

Correspondence.

MRS. HARLEY'S APPEAL TO ACTIVE SERVICE LEAGUERS.

Dear Leaguers,—Our Active Service League was called into being for the purpose of out-door propaganda for Women's Suffrage, and has already done much effective work since its formation.

At this present international crisis, it has been decided to suspend the political work of the Union and to use our organisations for the help of sufferers from the industrial and economic dislocation caused by the war.

This, then, is the moment for our leaguers to come forward, one and all, and show themselves to be as efficient and zealous in relief work as they were proving themselves in active propaganda. I appeal, therefore, to the already organised groups to rally round their respective Group Leaders, who, in consultation with the Secretary of their Society, will determine the method of working, whether it may be a combined effort, or the drafting of individual leaguers to specialised work.

I appeal also to those members of the N.U. who have not as yet enrolled themselves in the Active Service League to do so now. All time given for the relief of those suffering from the conditions of war, whether combatants or non-combatants, will be counted as fulfilling the pledge which the Active Service Leaguer is called upon to take on enrolment.

I am emphatic on the importance of wearing the *Active Service League uniform*, for the following reasons:—

(1) Because it will testify to the fact, that whatever work we may be doing individually, and possibly for the time being co-operating with other bodies, we are working as Suffragists—and under the banner of the N.U.W.S.S.

(2) Because it will prove a constant reminder to ourselves and to others, that though putting aside for a time actual Suffrage work, we are bound by word and deed to testify to our Suffrage principles.

Finally, let us remember our motto—"There is no love without sacrifice"—and let us give freely of ourselves to our distressed fellow-citizens.—Your comrade and League Leader,

KATHERINE M. HARLEY.

LONDON SOCIETY'S WORK.

MADAM,—There are thousands of women willing and anxious to give their services to the nation, but who do not know how they can best be of use.

The London Society for Women's Suffrage has suspended its ordinary political work for the time being, and is preparing to use its entire organisation (including over sixty branches in different parts of London) and skilled workers for the immediate requirements of the national crisis. Their object will be to organise these voluntary workers in conjunction with the central authority and societies carrying on relief work.

The urgent need of some such organisation has been widely felt, and it is hoped that it will not only prove of assistance to the individual, but will serve to relieve the pressure caused by inquiries at the offices of those societies, which are already overwhelmed with the practical work they have in hand.

Any woman who applies to the Secretary, at 58, Victoria Street, S.W., will be directed to the work for which she is most suited, and where she can be advised as to some elementary training, should she desire it.

P. STRACHEY.

MRS. KENYON (Lyceum Club) appeals to all Suffragists to work for the relief of distress, and to militants to abandon militancy.

MRS. H. E. COBB (Wealdstone House) and many other correspondents, write in support of peace.

MISS AVERILL (Hove) suggests that Societies in the National Union should do their work as far as may be "on democratic and advanced lines," and should specially help women and children by (1) opening co-operative stores, (2) making garments to sell at cost price, (3) helping their own members, (4) turning offices into relief centres.

M. D. begs that the National Union will remain neutral on the question of peace or war for this country.

IMPORTANT.

EDITOR'S NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS AND SECRETARIES.

It has been decided not to publish reports of work done before the outbreak of the war. Further, in order to save the time of our correspondents, it has been decided that news of relief work shall for the present come through National Union Headquarters. Secretaries are therefore urged to send news as full and interesting as possible to 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W., and selections from this will be published in this paper.

FOREIGNERS IN LONDON.

There are at present a large number of foreigners of all nationalities who are stranded in London, unable to return to their homes as their boats are not now sailing. The International Woman Suffrage Alliance hope to be able to do something to help these people, and on Wednesday there was a meeting at the offices—7, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C.—of the representatives of the organisations who are in touch with foreigners.

The International Suffrage Alliance has already had many examples of the difficulties in which these women have been placed. In one morning, among others who have come for assistance, have been a young German girl who came to England a fortnight ago, and has now found that owing to the changed circumstances, it is impossible to obtain employment; an Indian woman who was visiting the country and, expecting to return shortly, had forwarded all her luggage to the Continent, and is left with no means at all; a woman who is in great distress, because the foreign firm in which she worked has closed and there is no prospect of her obtaining new employment, as well as many Americans, who have little money with them and are cut off from their country.

