

THE VOTE,
FEBRUARY 23, 1917.
ONE PENNY.

Woman's Day.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, FEB. 23, 1917

Edited by C. DESPARD.

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

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MAN IN THE STREET.
Woman's Day, February 27, 1917.

Have YOU Ever Thought Why Women Demand the Vote?

WOMEN are part of the nation. Without women there would be no nation—no fighting men. Man and woman together make the home. Man and woman together make the State, which is all the homes put together. But

MAN HAS ALWAYS MADE ALL THE LAWS

which affect the homes, individual or in the mass. He makes the laws and expects woman to obey them without asking whether or not she thinks them wise or foolish. If she refuses, if she tries to show him that his laws are not good for her, or the children, or even himself, she is punished.

WOMAN HAS NO VOICE OR POWER

in making the laws she has to keep. This is unjust.

Man, too, makes woman pay for carrying on the country in his way; he takes what he likes out of her purse and expects her to smile and say: "You're welcome!" When she will not open her purse, when she refuses to let him know what is inside, he punishes her again. She has no power to alter these things.

THIS IS TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION. IT IS TYRANNY.

Do you know that your wife and daughter are classed by man's law with idiots and criminals? No! You do not like it! But it is true. Your wife, the devoted mother in your home, who cares for you in every way; your daughter who is now rendering service to her country in its hour of need, risking her life perhaps in working with high explosives; these capable women are reckoned with murderers and lunatics as unfit to vote. You say

IT IS GROSSLY UNJUST.

It is. That is what Suffragists have been saying for many years. But

YOU CAN ALTER IT!

How? You are a voter. You can tell your Member of Parliament that you will not vote for him again unless he supports Votes for Women. The Government and Parliament must enfranchise women. You can make them, you and your friends!

You know how the vote has been the means by which the conditions of your work have been improved, better arrangements, better wages. You stood together with your fellow workers and Parliament had to listen. You made it not only listen, but act, and

IT WAS THE WEAPON OF THE VOTE WHICH DID IT!

Is it not fair that your daughter and other men's daughters, doing service to the State directly or indirectly by their work, should not be protected against bad conditions and sweated wages by the same weapon that protected you?

Are you wondering what Woman's Day means? Why all these women are selling Pansies—and Suffrage papers—in the streets to-day? It is to help the women workers who are "winning the war." You know how Parliament and Press and Platform have praised women for their work during the war. The Prime Minister was the first to realise their value; when he leads a chorus, thousands join in. But women need something more than praise;

THE VOTE IS VITAL TO THEM.

There is a danger threatening voteless women. They may be compelled to serve where and how and under whatever conditions men like.

Shall you be pleased to see your daughter made a slave as well as classed by man-made law with criminals and lunatics? No! Then prevent it by insisting that she shall be a free citizen as you are, with

THE RIGHT TO GIVE HER VOTE

in choosing her representative in Parliament where laws are made which she has to obey. You will soon see how laws that touch the home and the children, education, women's work outside the home, and the moral standards by which the world judges are improved when your wife and daughter and other men's wives and daughters vote on their own account.

This is no leap in the dark. Listen to

WHAT MEN SAY IN COUNTRIES WHERE WOMEN VOTE.

The Australian Senate on November 17, 1910, in a Message to the Motherland on the subject, said that the extension of the Suffrage to Women had

"Led to the more orderly conduct of elections. Given greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children. Brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied."

Therefore "we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative Government would be well advised in granting Votes to Women."

Some Australian women were granted the vote in 1895, and all had it in 1905. New Zealand women have had it more than twenty years. Did you see Australian women voting in London with the Australian soldiers a short time ago in a Referendum of all adult Australians on the subject of military conscription? They did so because they were free citizens, and their decision was required. Are not British women at home—your wife and daughter—worth as much to their country as Canadians (many of whom have been enfranchised during the war) and Australians? Of course they are. Why are you men so blind as not to welcome their co-operation?

In the United States 4,000,000 of women voted for their President last autumn because the women of thirteen States are enfranchised on the same terms as men. And a woman (Miss Jeanette Rankin) has recently been elected a Member of Congress, which would mean, if here, a Member of Parliament.

