chair: Miss Eunice Murray. Refreshments can be obtained.  
 RECITAL OF FAIRY TALES AND FOLK SONGS, by Miss Raleigh and Miss Anne Squire at Morley Hall (Y.W.C.A.), 26, George-street, Hanover-square. Tea, 4 p.m. Recital, 4.30, Arranged by Mrs. Corner for the Clapham Branch, W.F.L., in aid of the Nine Elms Settlement. A short speech by Mrs. Tippett on the work of the Settlement. Tickets 2s. 6d. each, including tea.  
 Friday, December 22.—W.F.L. SETTLEMENT, Nine Elms, Children's Christmas Treat.

THE MINERVA CAFÉ, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Open every day except Sunday to men and women. Vegetarian lunches from 12 to 2 p.m.; teas from 3 to 6 p.m. Smoking-room. The large room is available for meetings. Apply to Mrs. Fisher.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W. 1d. and 4d. meals, weekdays at noon. Children's Guest House and Milk Depot for Nursing Mothers.

THE DESPARD ARMS, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. (five minutes' walk from Maple's). Open to all for refreshments (dinners and suppers from 6d.) and recreation. Weekdays, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Breakfasts from 7 a.m. Sundays, 4 to 9 p.m. Bedrooms for women at work.

#### PROVINCES.

Saturday, December 16.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Fair, Sale of Christmas presents, cakes, candy, &c. Suffrage Club, 231, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

Monday, December 18.—READING BRANCH MEETING. "St. Anne's," 232, Wokingham-road, 7.30 p.m. Address by Mrs. Sacret on Wilma Meikle's book, "Towards a Sane Feminism." Members are asked to bring friends with them. MIDDLESBROUGH. Fair. Suffrage Club, 231, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

Tuesday, December 19.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Children's Christmas Party. Suffrage Club, 231, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

Saturday, December 30.—SOUTHSEA. Whist Drive, 17, Lombard-street, 6.30 p.m. prompt. Tickets 1s. each.

Wednesday, January 3, 1917.—SOUTHSEA. Work Party, 17, Lombard-street, 3 to 7 p.m.

Tuesday, January 9, 1917.—SOUTHSEA. Members' Meeting, 17, Lombard-street, 7.30 p.m.

#### SCOTLAND.

Saturday, December 16.—EDINBURGH. Christmas Sale.

#### OTHER SOCIETIES.

Sunday, December 31.—KINGSTON HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY, Fife Hall, Fife-road, 7 p.m. Speaker: Miss Underwood. Subject: "The Importance of Women Minding their own Business."

### GET ON WITH THE WAR!

50,000 Shilling Fund.

Another list of this fund will be printed next week. 35,000 shillings have still to come.

Women cannot wait for their enfranchisement. Our country is calling for our help, we can do very little to aid her until we have the vote. Now is the time for every suffragist to make a great effort and send more than can be conveniently spared to enable the Women's Freedom League to

#### GET ON WITH THE WAR for Women's Freedom.

Contributions this week, for inclusion in next week's list, will be very warmly welcomed and gratefully acknowledged by your Honorary Treasurer,  
 E. KNIGHT.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

### LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

The following letter was sent to the Prime Minister by the Women's Freedom League:—

144, High Holborn, December 11, 1916.

The Right Hon. David Lloyd George, M.P.,  
 11, Downing-street, S.W.

DEAR SIR,—Believing that you agree with us that the help of women is as vital to the welfare of the State in war as in peace, we urge on you, as leader of the new Government, the great need of enfranchising the women and of welcoming their assistance in the solution of the many difficult problems that have to be faced at the present time.

We recognise that you have always advocated woman's suffrage, and we ask that you will receive a deputation from the Women's Freedom League, who will lay before you their case for the political enfranchisement of women.

Having the welfare of men as well as women at heart, and knowing that the only way in which to secure anything like equitable treatment between men and women is to put both on an equal footing, we ask you most earnestly to consider the need, for the well-being of the whole country, of enfranchising women so that they may be in a position to give their full co-operation with men, when, after the war, decisions on the great questions of social and industrial reconstruction are to be made.

