

THE VOTE.
NOVEMBER 30, 1917.
ONE PENNY.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE TEN YEARS OLD.
A BACKWARD GLANCE. M. H.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. XVII. No. 423. (Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper and transmissible through the post in the United Kingdom at the newspaper rate of postage, but to Canada and Newfoundland at the Magazine rate.) FRIDAY, NOV. 30, 1917

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

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POLITICAL NOTES.

Representation of the People Bill.

The decision to give the Local Government franchise to married women on their husbands' qualifications has been limited in exactly the same fashion as the Parliamentary franchise—*i.e.*, to women of over 30 years of age. But it is also specified that they must be women who are living with their husbands, which does not apply to the Parliamentary franchise, and seems an unnecessarily cruel penalisation of women whose married life has been unhappy.

It does not seem possible for the House of Commons to grant any concession to women without outbalancing it heavily with something far more favourable for men. The Local Government vote for married women is to be coupled with a further grant of Parliamentary franchise to boys of 19, if they are serving with the Imperial Forces.

Conscientious objectors are to be disfranchised for a term of years. We trust, having arrived at this national decision to inflict a serious disability—which also entails an unenviable stigma—that the sentences of penal servitude will be discontinued.

The Daily Telegraph believes that this session of Parliament will have to be prolonged into January, that the People's Bill will not go to the Lords until towards the middle of December, and that it will not be law until 1918. "Alterations" by the Lords are foreshadowed, but, so far as we can see, no other well-informed press organ has as yet taken this view. Mr. Arthur Henderson looks for a general election in the summer.

The Two Voices.

The ventriloquist performance in public matters to which we are getting so accustomed is now being played over the Irish question. It used to be given with the best effect by Mr. Asquith and his Cabinet, and at first it struck one as odd—to put it mildly—to hear the Prime Minister and Mr. Lloyd George, or in the more notorious case of the munitions output, Lord Kitchener, speaking in different voices in a different way. (Not to put too fine a point on it, contradicting each other flat.) Now we have Lord Wimborne and Dr. Mahaffy in a pleasant duologue. Lord Wimborne tells us that Ireland is not out of hand, that the Convention is doing epoch-making work, and that everything in the Irish garden is lovely. Dr. Mahaffy, on the contrary, says that the weak-kneed policy pursued by the Government is bringing about the triumph of open sedition and rendering the work of the Convention hopeless. You can believe which you like according to which group of newspapers you attach yourself. It must be poor fun to be the Government of Ireland, anyhow, for if it keeps order it is attacked for brutality and told that that is the true way to fan Irish disaffection into flame; while if it does not repress it is called effete and accused of making disloyalty pay. And it is, no matter what it does or says, held to be a lying imbecile by both sides. The Government of Ireland must indeed be grateful to Mr. Arnold Bennett for the almost indulgent approval of his recent articles. It is the first kind word they have ever had.

GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD FAIR,

Caxton Hall, Westminster, FRIDAY and SATURDAY, THIS WEEK.

Opened at 2 p.m. by { Miss LILLAH McCARTHY on November 30th.
Miss EVA MOORE on December 1st.
Chair: Mrs. DESPARD.

Disfranchisement.

In the worrying days when we were at peace the ranks of the officially disfranchised consisted of paupers, convicts and lunatics for the period of their incarceration, juveniles while juvenile, and women permanently. Disfranchisement, we were given to understand, was not a slur or a penalty, it was a sort of protection, or a condition consequent on requiring greater protection and tenderness than needed to be lavished on the mere rough man. Now disfranchisement has been openly declared to be, and inflicted as, a disgrace. It is a good thing that the House of Commons has almost completed the enfranchisement of women before it disfranchised the conscientious objector; for, had we still been condemned to the outer darkness beyond the register, what an uproar we should have raised had the condition we suffered under perennially been specifically laid down as a punishment for un-national conduct! What an agitation we should have roused! It almost seems a pity it did not come sooner.