Listen to

WHAT THE STATE OF WYOMING SAYS OF ITS EXPERIENCE OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE,

which goes back to 1893:—

"The possession and exercise of the Suffrage by the women of Wyoming for the past quarter of a century has wrought no harm and has done much good in many ways. It has largely aided in banishing crime, pauperism, and vice from this State, and that without any violent or oppressive legislature. It has secured peaceful and orderly elections, good government, and a remarkable degree of civilisation and public order; and we point with pride to the fact, that after nearly twenty-five years of Woman's Suffrage, not one county in Wyoming has a poor-house, that our gaols are almost empty, and crime, except that committed by strangers in the State, is almost unknown. As the result of experience we urge every civilised community on earth to enfranchise its women without delay."

You never thought of this before? You feel as though your eyes had been opened?

Then one step only remains for you to take:

MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME AND WORK HARD TO WIN VOTES FOR WOMEN NOW!

Become an Associate of the Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, London, with Branches all over the country. Stand by the women in their fight. Remember: Union is strength,

SUFFRAGIST.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

WOMAN'S DAY! Celebrate the occasion by **Wearing Your Freedom League Badge** and by sending a contribution, however small, to the **50,000 Shilling Fund.**

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AN OPEN DOOR NO GOVERNMENT CAN IGNORE.
OUR WEDNESDAYS. OUR TREASURY.

THEY SUPPORT US.

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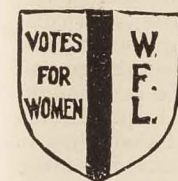
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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Friday, February 23.—Croydon Public Meeting 32A, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Mustard, "Women's Place in the Empire."

Saturday, February 24.—Golder's Green Branch Drawing Room Meeting, 13, Temple Fortune-court, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Mustard. Chair: Miss Hodge.

Sunday, February 25.—Dramatic Recital of "Romeo and Juliet," by Miss Clara Reed, at Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C., 3.30. Chair: Mrs. Tanner. Tickets, 2s. (numbered and reserved) and 1s., from W.F.L. Office.

Wednesday, February 28.—Public Meeting, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Dr. Armstrong Smith (Letchworth Theosophical School), on "Some Ideals in Education from a Theosophical Standpoint," and Miss Eunice Murray. Chair: Mrs. Despard. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the hall at 4.30 (6d.).

Friday, March 2.—Suffrage Rally, Caxton Hall, 7 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Munro, Miss F. A. Underwood, Mrs. Whetton. Chair: Miss Eunice Murray.

Wednesday, March 7.—Public Meeting, Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speakers: The Rev. C. Warlow, on "Women and the Church," and Mrs. Mustard. Chair: Miss Eva Christy. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the hall at 4.30 (6d.).

Friday, March 9.—Debate, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 6 p.m. "That the Present Economies in Education are Desirable in the National Interest." Opener, Mr. H. A. Grimshaw. Opposer, Miss de Norman. Questions and discussion invited.

Saturday, March 10.—Clapham Branch, Recital of Folk Songs and Fairy Tales by Miss Anne Squire and Miss Katherine Raleigh, Wirtemberg Hall, Wirtemberg-street, Clapham, S.W., 3.30. London Branches Council Drawing Room Meeting at 94, Cambridge-gardens, West Kensington (by kind invitation of Miss Reeves), 3 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Cobden Sanderson.

PROVINCES.

Monday, February 26.—Bournemouth, Public Meeting, Freedom Hall, Loughtonhurst, Westcliff-gardens (by kind permission of Mrs. Hume), 3.45 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck, on "The Devil a Saint Would Be," and Mrs. Whetton, on "The Present Political Situation." Tea can be obtained from 3.15 to 3.40 at 6d.

Thursday, March 1.—Reading, Public Meeting, Gas Offices Lecture Room, Cross-street, 7.30 p.m. Speakers: Miss Eunice Murray and Miss Anna Munro.

SCOTLAND.

Saturday, February 24.—Glasgow, in Hengler's Circus, Illustrated Lecture, "How I Escaped from Ruhlleben," by Geoffrey Pyke, Esq. Other speakers: Sir Samuel Chisholm and Miss Eunice Murray. Proceeds in aid of Scottish Prisoners of War. 2.30 p.m.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGH CAMPAIGN.

Thursday, March 8.—Abermule, Public Meeting, Dolforwyn School. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro; subject, "Social Evil." Chairman: Mr. E. B. Williams. 7 p.m.

Friday, March 9.—Llandyn Schoolroom, Public Meeting. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro. Chairman: Miss Alix M. Clark. 7 p.m.