We should take up as little of your time as possible, and only the urgency of the matter compels us to ask you to receive our representatives.

We have the honour to be your obedient servants,

E. KNIGHT, Hon. Treasurer.  
 F. A. UNDERWOOD, Secretary.

### OUR POINT OF VIEW.

#### The New Government.

A revolution in Parliamentary Government has been accomplished, and a new era ushered in amid the darkness of sordid political intrigues, upon which it is not for us to enlarge. The operation of Cabinet-making has, apparently, made the sawdust fly, and the construction of upper shelves is an industry which the exigencies of the situation are likely to require. We had been led to expect another Coalition Government, but, day by day, as the process went on, it became clear that Mr. Lloyd George was depending more and more on Unionist and Labour and less and less on Liberal support. The Asquithian following have definitely gone into opposition, and none of the chief offices of State have been filled from their ranks. Stars of the Second Magnitude, such as Mr. Herbert Samuel, have preferred to share the obscurity into which Mr. Asquith and Viscount Grey have been relegated by the transit of the brilliant luminary which now dominates the political firmament. Even such a prominent member of the Liberal "Ginger" group as Sir H. Dalziel is careful to announce that he does not seek office. The administration purports to be a national one, and includes business men, though the great head of the barons of the Press (one of the most important business undertakings in the country), the maker and unmaker of the King's ministers, prefers the seat of the mighty in Printing House Square and Carmelite House. The Prime Minister may yet pray to be delivered from his friends. "Get on with the war" is to be the motto of the man in the street, who recognises all is not well but hopes for the best from the shaking of the political kaleidoscope.

#### Suffragists and Anti's.

From 23 the Cabinet has been reduced to five, while the Ministry has been increased to 30. Several new offices have been created, and the example of France has been followed by the setting up of a Ministry of Labour. In the midst of the national excitement, caused by the war, and the conflict of interests of the various political groups, what chance is there for a measure of Franchise Reform in which women shall have a part? Like the larger Cabinets of the past, the contracted Cabinet contains

THEY SUPPORT US!

both our friends and our enemies. The Prime Minister would claim to be among the former, though we have not forgotten his desertion at the time of the Conciliation Bill. Before the war Mr. Bonar Law was credited with the desire that the Unionist party should adopt some form of Votes for Women. The Labour Party is said to have demanded guarantees before they joined Mr. Lloyd George's Government, and it would be interesting to know whether they extracted any pledge on behalf of the women of the country, as it was clearly their duty to do, before Mr. Henderson became a member of the Cabinet. Unfortunately, our enemies, Lords Curzon and Milner, loom larger in a Cabinet of five than they would in a larger body.

#### A Chance for Our Champions.

The hope of the future probably lies in the fact that, although this is not a Coalition Government, it is one which is dependent upon followers in three different camps—Unionist, Labour, and, to a less degree, Liberal. The fusion of elements, which at present have no attraction for each other, might at any time prove fatal. In the circumstances it would connote suicidal mania not to proceed with a measure of registration reform and to trust to an already obsolete register. When once the question is before the House, it seems unlikely that it would be possible to exclude the discussion of franchise reform. When this time arrives, have we not enough friends in all the political parties to insist that the claims of women shall no longer be neglected? There has, for some time, been a general feeling in both the Liberal and Labour parties that the question has been allowed to hang fire too long, and ought to have been settled long ago. Loyalty to the Head of the Government can no longer be pleaded as an excuse for the denial of justice to women. Women suffragists have not been unduly elated by the floods of adulation poured forth on the work of women, and occasionally we may have been caught seeking the signs of facial protuberance due to a displaced organ of speech. Yet, undoubtedly, we have made friends, and, in the face of a common adversity, more generous instincts have sprung to life. The genius of Mr. Lloyd George is constructive. He is credited with large aims and great schemes—imperial and national. No one knows better than he that the success of many of these schemes is impossible without the active co-operation of the women of the country.