POLITICAL ECONOMY.

"When none were for a Party,
But all were for the State."

One does not remember anything in past history like the general attitude of the press and the Government towards the nation at large in this war. There is a great awakening of conscience with regard to non-combatants, and a realisation that they are indispensable; a realisation, too, that in war, as in peace, economic forces are of absolutely prime importance. Whatever the views of the leaders of thought and action may be in time of prosperity, it is remarkable that, in time of international calamity they have all become socialists. The State, indeed, becomes one, as representative of the whole nation. If the war be waged against a foreign enemy, for the safety, honour, and welfare of the people, the least that those can do who stay at home is to wage that other war against monopoly, sickness, vice, enforced idleness, and poverty. Even the most war-like know that food and health are the sinews of war. So we are all economists now—militarists and pacifists alike.

Our Political Economy, the "dismal science," is being turned into National Economics, by no means a dismal thing. The threefold division of the science into production, distribution and exchange is undergoing considerable modifications, and certain truths, hidden by the complexities of our social life, are now emerging in raised letters for the blind.

The vast, highly specialised and excessively sensitive structure of credit and exchange, upon which modern industry and commerce are based, has made the problem of immediate action a very difficult one for the Government, and we deprecate the highly inflamed appeals which some doubtless well-meaning people are making to ignorant crowds on questions of finance, such as money, indebtedness and so forth. An enlightened criticism, a healthy public opinion on these matters is all to be desired for the checking of grossly selfish manipulations. But it is absolutely impossible for an ordinary popular orator, even if he understood these questions himself, to make them comprehensible to a miscellaneous crowd in time of great political stress and personal suffering.

But there are certain very clear and definite necessities for a nation in time of war, and we propose to publish a number of articles which we hope will be of practical use at this time. It must be remembered that we shall have to learn new virtues to meet the new situation, and the chief new virtue that comfortable people will have to learn is that they must be content to live from hand to mouth. They must not use their position of privilege to buy up or to hoard, whether it be food, or fuel, or gold.

If we bear in mind, further, the chief objects to be aimed at in all we undertake, we shall do far more lasting good than if we yield to almsgiving impulses. Our two great objects are (1) to keep the whole people alive, in physical health and strength; (2) to preserve and strengthen the *moral* of the people.

These two objects are not really separate, of course, but we divide them, placing the one first, because the dreadful thing would be if we were so paralysed by the fear of doing harm, that we suspended help till too late.

We hope to have articles bearing upon the production of the necessities of life and on their distribution. Further, since the best way of procuring the advantageous distribution of necessities is to secure that as many people as possible shall have the means of buying necessities, we hope to deal with the procuring of paid employment for the people. Lastly, since, at such a time of absolutely unprecedented dislocation, it is impossible that work and wages should be assorted so as to give remunerative employment to all, we hope to publish helpful articles on various ways of organising and administering relief without pauperisation.

As the organised strength of the National Union will be turned into all such activities, we hope to make THE COMMON CAUSE an expression of the activities of the Union as well as of women at large.

WOMEN'S CO-OPERATIVE GUILD.

The Women's Co-operative Guild is urging that the needs of motherhood require special attention at this time. Whatever general help is given, maternity introduces additional needs. Provision must be made not only for those whose families are entirely without employment, but for the wives of workers on short time. Free medical treatment, and special forms of nourishment should be at their disposal.

The Guild has asked all its branches to offer their help to the Municipal Committees, and it desires to urge the great value of appointing representatives of Industrial Women's Organisations on these Committees. Being themselves working women, the members of the Women's Co-operative Guild, of Women's Trade Unions, of Women's Labour League, and Railway Women's Guild, have a knowledge of the conditions of those for whom employment and help must be provided.

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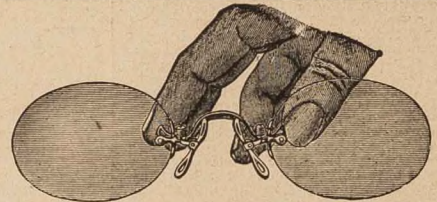
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