We draw special attention to—

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OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

Speaking at Caxton Hall on February 14 on "Juvenile Crime," Miss Evelyn Sharp said that people talked a power of nonsense on this subject, and that children and crime ought never to be associated. Whenever a child was brought before a magistrate Society ought to take its place in the dock. Statistics showed that there was a great increase in the number of juvenile offenders, and the reasons given for this increase were the absence of the father, the fact that the mother was out at work, the darkened streets, etc. But Miss Sharp considered that the status of the mother had something to do with it. While the father only was legally the parent of a child in the eyes of the State, the influence of the mother was lessened. Then if children were housed and crowded into what were no better than pigsties, how could they be morally sound? It was said that the high wages paid to boys and girls enabled them to go to cinemas, where there was incentive to adventure, and this fact helped to increase juvenile crime, but Miss Sharp thought that the attempt on the part of boys and girls to make their lives less colourless was a good and not a bad sign; that they sometimes broke away from our ordinary conventions of child-behaviour showed that there was some life and spirit left in the country. "Boys will be boys" was a frequent statement; then why, asked the speaker, make men of so many of them at fourteen years of age when they are sent into the labour market, to work there without the experience and ability of riper years to help them? People had no business to expect these children to behave as old wiseacres, and, for her part, she was glad they did not. Miss Sharp thought that if children were kept at school beyond fourteen years of age there would be a decrease in what was called juvenile crime. One disturbing fact was that those convicted of juvenile crime belonged to the working class. Children of other classes did not appear before magistrates, but their delinquencies were styled "naughtiness." The speaker contended that "naughtiness" was the term which more accurately described juvenile crime. The State had not yet faced the question of child labour or the life of its children. The country needed the spirit of adventure in children and should see it was directed into right channels. After the war there would probably be a wave of materialism and many material reforms, but it was the soul of the child that we wanted to save; for this women's insight was needed. Women should be on the Bench as well as men, and women's counsels in the State of equal value with the counsels of men.

Mrs. Mustard declared that the agitation for votes for women went down to the bed-rock of things. Fathers of families had had the parliamentary vote for many years, but what had their votes done for the protection of our girls? When women had political power there would be less danger in the streets to our girls and less nonsense talked of the danger of these streets to the men. The chair was taken by Miss F. A. Underwood.

BIRTH.

Wicks.—On February 6, at 8, Church-lane, Hornsey, N., to Henry W. and Mary Suzette Wicks (née Syms)—a daughter (Mary Pleasant). [Welcome to another little suffragist!—Ed. Vote.]

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 128.

THE VOTE.

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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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AGENTS.

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WOMAN'S DAY.

On Tuesday, February 27, 1917, Woman's Day will be celebrated in London. It is the first time that the women of the nation—the women who are so loudly acclaimed as "winning the war"—are making an appeal to the public by means of a Flag Day. There have been Flag Days for our Allies, for the Red Cross, for all kinds of comforts and help for our soldiers and sailors, but never till now for women. Next Tuesday the appeal will be for the great work which the Young Women's Christian Association have done and the greater work they want to do for the women workers—providing huts, canteens, and other necessary aids to welfare and efficiency. All honour to the splendid work of the Young Men's Christian Association for men and to the devoted work of the Young Women's Christian Association for women. A real Woman's Day, however, should bring before the public some wider and clearer idea of how woman has always served her country as well as in this supreme crisis. The notable service rendered during the years of war is not the reason why she should have the vote on equal terms with men—for the only reason is the justice of her claim as woman—but it supports her claim by proving that she can play the part of a true citizen.

It will be remembered that when war broke out it was the Woman Suffrage organisations which were ready without delay to register and mobilise women for vital and immediate service. That there were some men wise enough to realise the importance of this fact was proved by a Mayor of one of the London boroughs, who, evidently much worried in those anxious first weeks of the war by bewildered questioners, declared: "If you want to know what to do and how to do it, go to the suffragists!"

Would that his advice had been taken seriously by the Government and municipal and other authorities, who either laughed to scorn women's offers of service or crowded all women into workrooms. When one of our own members, a woman experienced in public service, urged the Mayor and Council of the London borough in which she lives to provide for the training of women on the land and

undertook to bring, for a start, 100 women of the borough, all eager to learn, to all of whom the spade made a stronger appeal than the needle, her wise counsel was scoffed at and ridiculed. "Back to the needle!" was the cry. So it comes about that the land army of women, for which the need is so great to-day, and which might, by this time, have become efficient and experienced in service, is only now being mobilised. While men were learning the hard lesson of breaking down ancient prejudice the country was losing not only money but vitality. The same attitude was shown to the offer of the Women's Freedom League to find women cooks for the Army and to organise women police.