#### Women's Work and Wages.

"It is for the employers, and above all for the Government, to see that prospects are opened to women more encouraging than those offered by a salary of 30s. a week. Given respectable education, and a wage which allows of freedom from constant anxiety, our womanhood will be found fit for its task." We call the attention of our readers to an important article in the *Times* of December 12 on "The Woman who Works," which discusses wages, adequate and inadequate, and ends with the above words of wisdom. To get the Government and other employers to heed them is another question; how far they fall short was well pointed out by Miss Esther Roper at our "Wednesday" gathering last week. "The girls only want a little pocket money—half a man's wages is plenty for them," is too often the rule by which employers are guided, and the Government is among the worst of sinners. By accepting "pocket money" for their work, rather than just remuneration, women who have no anxiety as to shelter, food, or clothing do a serious injustice to their sisters who frequently have to support, not only themselves, but others. The trained woman is a vital necessity to-day; how quick is her response—given training and opportunity—is one of the revelations of the great war; but her work must be

rewarded according to its worth, not according to her sex. *The Times* article shows how bare a subsistence is possible on 25s. a week, and that "even £2 a week means a very hard life for a woman of refinement."

#### A Force Against Vice.

We note that Dean Inge, speaking at the annual meeting of the Christian Evidence Society on December 11, included the Woman's Movement as one of "three powerful extraneous influences" against vice. It was this force which converted the Bishop of London to Woman Suffrage, yet the attitude of the Church, with some notable exceptions, towards the question has been that of unreasoning and obstinate opposition. It is high time for a mission of repentance.

### A MESSAGE FROM MISS NINA BOYLE.

London, December 8, 1916.

DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,—I want to send you a word of greeting before leaving for the uncertain fortunes of hospital work in the near East. You know, I hope and believe, that I am not taking up "war-work" of this sort because I believe it to be my duty or because I am fired with feelings of patriotism developed by the exigencies of the European crisis. My patriotism has never needed that sort of spur, and is quite as well served and displayed in working for the welfare of my fellow-women as in any other possible way. That is my real work; I am only leaving it for a time because I believe I shall come back to it fresher, fitter, and more competent.

After five and a half years I have felt myself getting into a groove, and lacking in initiative and in fresh ideas. A change of work as well as scene is the best tonic; and I shall be able to be of greater use to our League than if I let myself get stale. Also, this great war is the biggest thing the world has yet known; and I think it becomes me, who talk politics and find fault with politicians, to see something of it for myself at first hand, and not to be dependent on other people's impressions. I feel sure I shall get a better perspective and sense of proportion as the result.

To our president, our executive, to all my colleagues, and our branches and members, I owe nothing but thanks and goodwill for a vast amount of help, encouragement, and support. If I have done well for our League, it is because our League has done well for me; and it is my earnest hope that we may keep together and help carry our Cause to triumph in the not too distant future. To keep a straight course for votes for women, to keep the flag flying until we win, is the only policy for us; and I believe we will.

It has not been considered advisable to publish widely the date or manner of our departure, and in deference to this decision I have not asked many of my friends to come and give me a send-off. I hope they will forgive me, and come, instead, to give me a welcome on my return. I shall look forward to that through all my new adventures, whatever they may be.—Ever sincerely yours,

C. NINA BOYLE.

Miss Boyle left London last week for Salonika as one of a small reinforcement sent out to strengthen the Wounded Allies' Relief Committee's hospital at Vodena, Macedonia. The party included Mrs. Aldridge (another Women's Freedom League member), Mrs. Sandeman, and Miss Waller, with Professor Gilbert Davis, of Glasgow University, who holds the position of administrator. Mrs. Aldridge, as all our members know, has previously had exciting experiences in Serbia with Mrs. Stobart's hospital, and took part in the incredible hardships of the retreat; Mrs. Sandeman also was in Serbia with the British Farmers' hospital unit for over a year, and was a prisoner of war in the hands of the Austrians.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 48.



## THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd.  
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 FRIDAY, December 15th, 1916.

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.  
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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.

### SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

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### AGENTS.

International Suffrage Shop, 5, Duke-street, Charing Cross, W.C.; Messrs. Horace Marshall and Co., Temple-avenue, E.C.; City and Suburban Publishing Company, St. Bride's Churchyard, E.C.; E. Marlborough, Old Bailey, E.C.; A. Ritchie, Pemberton-row, Gough-square, E.C.; Simpkin, Marshall and Co., Orange-street, Haymarket; John Heywood, Manchester. Can be obtained at the Book-stalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son and all newsagents.