We wonder whether the House quite realises the yawning width of the door it has thrown open—rather, we do *not* wonder; for the House, we can take it for granted, does not realise the meaning of three-quarters of the things it does. It has now established as a Parliamentary principle that Parliament may give and take the franchise at its own caprice, treating it as a weapon to chastise or a bon-bon to reward those who rouse its wrath or its approval. The principle is capable of infinite extension, and will undoubtedly be a point round which controversies of the most heated kind will rage in the future.

Food "Control."

"Control" is a rather remarkable word to apply to the strange divagations of that weird body the Ministry of Food. The latest juggling with the "free" Government tea that does not exist, and the 4s. and 5s. tea that we are told in mysterious whispers is made of waste tea-leaves redried and coloured; and the new and quite original muddle over the sugar-cards, has given those responsible a startling and not over-popular notoriety. "Control," under the circumstances, appears to be a misleading word.

The Prime Minister Again.

The Prime Minister, whose pessimistic outbreak caused such a flutter in the political dovecotes a week or two back, has reverted to his old style—the style which he affected when he spoke of the "knock-out blow," and the Germans who were "squealing for peace." He has just told the shipbuilding trade that "we have got them," and that "they cannot escape." There is sure to be an outbreak of sheer gloom and of heavy denunciation from the Northcliffe press which "supports" Mr. George, so soon as its attention is called to this hopeful point of view.

A Law Unto Himself.

"I often go to a certain place for a sandwich," said Mr. Bingley, the Marylebone magistrate, "and see 'treating' going on absolutely openly. But I won't name the place."—*Weekly Dispatch*.

We could wish that Parliament would summon Mr. Bingley to the bar of the House of Commons and either reprimand or dismiss him, or both. A "Mirror for Magistrates" is necessary. From the Bingley point of view administering Law seems not so much a high duty as a high salary.

Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett writes to point out the grave danger to women which lurks in the reply of Sir George Cave to Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's question, reported in last week's *VOTE*, and urges suffragists to combine in keeping off the Statute Book that "horrible thing, the forced physical examination of women." She pays tribute to the excellent work of the Women's Freedom League in preventing earlier attempts to inaugurate this form of coercion, and protests against "safeguards" for the immoral acts of men.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

Women's Freedom League.

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Political and Militant Organiser—Miss C. NINA BOYLE.
Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.**DARE TO BE FREE.****LONDON AND SUBURBS.**

Friday, November 30, and Saturday, December 1.—Green, White and Gold Fair, Caxton Hall, Westminster, 2 p.m.—9 p.m. To be opened on first day by Miss Lillah McCarthy—on second day by Miss Eva Moore. Come and buy your Christmas Presents—all kinds of useful and fancy articles. Admission, 1s. before 5 p.m. on Friday, after 5, 6d. Saturday, 6d. all day. Tickets from W.F.L. Office.

Wednesday, December 5.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss K. Raleigh, on "Are we Civilized? If not, Why not?" Chair: Miss Nina Boyle. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café, if required. Croydon, Public Meeting, 32A, The Arcade, High-street, Croydon, 3 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Stanbury, on "Women's Opportunity in Local Government."

Saturday, December 8.—Jumble Sale, The Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1, 6-8 p.m.

Wednesday, December 12.—Croydon, Jumble Sale.
Saturday, December 15.—Croydon, Social at the Church Institute (Braithwaite Hall), Wellesley-road. Tickets, including tea, 1s.

PROVINCES.

Monday, December 3.—Middlesbrough, Meeting at Suffrage Centre, 8 p.m. Miss C. M. Ellis, on "Women's Wages."

Wednesday, December 5.—Portsmouth, Public Meeting, Suffrage Rooms, 3.15 p.m. Speaker: Rev. G. W. Thompson. Business meeting, 4.15 p.m.

Monday, December 10.—Middlesbrough, Meeting at Suffrage Centre, 8 p.m. Various members: "Pioneers."

SCOTLAND.

Wednesday, December 5.—Edinburgh, 13, South Charlotte-street, 7.30 p.m. Judge Stevenson: "The Housing Question: the Royal Commission's Report."