The story is now well known that the offer by two woman doctors, well-known suffragettes, of a complete hospital unit, entirely staffed by women, was summarily rejected by the War Office on the ground that war was no place for women. France thought otherwise and eagerly accepted their help. In due course the British authorities opened their eyes to the value of the work of these women and, repenting of their scornful attitude, put into the women's hands the transformation of the old St. Giles's Workhouse into the now famous Endell-street Military Hospital with 550 beds, staffed entirely by women. The magnificent service of the Scottish Women's and other hospitals, organised by the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies and various bodies and individuals, has been devoted to our Allies—France, Belgium, Serbia, Russia, and Roumania—having in the early days been refused by our own countrymen. It was an irony of circumstance when British women doctors and nurses bound for Serbia were captured by the British authorities at Malta and requisitioned for urgent service there. It is to be hoped they appreciated the coals of fire heaped upon their heads!

The industrial, commercial, and, in part, the professional world, though the Law and the Church lag far behind, has joined in the discovery of woman. The engineers were slow to credit her powers, even under the persuasion of Mr. Lloyd George; the farmers are even slower and more prejudiced. The woman on duty—and fulfilling it well—is now evident in the public services in towns; she must eventually come into her own in the country, but only on terms that ensure the decent comfort a self-respecting woman demands.

It is good to know that the Government itself, so lamentably slow to learn and thereby setting a bad example to others, is cutting some of the red tape which entangles it. We welcome most warmly the appointment of such capable and experienced women to direct the National Service for women as Mrs. H. J. Tennant, one of the first women appointed as Inspector of Factories, and Miss Violet Markham, whose keen interest in the work of women is well known. Mr. Asquith prided himself on having appointed women as Factory Inspectors. He was wise within the limits of his vision, but there can be no limit to progress, and if women had waited for Mr. Asquith's further encouragement, the country would have been the poorer to-day.

Another step forward taken by the Government in recognition that this is Woman's Day is the Women's Department of the Board of Agriculture. This is a recent development, but we take it as an outward sign of inward grace, and shall look forward now with hope to the necessary arrangements for decent housing, proper conditions of labour and just remuneration being made for the welfare of women called to do land service. Let other Government Departments follow suit. The Home Office, the Board of Trade, and the Foreign Office need the presence of capable women in positions of responsibility,

REMEMBER MARCH TWO. SEE YOU MARCH TOO.

I still want 34,000/- and there are only seven days before

MARCH 2.

Bring your contribution or send it if you cannot come, and I will add it to the list.

E. KNIGHT.

it is our duty to press for this clause to be applied fairly to both sexes. A similar danger exists on the question of loitering, for, while soliciting is a provable offence, a charge of loitering depends on a policeman's unsupported word, and, as the *Daily News* points out, "to strengthen the hands of the police in this connection involves a risk to innocent women and increases the danger of blackmail of the guilty." It becomes more and more evident that the only means by which we can get equal legislation for men and women is by securing for women the same political power as men enjoy.

The Value of Women.

We hear frequently that this war has taught men that women can do many more things than was hitherto believed, but it seems to be doing what is of even greater importance, *i.e.*, teaching women themselves what they can do, and helping them to realise their own power and value. On all sides we hear of the growth of a new spirit among women; two cases recently reported in the Press afford a striking illustration of this new spirit. In one instance seven girls employed in a munition factory appeared before a Tribunal on a charge of refusing to work in one of the danger rooms when ordered to do so. They had previously worked in the T.N.T. part of the building, and had suffered from the discoloration which results from that work; in one paper it was stated that their refusal to enter the other room was due to the fact that they were not given the masks which they were supposed to receive for the work. They were ordered to pay a certain fine, upon which they all cried out in chorus, "We will not pay; we are not labour conscripts, we are volunteers." We shall hope to see these girls in the suffrage movement, fighting for the political weapon which will help them to wage their industrial battles. The other case was at the Westminster Tribunal, where three women appeared to complain that they had been dismissed by their employer for joining the National Federation of Women Workers. The employer stated that he had really dismissed them for talking at their work, but the Tribunal did not accept this statement, and pointed out that under the Munitions Act employers had no right to dismiss workers for belonging to Trade Unions. The employer was fined £15 for each woman. This victory should encourage all women workers to organise and prove the truth of the adage, "Union is strength."

Political Meetings.

Another very successful meeting (which is reported on another page) was held on Saturday last. The next will be held on Saturday, March 17, at 3.15, in the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Mrs. Nevinson will speak on "The Work of a Poor Law Guardian," and Mrs. Despard will take the chair. Further details will be announced later.