## WOMEN'S TERMS:

### Our Message to the Government.

That which has been so subtly prepared for has come to pass. The much-abused Coalition Government has fallen, and Mr. George has been given the task of building up a new Cabinet. With the purely political aspect of the situation we do not propose to deal here. Some are jubilant, others are depressed. For the sake of the suffering country it is to be hoped that these kaleidoscopic changes—this shifting of personnel, for it is little else—will put an end to the present deadlock. Also that the people, men and women, will be allowed some clearer vision than hitherto of what is actually going on, and of that to which our statesmen are committing us.

As women, we have no voice whatever in any of these changes. It may be said that, at the present moment, men are in the same position. Practically the constitution is a dead letter, for while neither the Coalition Government represented nor that which Mr. George has formed represents the House of Commons, it is impossible to maintain that the House of Commons represents the country. That, indeed, may be one of the reasons for all the creaking of hinges. Public opinion is uncertain. It varies from day to day. Further, it is unascertainable. Who can dare to say what the men in the trenches are thinking?

Thousands of the workers at home are too much worn out when the work of the day is over to be able to think at all, and large sections of the Press misinterpret the thoughts of the people. One point, however, we note, and here we see the radical difference between the position of women and that of men.

Look back over the dramatic history of the last few days. Mr. George resigns, Mr. Asquith resigns. Mr. Bonar Law, leader of the Opposition, is asked to form a Ministry. He finds the task impossible. Upon this Mr. George is sent for and, furnished with full authority, proceeds to his task. The public may look upon him as a Dictator. Virtually they may think the power is in his hands. But Mr. George knows better. There are dubious elements in the House. Labour and Ireland have between them a large representation, therefore they must be conciliated. So, at the head of *The Daily News'* issue of December 8 we find the following momentous words:—

"Labour's terms with the new Prime Minister;"

and from the "Lobby Correspondent," "Mr. Lloyd George yesterday secured the adherence of the Labour Party to his Ministry, and his success in this direction wrought a quick change in the political atmosphere. No doubt is now entertained of his ability to form a Government."

Whether or no the representatives of Labour were right in their decision, and whether they will be supported by the rank and file, remains to be proved. No doubt we have many surprises in front of us. That which stands out clearly is that no definite recognition of the Government could take place without the backing of Labour. It is right that it should be so, and we are ready to admit that this open recognition of Labour's power is a step towards the establishment of truer estimates and a sounder basis of society in the future than we have had in the past. But we maintain that women, unrepresented, and therefore, so far as Cabinet-making is concerned, disregarded, are custodians of a force to the full as necessary as that which is wielded by Labour, and yet they are not asked to make terms.

In our last issue we drew attention to the questions that are now before the public, and pointed out that every one of them is of vital concern to women. Were they in a position to give effect to their demands, what might it not mean for the harassed country?

Now, once more we are waiting. The whole of our political history shows that the will and desires of the Prime Minister loom large in the decision of the Cabinet. Mr. Asquith's unveiled opposition to Woman's Suffrage, qualified by his later experiences, did actually tend indefinitely to delay the granting to women of citizens' rights. Mr. George has no such record. All who were present at the great suffrage deputation received by Mr. Asquith some years ago will remember how, when called upon, the present Prime Minister asserted strongly his sympathy with the women's claim. He, personally, he said, would do what he could. He would advocate their cause in the country and in Parliament—and he did, indeed, make one or two speeches. Armed now with the power which then he did not possess he is able to fulfil his promises. He must know—none better—that until every adult section of the community is represented there can be no true democracy. He professes to be a democrat in the widest sense of the term. He is now to be put to the test. Will he go forward boldly and consistently until his aim is achieved? Will he see to it that, when the war—with all its anomalies—is over, and when the work of reconstruction is taken in hand, the whole country—men and women of every class, occupation, and degree—is given representation, or will he slavishly repeat the old formula to the women, "That which you desire is just; and if you will only be patient your desire will be granted. But—this is not the time." To which is added now, "Consider the awful eventualities that face us. Give your energies to war work, and presently you shall be attended to."