Saturday, December 15.—Edinburgh, 13, South Charlotte-street, 3 p.m. Christmas Sale.

We draw special attention to

Friday and Saturday, November 30 and December 1.—Green, White and Gold Fair. Caxton Hall, 2 p.m.

Wednesday, December 5.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss K. Raleigh on, "Are We Civilized? If not Why not?" Chair: Miss Nina Boyle.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Sunday, December 16.—Kingston Humanitarian Society, Fife Hall, Fife-road, 7 p.m. Miss Dorothy Evans on "The Male State versus Mother-Father Commonwealth."

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE: TEN YEARS OLD! 1907-1917.

Victory is within sight, but, like all things that are worth having, it is at the cost of long struggle and self-sacrifice. That the Women's Freedom League has borne its full share in the fight is proved by its magnificent ten years' record. As is shown by the facts given in the able and interesting article on pages 60 and 61, the League was founded on principles which made for stability and sure growth. It is fitting, on the occasion of our tenth birthday, to remind the country that the Government's tardy recognition of the justice of women's demand for enfranchisement is the result of long years of unceasing, undaunted and strenuous agitation. "A Backward Glance" is written by a member who has fought from the beginning, and whose name is well known to us all as a speaker and writer who helped to make the League a power to be reckoned with as soon as it came into existence.

OUR CITY STEPFATHERS!

Comments have often been made on the failure of municipal bodies to give adequate representation to women on Public Health or Child Welfare Committees. The long period which has elapsed since the last municipal election has afforded many opportunities for the co-option of women, and such opportunities do not appear, to say the least, to have been utilised to any very great extent. Still, the record of the Belfast Corporation is rather unusual in this respect, or, at least, so it is to be hoped.

A proposal to co-opt a woman on the Belfast Corporation was defeated two years ago lest "a crowd of undesirable females" should rush the august precincts of the City Hall, *the unanimous request of the ratepayers for such co-option being disregarded*. Now the new Child Welfare scheme is under consideration. The population of Belfast is nearly 400,000, but the City Fathers consider that the part-time service of two male medical officers—three hours a week each—is amply sufficient, and further, hold that care of babies is a matter that should be left to the sterner sex. Among the applicants for the post of medical officer under the new Child Welfare scheme were several women doctors, two of whom have rendered long service to the city. The very existence of Baby Clubs in Belfast at this moment is, in fact, due to the voluntary work carried on for years by these women, whose services are now set aside in favour of two men, neither of whom possesses any special qualifications for the post. Comment is needless.

Every effort has been made by the women's organisations of the city to force reconsideration of these extraordinary appointments. Letters in the Press and protests to the Corporation and to the Local Government Board have so far effected nothing. A deputation representing nine women's organisations, including such important bodies as the Irish Co-operative Guild, the National Teachers' Organisation, and the Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland, was organised by the Belfast Suffrage Society, and waited on the Public Health Committee of the Corporation on November 20. The Committee, however, decided to take no further action in the matter. The same deputation will wait on the Corporation at its quarterly meeting on December 3, and it is possible the policy of persistence may yet bear fruit.

When one of these women doctors volunteered for service in Malta her offer was accepted, but it is quite a different matter when women ask to be given official recognition in permanent posts at home. They may treat wounded men at the front, that work will come to an end some time, and the ex-Bishop of Queensland may be successful in his efforts to dismiss women with a "Thank you; when we want you, we will let you know." But a permanent post in charge of important work under the Corporation, work which is certain to extend and be developed, oh, no, that cannot be thought of! The City Fathers know better what is needed by the mothers of the city.

Happily the Representation of the People Bill applies to Ireland, and there will be a large increase of women municipal voters when the long-deferred election comes at last. Would that it were in our power, as one woman suggests, to poster Belfast with a huge cartoon representing the two medical gentlemen dandling the babies, who scream violently under the unskilled handling, while in the background the women doctors in khaki go off to care for the wounded men!