ANNE E. CORNER.

and it would ensure a far more widespread confidence throughout the country if a woman Food Controller were appointed in association with Lord Devonport, and the names of those women who occupy positions of responsibility in the Department were made public.

It cannot, however, be Woman's Day in the fullest sense till women stand side by side with men as citizens, sharing both responsibilities and rights. We look to Parliament to show its recognition of this fact by enfranchising the women of the nation now. The time must come when woman, free from age-long fetters, will take her place, too, in the National Assembly, which only then will be truly representative. An Anti-Suffragist Member of Parliament desires to see women as members, though he would deny them the Parliamentary vote. We, too, desire to see women in Parliament and in the Government, but they must be there by right of citizenship, not on sufferance; it will be the votes of men as well as of women which will put them there. The State has discovered woman during the war; woman, too, has in a sense discovered herself. She has discovered latent, and little suspected, powers; she has been astonished at what she could do when she cast aside convention and custom. She realises now that to be able to render valuable service to the State she must be efficient, and her efficiency must be recognised by the powers that be, for the full glory of Woman's Day will only come when she co-operates with man, as comrade, not as slave, for the benefit of humanity.

POLITICAL NOTES.

The Political Situation.

Suffragists are anxiously awaiting the promised debate on Franchise Reform in the House of Commons, and it is hoped that it will take place within a few days. There seems a general opinion that the whole debate will turn on the question of women's suffrage, and that no Bill can pass through Parliament unless it contains as an integral part provisions for the enfranchisement of women. Whatever form these provisions may take, however limited or however extended they may be, we, of the Women's Freedom League, must continue our demand for the vote "on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men," and must make it clear that whatever Parliament decides for us now, we shall "never sheathe our swords" until women stand on a complete equality with men in the political, industrial and social worlds.

Criminal Law Amendment.

On February 15, Sir George Cave, the Home Secretary, presented to the House of Commons a Bill for the Amendment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, containing provision in regard to the spread of venereal disease. While the clauses of this Bill still leave much to be desired, we must admit that it is a great improvement upon the law as it now stands. One statement which we welcome is that women under treatment for disease shall have access to women doctors where they so desire. This was one of the points raised by the recent deputation to the Home Secretary and the Local Government Board, which was organised by the Women's Freedom League. Another advance is noted in the clauses with reference to indecent assaults on girls, the age of consent being raised to 16, and no defence being allowed on the plea of ignorance as to age, or that the girl is a consenting party to the offence. All this is good as far as it goes, but we deeply regret that the age of consent for criminal assaults should remain at 16 instead of being raised to 18 for both sexes. The clauses with regard to soliciting and loitering are very unsatisfactory; as we know, whatever the law may be, under our present system it is always women who are charged with soliciting, while men go scot free, and

THE SUFFRAGISTS' DEMAND.

The following resolution was sent to the Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P., on February 20, 1917:

"That we, representing the undersigned Societies, recognising that a Bill based on the recommendations of the Speaker's Conference will confer the suffrage upon women, though not upon the terms for which we stand, urge the Government to introduce such a Bill without delay, provided that it contains as an integral part provisions for the enfranchisement of women."

SIGNATORIES.—Millicent Garrett Fawcett (National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies), C. Despard (Women's Freedom League), Bertha Brewster (United Suffragists), A. M. Chapman (New Constitutional Society for Women's Suffrage), Frances Balfour (Scottish Churches League for Women's Suffrage), Frances H. Simson (Scottish University Women's Suffrage Union), A. Cobden-Sanderson (Women's Tax Resistance League), May Ogilvie Gordon (National Union of Women Workers), Mary Longman (National Women's Labour League), Margaret Llewelyn Davies (Women's Co-operative Guild), Clementina Black (Women's Industrial Council), Laura Abernethy (Women's Liberal Federation), A. Maude Royden (Women's International League), Ellen E. Smith (Fabian Society, Women's Group), A. E. Metcalfe (Suffragettes of the W.S.P.U.), Florence de Foublanque (Women Marchers' Qui Vive Corps), Winifred Mayo (Actresses' Franchise League), Monica Whateley (Catholic Women's Suffrage Society), S. A. Villiers (Church League for Women's Suffrage), Maud Selborne (Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association), Jane E. Strickland (Free Church League for Women's Suffrage), Gulielma Crosfield (Friends' League for Women's Suffrage), I. E. Harrison (Hastings and St. Leonards W.S. Propaganda League), J. Spring-Rice (Irishwomen's Suffrage Federation), Eva McLaren (Liberal Women's Suffrage Union), Herbert Jacobs (Men's League for Women's Suffrage), Esther S. Roper (National Industrial and Professional W.S.S.).