Ah! Can we not see? Presently there will be peace congresses and reconstruction, and patching up what this war of men and machines has broken. Complications still; and no end in sight anywhere! Meanwhile our homes are being robbed; the fruit of our love and toil is being taken away from us; our children are passing on into adolescence ill-equipped for the stern battle of life; and we have to stand aside powerless to act. If the new Prime Minister temporises he will lose an opportunity such as has seldom fallen to the lot of any leader of men.

We, the women of all the belligerent nations, are waiting. We have drunk deeply of the bitter waters of pain and humiliation brewed by the insensate

## COMBINED AND UNCOMBINED WOMANHOOD.

Speaking at Clapham Public Hall on December 6 Mr. Laurence Housman said that uncombined womanhood accompanied the slow progress of women through the centuries. This uncombined state segregated woman, impressed on her that her duty lay only in her home, and confined her energies to her household. When England was developing at a great rate, and a new age was forming, individual women broke away from the old traditions. Florence Nightingale was among the first, and she and her nurses were judged to be unwomanly. Every attempt that women made to express themselves outside the home was denounced as unwomanly, and each new point for which women combined was always resisted—it is still considered unwomanly for women to be lawyers! But industrially women must combine. Was not women's struggle in the industrial world one of the root causes of the suffrage movement? Civilisation was based upon man's power of perceiving results, of putting two and two together, and of making experiments. The suffrage movement stood for evolution, and for a democracy capable of perceiving results. The vote was still a very crude and imperfect instrument, but it was a symbol of power. The right of way and the great recognition of equality were denied to the voteless. The present war was a war of positions; but this was not the case in civil affairs. There was a strong, swift revolution at home, and conditions were moving. Women were less represented in war conditions than in peace conditions, yet greater emergency problems were thrust upon them. If women themselves were not in the position to deal with these problems, men would solve them over the heads of voteless women. This was already foreshadowed in proposed legislation in the treatment of venereal diseases and in trade union demands in connection with women's labour. Women must be in possession of the right weapon—political power—to protect their interests.

Mrs. Despard referred to the deputation which she had recently introduced to the Home Secretary on the subject of the treatment of venereal diseases, and pointed out the necessity of women now being more alert than ever on questions affecting the interests of women. Women all the world over had to realise the strong bond of common womanhood. Women must be definite in their thinking and must influence public opinion. They must work as never before to gain an equal footing with men in the political world, and use the power which lay behind the vote.

The chair was taken by Mrs. Samuel, and Mrs. Corner appealed for the collection.

folly of men. We have endured; but we would have them know that there is a limit to our endurance. Better death than the life we have been leading. Better no children at all than sons to be food for cannon and daughters to mourn their loss. If there is no change of outlook the time will come when women will say this after a fashion that cannot be disregarded.

It is our earnest hope that the men in power will recognise this before it is too late, and that the hour will soon come when the Woman, as well as the Labour force, will have to be reckoned with by politicians.

C. DESPARD.

## WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

### The Queen and the National Council of Women.

Mrs. Creighton, presiding on December 7 at the annual meeting of the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, held at the Central Y.M.C.A., announced that Queen Mary, having had the agenda of the meeting before her, had most reluctantly come to the conclusion that, considering the nature of the questions upon which the Council was asked to pass resolutions, such as total prohibition, the extension of the franchise, etc., she had better retire from the position of patroness. Her Majesty, explained Mrs. Creighton, always abstained from any appearance of interference in public matters, but did not wish it to be thought that her interest in the Council was lessening, and desired that the annual report might be sent to her.

### The Roll of Honour.

Twenty-six women workers were killed and about thirty injured as the result of an explosion which occurred on December 5 in a "national factory in the north of England." In the announcement made by the Press Bureau it was stated:—"The great majority of the workers in the factory are women, and their behaviour is deserving of the highest praise. They displayed the greatest coolness and perfect discipline, both in helping to remove the injured and in continuing to carry on the work of the factory in spite of the explosion."