DORA MELLONE.

Get the Vote First!

DR. GARRETT ANDERSON, in *The Weekly Dispatch* last Sunday, says: "It is ridiculous to think of a Woman's Party at all until women are enfranchised. People say we have won the vote. What makes them think so? I am by no means convinced of it myself."

GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD FAIR.

Buy your Christmas Presents at the Fair, also Christmas Puddings, Cakes and Butter!

How many Friends are You Bringing to the Fair? Come Early!

Be sure to be in time for the opening ceremony by Miss Lillah McCarthy at 2 p.m. on Friday, November 30, and by Miss Eva Moore at 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 1. Mrs. Despard will preside on both days.

STALLS AND STALLHOLDERS.

1. *General Stall*.—Useful and fancy articles of every description, Christmas presents, presents for soldiers, sailors and nurses. Mrs. Mustard, Mrs. Tanner, Mrs. Thomson.

2. *White Stall*.—Ladies' and children's underclothing, tea-cloths, d'oyles, household linen. Mrs. Cobden Sanderson, Miss Triplett, Mrs. Whetton.

3. *Handkerchief Stall*.—Handkerchiefs of various kinds and articles made of handkerchiefs. Miss Boyle and Mrs. Corner on behalf of the N.E.C.

4. *Home-made Provisions*.—Mrs. Terry, Mrs. Thompson.

5. *Toy Stall*.—Dolls, books, and toys of all kinds. Mrs. Lindus, the Misses Stutchbury.

6. *Montgomery Boroughs Stall*.—General: All kinds of useful articles and Christmas presents. Miss Alix M. Clark and Montgomery Boroughs members.

7. *Montgomery Boroughs Stall*.—Welsh produce: Cakes, plum puddings, butter, jam, etc. Miss Alix M. Clark and Montgomery Boroughs members.

8. *VOTE Stall* (in memory of Mrs. Snow).—The proceeds of the stall go to the funds of THE VOTE. Mrs. Abbot, Miss A. E. Jacob, Miss A. A. Smith, Mrs. Tritton.

9. *Literature Stall*.—Literature of the Suffrage Movement, books, Christmas cards, Calendars, etc. Miss Hodge, Miss Telling.

Stalls have been taken by the following Societies:—The Minerva Dressmaking Department, Nine Elms Settlement, the Free Church League for Women's Suffrage, United Suffragists, Independent W.S.P.U., Friends of Armenia.

Special attractions: Miss Janet Buntan as the Old Lady with a Hundred Pockets, Psychic Delineations by Mrs. Thomson Price, the Violet Clark Quartette, etc.

The Goal at Hand.

"Your battle is won."—*An Anti-Suffragist.*

March to the dawn, to the ultimate noon!

Swift are our forces and strong.

Freedom the goal; for the bliss of the boon

None counts the pilgrimage long.

Banners and blazonries spread to the light,

Armed to achieve, to endure,

Hail we—well won we—the triumph in sight!

Ay, for the triumph is sure.

Wrong is an army outwitted, outworn;

Right in her might waxes clear,

Peace for the Man shall of Woman be born:

Surely the birth draweth near!

Citadels falter and fortresses fall;

Totter their towers to the dust.

Prejudice quails; Truth is stronger than all;

Woman, be true to thy trust!

True to the Hope of the World set on thee;

True both as mother and maid.

Maker of man, make him wise, set him free!

Lily of God, to His aid!

Ay, to His aid! till His buds, white as thou,

Everywhere blossom secure;

Till, where wan Magdalens agonise now,

Maidens laugh, blithe because pure.

Till the slums fade from the gardens; till grace

Grow in the Child, by the Mother.

Golden the goal of the hope of the race!

Is it not She, and no other? S. GERTRUDE FORD.

Engine Builders' Exhibition at Sheffield.