An Oxford Memorial.

Day by day evidence accumulates of the wide recognition throughout the country of the justice of enfranchising women now. A strong appeal from Oxford, signed by thirty-seven men and women connected with the University or public service, has been made to the Government and to Parliament. The signatories point out that the recommendations of the Speaker's Conference mean practical manhood suffrage, and consider that there are grave objections to enlarging so greatly the male electorate without giving effect to the claims of women. They say that the great services rendered by women afford evidence of a practical capacity and of a sense of public duty which has converted many who had doubted or denied the expediency of admitting women to a voice in public affairs.

We believe that this voice should be heard, and will have a beneficial effect, in the settlement of the many problems which await the nation after the war. We appeal to the present Government and Parliament to give effect to the principle of women's suffrage, in such form as may command the greatest measure of assent, as part of any scheme of electoral reform which may be introduced, rather than to leave the question to be raised at a later time, amid the passions of party controversy.

Among the signatories are: The Bishop of Oxford; C. B. Heberden, Principal of Brasenose; Miss Christine M. E. Burrows, Principal of St. Hilda's Hall; Miss Henrietta Jex-Blake, Lady Margaret Hall; Miss Eleanor F. Jourdain, St. Hugh's College; Miss Emily Penrose, Somerville College; Gilbert Murray, Regius Professor of Greek; H. Scott Holland, Regius Professor of Divinity; Rev. A. J. Carlyle, Lecturer in Political Philosophy and Economics, University College; Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, Wilde Lecturer in Natural and Comparative Religion, and late Principal of Manchester College; Alderman Hugh Hall, J.P., Chairman of the Oxford Education Committee; Sir C. Hubert H. Parry, Hon. Fellow of Exeter, late Professor of Music; Miss A. M. A. H. Rogers, Tutor of St. Hugh's College and Secretary of the Association for the Education of Women in Oxford.

Col. Penry Williams, M.P. for Middlesbrough

Speaking at the public meeting at Middlesbrough on February 15, arranged by the Women's Freedom

League and the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, Colonel Penry Williams said:—

"The whole question of franchise is to be raised, and when once you admit that a change is necessary, the question of votes for women again becomes acute, and there is an outcry for an alteration in the franchise. If you admit that the man who is doing public service is entitled to exercise the franchise, you are bound to admit that the woman who is undertaking work of national importance should be entitled to her proper place in the community. On every occasion on which the question had been before the House of Commons I have exercised my vote in favour of the enfranchisement of woman. The larger the register of franchise the better I shall be pleased. I hope for a broad, democratic qualification and believe it will have a beneficial effect on the whole situation of the country."

Suffragists' "Strong Tactical Position."

The *Nation* (February 17) discussing the situation with regard to Woman Suffrage and the report of the Electoral Reform Conference, says: "The first step is, of course, to insist that a Bill must be introduced by the Government this session," but points to indications of delay—from statements by Lord Rhondda, Mr. Henderson, and the discouragement of legislative work by Mr. Bonar Law during the debate on the address, an attitude which will be supported by Lord Curzon, Lord Milner, and Sir Edward Carson. It adds:—

It will no doubt be urged that if a Bill is introduced it must be practically unopposed, and suffragists will be asked to take in silence whatever may be offered them. Undoubtedly it will be difficult to amend the Bill without wrecking it. From that fact we draw the moral that every effort ought to be made now, before a Bill is drafted, both by women and by Parliamentarians, to move the Cabinet to frame its Bill on wide lines. To exclude all women under thirty-five is, first, to exclude nearly all the munition-workers, and, secondly, to disarm most of those who have a direct concern in the future industrial settlement. No less than 75 per cent. of the women in paid occupations are under thirty-five years of age. The proposed women's electorate will be doubly conservative—partly from this age limit, and partly from the restrictions of the local government franchise. If the latter is adopted, the age ought to be lowered to twenty-five. In any event, the proposed age of thirty-five is impossible. Suffragists should realise that they hold a strong tactical position. Parliamentarians, quite rightly, want to carry the Speaker's charter—a big and bold achievement; but they must pay something for the chance. Suffragists ought not to sell their assent too cheaply. As yet the Parliamentarians have not even got a Bill from our dictators.

Forewarned!