### The Expected.

The expected has happened. Following the announcements recorded in *THE VOTE* a fortnight ago, that women were to drive Royal Mail vans, and that the London and Provincial Union of Licensed Vehicle Workers had declared they would not employ women, the Postmaster-General has been informed by the National Transport Workers' Federation that the crisis has arisen through the attempted substitution of the men drivers of the mail vans of Messrs. MacNamara and Co., Limited, by women labour. "The men are more than suspicious that efforts are contemplated to substitute women in every sphere of the transit departments," says the secretary of the Federation in his letter. "No reasonable objection will be taken to the substitution of the single men eligible for military service by other men, but to introduce untrained women, with the darkened streets, would be fraught with the greatest danger to the public. The feeling of the men is one likely to precipitate a conflict at any moment."

Contrast the message from the Press Association correspondent at Salonika (*THE VOTE*, November 17) paying tribute to the courage and skill and nerve of women drivers of ambulances along precipitous roads: "Yet young girls perform the journey sometimes twice daily . . ." and the records of women drivers of commercial vans in London and elsewhere. It will be interesting to see the result of the struggle between the Post Office and the Licensed Vehicle Workers. The only way to prevent women becoming blacklegs is to give them equal pay for equal work.

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### GOLIATH AND DAVID.

The proverb *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* is a hard saying if we, as suffragists, are to speak of the politically dead. To speak of the "politically dead" is not necessarily to deny the resurrection, and it may be (so often is it that the unexpected happens in politics) that, after a period of hibernal sleep, marked possibly by growth, the dead may rise once more and reoccupy Downing Street. But, for the practical purposes of the moment, the administrations of Mr. Asquith are over, and the Coalition Government, which followed the several Liberal Governments that have been in power since 1906, is defunct. Whatever may be our individual feelings in regard to those principles for which the Parliaments dominated by Mr. Asquith were said to stand, or however great may be our appreciation of the personal qualities of individual members of his several ministries, women, as suffragists, can scarcely regret the passing, or temporary eclipse, of Mr. Asquith. It is obvious that he never concealed his opposition to the women's movement, and that he was equally convinced of their mental, as of their physical, inferiority. True, that the war, which brought to women a larger scope for action, hitherto denied to them, caused a certain change of attitude in the late Prime Minister. But the naive statement, "There are thousands of such women, and a year ago we did not know it," does not seem to have carried with it the conviction that the long-delayed act of justice to women ought immediately to be put in hand. His eulogists in the Press insist upon his steadfastness, his caution, and his robust common-sense—admirable qualities, though an excess of steadfastness may degenerate into obstinacy, undue caution may extend into the fields of mental indolence, and the saving grace of good sense may be too largely qualified by the adjective "common," and may connote a certain insensibility to the finer aspects of life and feeling.

It would have been far better if his Liberal supporters had long ago told women that the opposition of the Prime Minister made it so difficult, as to be almost impossible, to pass a Woman Suffrage measure as long as he held the reins of Government, even though the bulk of his party were in favour of some measure of Votes for Women. On the contrary, women were told that what was necessary was a raging tearing propaganda, and to go on storming the citadel. They read political history, and found that Liberalism stood for trust in the people, for the extension of the representative principle in Government and for liberty. Those who fought for freedom in the past were the giants of Liberalism. Only last month, at the Guildhall banquet, Mr. Asquith himself insisted that "barbarism and tyranny are the secular enemies of what is best in humanity, whether they issue from the east or the west"; but there was one aspect of tyranny which he failed to recognise—the tyranny, however benevolent, of one sex over the other.

Women saw that the reform they advocated was in the direct line of succession to the chain of liberties already won. It was one door still closed leading to the arena of citizenship, in which the men of the country were throwing their weight towards the realisation of what seemed to each the ideal State. On various occasions resolutions of the House of Commons affirmed the principle of Woman Suffrage, and Bills passed their second reading by large majorities. Probably we took these proceedings too seriously, being ignorant that politicians would waste their time professing pious opinions upon which they had no intention of acting. Ours, we had been told, was the loquacious sex, while men talked to some purpose in accordance with logical propositions. The periods of Mr. Asquith's ad-

ministrations were not only marked by the refusal of Votes to women. They were marked also by ruthless persecution of those who were sacrificing health, and even life, to support a cause which was essentially in accordance with the principles of Liberalism, i.e., the extension of representative Government to a disinherited class. We may allow that in this, as in other great reform movements, there were excesses of zeal and a too faithful imitation of male methods which no Government could permit to continue with impunity. But there could be no excuse for the brutality exhibited in putting down, not only manifestations of the movement which were clearly anti-social, but also perfectly legitimate demonstrations. The blackest failure of those Liberal administrations was their inability to look upon the motive and not the deed alone.