The Executive Committee of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage has resolved to take prompt steps in opposition to the fresh movement for female enfranchisement, and has passed a resolution placing on record its deep and grateful appreciation of the invaluable services rendered by the late Earl of Cromer to the cause of opposition to Woman Suffrage.

POLITICAL MEETING.

Dr. G. B. Clark's address on "How our Laws are Made" proved most interesting and enlightening to the many members and friends who gathered in the Minerva Café last Saturday afternoon. He told how Bills came before the House of Commons, and explained their course from the draftsman's hands to the Statute Book. The whole machinery of legislation appeared to slow and complicated, and the power in the hands of the Government so autocratic, that there was great sympathy among the audience with a questioner who wanted to know if efforts had been made towards simplification, and with the speaker who declared that "the vote is not enough; we must be in Parliament to protect our interests!"

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An Open Door No Government Can Ignore.

From the chair at the well-attended suffrage meeting at Queen's Hall, London, on February 20, Mrs. Fawcett was able to give a message from Mrs. Chapman Catt announcing victory in two more of the United States—North Dakota and Ohio. The latter has been a specially hard fight, owing to the opposition of the liquor interests. In a vigorous suffrage speech, Mr. Runciman, M.P., declared that the Majority Report on Woman Suffrage of the Speaker's Conference was an open door which no Government can ignore. The first duty of all suffragists was to press for the introduction of a Reform Bill in which women were included and consolidate on the ground won. He quoted Lord Kitchener as saying that the nation would not put forth its full strength until women were doing nearly everything now done by men. The war had revealed a new value in the life of women; it was now recognised as no less than man's. Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., laughed aside the belief that women cannot govern by declaring "they could not have made a bigger muck of it than men." He believed there was a good chance of the enfranchisement of six millions of women. Many representative women workers were on the platform.

OUR TREASURY.

NATIONAL FUND.

Amount previously acknowledged: October, 1907, to December, 1916, £27,609 4s 3d.

	£	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged	91	4	7
<i>Special Emergency War Fund—</i>			
"A Friend"	1	5	0
Mrs. Sutcliffe, per Clapham Branch	10	6	
Miss Hurry	1	0	
Mrs. de Vismes	1	0	
Clapham Branch	1	0	
Hornsey Branch	4	0	
C. Schofield Coates, Esq.	2	2	6
Miss F. Howard	10	0	0
Miss M. Watson Petty (Birthday Fund)	1	1	0
Miss Eunice Murray	1	1	0
Mrs. Sidley	10	0	
Miss F. A. Underwood	10	0	
Miss M. B. Murray	5	0	
Miss D. C. Phillips	2	6	
Mrs. Prowse	2	6	
Miss Steven	2	6	
Mrs. Sutherland	2	0	
Miss Neal (to send VOTE of Dec. 29 to M.P.'s)	1	0	
Miss Phipps (" " ")	1	0	
Miss Tagg	1	0	
Miss M. C. Vaughan	1	0	
Miss Watterson	1	0	
Collections	7	15	2
Office Sales	2	9	
<i>Branches: Capitation Fees—</i>			
Dundee	14	6	
	£116	11	0

Cheques to be made payable to the Women's Freedom League, and crossed "London and South-Western Bank, Ltd."

BRANCH NOTES.

Golders Green.

The Branch held its second annual meeting on February 15, when the following were elected as Branch officials: President, Miss Hodge; honorary secretary, Miss Mitchell; honorary treasurer, Mrs. Van Raalte; honorary VOTE secretary, Miss Van Raalte; other members of committee, Miss Dickson, Miss J. Moore, and Mrs. Pierotti. The Secretary's report showed that five new members and one associate had joined during the year, and five had been transferred from other branches. Eight Branch meetings and two drawing-room meetings had been held. The Treasurer's report showed a good balance in hand, and it was decided to contribute both to the Organisers' and the Fifty Thousand Shilling Fund. It was further decided to hold monthly Branch meetings on the third Thursday in the month at 59, Ashbourne-avenue, to be followed by a discussion meeting or debate open to members and friends, the first to take place on March 15.

West Hartlepool.

Offers of support to enable the Branch to follow up Mrs. Despard's meeting and carry on other educational and political work will be warmly welcomed, and should be sent to the Secretary, Mrs. English, 6, Carlton-street, West Hartlepool.