The slings and arrows (some doubtless poisoned) of political fortune have brought down the weighty Goliath and David fills the stage. His is a less ponderous, less imposing figure, but more agile, more vital, more versatile. His mind moves more quickly perhaps, though not necessarily, because there is less to move. He is not credited with the excess of caution attributed to Goliath, and, indeed, the editor of the *Daily News* entreats him and adjures him to be moderate and restrain his reforming zeal, to think before he acts, and to move slowly. We have the feeling that he is of a younger generation than Goliath—younger not only in years, but in thought and feeling, and that he will more readily respond to the promptings of the *Zeitgeist*. He looks forward and he sees far. Doubtless his reach exceeds his grasp, but he possesses that priceless gift of imagination as necessary to politicians as to poets and artists. For, indeed, the politician is the artist of the State: architect and builder of the future. While it would appear that the guiding principle of the policy of the late Prime Minister was embodied in his favourite maxim: *Wait and See*, Mr. Lloyd George moves to the appeal, *l'Audace et encore l'Audace*. E. M. N. C.

### OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

Speaking at Caxton Hall last Wednesday on "Women's Liberty in the Economic World," Miss Esther Roper said that liberty was a necessary foundation for equality in economic and other forms of life, and she warned women that they would be living in a fool's paradise if they slackened in their struggle for political liberty now, and had any belief in men's political gratitude for women's war services. Women had certainly proved, as suffragists had always contended, that they could do any men's work quite as well as men, if they were given an equal chance with men in training and in general conditions. Indeed, numerous women after three weeks' training were now doing exactly the same work as men had done after a seven years' training. Yet the Owner-Drivers branch of the London and Provincial Motor Vehicle Workers' Union had decided not to employ women as taxi-drivers, mainly on "physical and moral grounds," despite the fact that in very many other parts of this country women were being employed in that capacity in large numbers! Referring to the resolutions being discussed by the Parliamentary Committee of Employers and Trade Unionists, Miss Roper contended that the motto of the labour world after the war would be "Female labour must go!" unless women were in a better position politically than they are now. In Government Departments women were not given the work they could do best. Typewriting was being done by very highly-trained women, but they never had a chance of doing Class I work. Miss Roper asked if meanness could go further than the Govern-

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### BRANCH NOTES.

#### Dundee.

A social meeting was held in Lamb's Hotel, Dundee, on December 4, and Miss Husband presided over a large gathering. After tea and an excellent musical programme, rendered by the Misses Bryan, Anderson, Leslie, and Mrs. F. Gibson. Miss Eunice Murray's bright and inspiring address was eagerly listened to and cordially applauded. She pointed out that if at the beginning of the war a bargain had been struck for the acceptance of women's services on the same footing as those of the men they had released, much would have been done towards ensuring the future of our womanhood. Unless political power were given to women and their interests thus safeguarded, there was the very serious danger in the future that women would be used to undersell men. On the motion of Miss Husband, a very hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the speaker and also to the musical contributors.

#### Glasgow Suffrage Shop, 212, Bath-street.

The Glasgow Council met on December 7 to discuss the business of the branch; afterwards the branch meeting was held, at which Miss Eunice Murray spoke on "The Price of Food." There was a good attendance and an interesting discussion. Miss Murray has spoken recently at several meetings on the subject of food control, one of them being a large demonstration in the City Hall organised by the Glasgow Trades Council. The jumble sale held by the Queen's Park District was a great success, the sum raised being £23. We congratulate Miss Menzies and her committee, who worked so hard to make the sale successful.

#### Letchworth.

Mrs. Despard was warmly welcomed at our meeting on December 6 by a large and most attentive audience, representing widely differing views, but appreciating to the full her spiritual interpretation of the work before womanhood. The wish was expressed that she would visit Letchworth once a month! Our thanks to THE VOTE sellers for their successful help.

#### Portsmouth.

The annual whist drive will be held on Saturday, December 30, by kind invitation of Miss Mottershall, at 17, Lombard-street. Play will commence promptly at 6.30. Tickets 1s. each. A members' meeting will be held at the same address on Tuesday, January 9, at 7.30 p.m. The pamphlet, "Notification, and What Then?" published by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, will be read and discussed.

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

Our Christmas treat takes place on December 22, and we shall be grateful for any help friends can give at Nine Elms between now and then in the preparation of plum puddings and mince pies. We thank all those who contributed towards the Christmas fare, and acknowledge further gifts of 2s. 6d. from Miss Triplett, 5s. from Mrs. Roberts. Also for General Fund:—Miss L. Soames, £1; Miss K. Keizer, 5s.; L. H. de Friese, Esq., £2 2s.; Miss B. Sankey, 5s.; Miss Riggall, 1s.; Mrs. Norgate, 6s. for milk depot; Mr. Delbanco, payment of Fire and Employers' Liability premiums. Provisions have been given by Mr. Delbanco, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Thomas; jumble goods by Miss Powell, Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Delbanco, and an anonymous donor; flowers by Miss Ibbotson and Miss Tollemache; a gas-lighter by Mrs. Presbury; Mr. Frankenburg, mackintosh sheeting; dinner knives, Mrs. Delbanco; toys, Angela Clark.

ment's decision to give women half the war bonus given to men. As if women could go to the nearest grocer's and pay half-price for the goods they ordered! At the end of the war there would be less capital in the country, a lowering of wages, and an increase of Trusts, and women would need paid employment as they had never before needed it. In 1914 it was calculated that 4,000,000 people in this country were dependent on the work of women. But how many would there be in 1918? Can anyone say that women then will not need as much money as men? Women at present had no permanent footing anywhere—they had not gained the franchise, and Miss Roper believed they were up against increased difficulties in getting it. For this reason it was urgent that women should unite more strongly than ever to gain it. Labour difficulties would be settled politically over the heads of women, and unless women were prepared at once to face facts and unite their forces for political enfranchisement, it would be very difficult to stop short of a national disaster for women.

Mrs. Corner, speaking on the political situation, urged women to think more and to make other women think over the problems of the day. It mattered a great deal what women thought about compulsory notification of venereal diseases, the food problem, and education. Women should voice their thoughts on these matters insistently, and she reminded the audience that although England was making at the present time disastrous economies in the education of its children, Germany had not economised one jot or tittle in its children's education. Germany knew better; but it had done away with officers' servants!

From the chair, Miss Eva Christy declared that every woman ought to take a share in the responsibility of the State; this was no time to shirk one's duty, and every man and woman should desire to do the best they could for the country in which they lived, and to put into life some equivalent for what they got out of it.

### The Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W.

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### East and West.

Under the auspices of the London Branches Council, Mrs. Despard gave at Headquarters, on December 8, a lecture on East and West, in which she pointed out how much the West owes to the East in art, literature, science, and religion. She dealt principally with India from the historic, social, and political points of view and urged that the mysterious tie binding Britain to India made the study of Indian questions the duty of every Briton. Each had something to give to the other, and co-partnership, with sympathy and knowledge, was the only true way of progress. Mrs. Corner presided, and expressed the thanks of the audience to Mrs. Despard for her informing lecture.

### Voices from the North.

A mass meeting of the Northern Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage was held on Sunday evening, December 3, at the Oddfellows' Hall, Edinburgh, at which Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett presided. She said that the meeting was called to protest against any Register or Franchise Bill going through Parliament without the inclusion of women on equal terms with men. If adult suffrage was to be given to men, they would demand adult suffrage for women, and warned Parliament that they would resist to the death the conscription of women without women's consent or any attempt at the introduction of any single provision of the Contagious Diseases Act in connection with the sex of women.

Councillor Bruce Lindsay, J.P. (Edinburgh), said that he owed it as a duty to his dead wife to fight for the franchise, and he believed that when women obtained a voice in Parliament there would be a new heaven and a new earth for men.

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