Middlesbrough Suffrage Club, 251a, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

Emphatic resolutions demanding the enfranchisement of women have been sent up to Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Henderson during the course of the week from a meeting of soldiers, a meeting in Great Ayton, a Trades Council meeting, a joint meeting of the Women's Freedom League and the National Union of Woman Suffrage Societies, under the chairmanship of our M.P., Colonel Penry Williams—and from a great Suffragist Rally addressed by Mrs. Despard in Middlesbrough and in West Hartlepool. A women's meeting is to be held in the Suffrage Rooms on February 26 from 3 to 4 p.m. Invitations may be obtained from our shop. Subscriptions are urgently needed for special propaganda and educational work in Middlesbrough. We propose for the next three months to buy a number of the principal posting stations of the town, and post on them huge bills giving the principal facts of the political situation and setting forth our point of view. From now until after the Franchise Bill is introduced we shall have our news on the boardings under the title of "News for Women." Arrangements for a munitioners' meeting in Middlesbrough are being made, and offers of help in making it known will be welcomed.

Sale and Ashton-on-Mersey.

Mrs. Despard was "At Home" to the members and friends of the Branch on February 17 at Thornlea. Several Freedom Leaguers of long standing were present, and a most delightful afternoon was spent. Mrs. Despard spoke for nearly an hour, and many questions were asked and answered. All the copies of THE VOTE were sold, and one new member and one associate joined the Branch.

Croydon. 32a, The Arcade, High-street.

Croydon gave Mrs. Despard a warm welcome when she spoke on February 9 at our public meeting at the Lecture Room, Public Hall, on "Women of the Nations." The audience listened with keen interest to her address, also to Mrs. Tanner, whose subject was "On Guard." Our thanks are due to both speakers, and also to Mr. Alfred Foster for taking the chair. A vote of sympathy was passed with our hon. secretary, Mrs. Terry, who had slipped and broken her wrist, and was therefore unable to be present. A good collection was taken, and many copies of THE VOTE were sold. One new member joined us. On Friday, February 23, Mrs. Mustard will speak at 3.30 p.m.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

War—and Peace—Work.

Settlement, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W.

Some kind friends, not members of the League, but interested in the work of the Settlement, are organising a sale in aid of our funds, to take place on March 14 at The Studio, 1, Campden Hill-road, Kensington. We are anxious to encourage such outside efforts, and should be grateful to any sympathisers who would send needlework, fancy articles, flowers, garden or farm produce, either to Mrs. P. H. Miller at The Studio or to Miss Holmes at the Settlement, for her stall. Welcome gifts for the sale have already been received from Mrs. George Lewis, Miss Lewis, Miss Woods, Miss Mahon, and Miss Walkden (Letchworth); and we also acknowledge jumble goods from Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. A. Gascoigne, and 1s. from Miss Riggall.

The Despard Arms, 125, Hampstead-road, N.W.

We are looking forward to a visit from Lord French, and our soldiers, also their officers, at the camp in Regent's Park are delighted at the prospect. They are enthusiastic about the Despard Arms as "the best billet going," and fully agree with Rifleman J. E. Brown, who has written more than one letter to Miss Vicary on behalf of the men who were with us after Christmas, expressing appreciation of the kindness they received. He says:—

"We did not want to leave you, but of course we had to go; Mysterious ways our Army has, but this of course you know. We sing God bless you with all our might and main, And hope, if we return safe, to stay with you again."

"If every billet was as comfortable as the Despard Arms—not Despair Arms—Tommy would have less to grumble about. It's a treat to find such a good place, with excellent food and recreation. Wishing you the best of health, and thanking your kind staff for their attention to our wants, Yours sincerely, Rifleman J. E. Brown, on behalf of the boys."

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 128.

FRIDAY,
FEB. 23,
1917.

THE VOTE

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WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

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MISCELLANEOUS—cont.

BRITISH DOMINIONS WOMAN
SUFFRAGE UNION.—Ten Lec-
tures on "Women as Builders of
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George's Vestry Hall, Hart-street,
Bloomsbury, Tuesdays, beginning
January 23, at 8 p.m. Tickets for the
Course, 7s. 6d. (to members of Suffrage
Societies, 5s.). Each lecture will be
repeated on the following Friday at
3 p.m. Single tickets, 1s., from the
Int. Suffrage Shop, 5, Duke-street,
Adelphi.

MISCELLANEOUS—cont.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM
LEAGUE will hold Public Meet-
ings at the Caxton Hall, Westminster,
every Wednesday afternoon, at 3 o'clock.
Feb. 28, Dr. Armstrong Smith, Letch-
worth Theosophical School, "Some
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Chair, Mrs. Despard.

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