An exhibition of photographs of women's war work, which has been opened at Sheffield, contains a series of pictures of the making of internal combustion engines for aeroplanes, motor-cars, or lorries, and the results of the various processes illustrated are shown in a complete rotary engine for an aeroplane which stands in the centre of the room. The greater part of the engine is women's work.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 64.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
Offices:—144, High Holborn, W.C.
FRIDAY, November 30th, 1917.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—
To the Editor—on all editorial matters.
To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.
Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.
Telegrams: DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

EDITORIAL.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

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

A BACKWARD GLANCE.

We will trace a road to Freedom that our feet may never tread,
They shall find a beaten pathway who come hither in our stead.
They shall walk on it securely holding children by the hand,
But the glory of the making they will never understand!
PHEBE MILNER PHILLIPSON.

The glory of the making! Shall we ever forget it, we who watched over the birth of the Women's Freedom League ten years ago? Cradled in a storm though it was, we knew, as we tended it, that it was a lusty child, destined to play a worthy part in the great struggle that was impending. And, knowing that, how sedulously and loyally we guided its footsteps during that first year of existence! Looking back, it seems to me that we ate, drank, and slept with its name on our lips. We begged, borrowed, and—well, no! we didn't steal exactly—but we certainly "commandeered" from friends, husbands, and relatives all we could lay our hands on for its use and sustenance. We made unblushing nuisances of ourselves, not only to the enemy, who was fair prey, but to everyone else as well, and counted ourselves justified if, by doing so, we raked in something for the Cause.

The only thing we never did was to get bored. Tired, if you like—and no wonder, seeing how we worked—and a little fractious occasionally, seeing that we were but human, and nervily human at that—but bored, never! Enthusiasm wrapped us round like a flame, and if, after the manner of flames, it flared a little too fiercely for comfort at times, it certainly kindled responsive sparks in hearts that would have remained cold but for our infectious glow.

And have not the results justified our devoted mothering? The Women's Freedom League has been pulled this way and that by the internal disorders incidental to a vigorous growing body; it has been spitefully used by some who gave it love and allegiance in its early days, but always—always—it has kept its feet and its head, and pressed forward single-mindedly to its goal.

"Looking backward" is not usually a pleasant or profitable occupation, but Freedom Leaguers can indulge in it with impunity. "Take care of the principle, and the results will take care of themselves," was the axiom on which it was founded, and a short restatement of the events that laid those foundations so well and truly may be of interest to those members who have forgotten or have never known them. Happily we can recount them now without any danger of raking up smouldering embers of bitterness. Time, and the knowledge of the solid advantages we have reaped from what seemed a disaster ten years ago, have extinguished the last

spark of rancour. The old fires are dead—peace to their ashes!

Early Days.

The second annual Conference of the Women's Social and Political Union was convened for a date in October, 1907. The various branches had received notices and had been asked to appoint delegates. A few weeks before the date of the Conference Mrs. Pankhurst announced to a meeting of the Executive Committee that she had decided to abandon the Conference; to appoint a new committee; and to wipe out the constitution dealing with the organisation, election of committee, officers, etc. Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Billington Greig, Mrs. How Martyn, and Miss Caroline Hodgson, who were members of the Executive Committee, rightly holding that the authority for the conduct of the Union was vested in the members, refused to recognise this unauthorised proceeding, and appointed a Provisional Committee to carry on the business of the Union and proceed with the arrangements for the annual Conference. Judging from the minute book this Provisional Committee apparently sat night and day until the Conference, which took place on October 12, 1907, at the Caxton Hall, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Billington Greig. The election of officers and committee resulted in the appointment of Mrs. Despard as hon. treasurer, Mrs. Billington Greig hon. organising secretary, Mrs. How Martyn hon. secretary, and the following as committee members: Mrs. Coates Hansen, Miss Hodgson, Miss Irene Miller, Miss Fitzherbert, Mrs. Drysdale, Miss Abadam, Mrs. Winton Evans, Mrs. Dyce, Mrs. Amy Sanderson, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Marion Holmes, and Miss Mansell. By a resolution which was unanimous the right to the name and properties retained by the National Social and Political Union—the name adopted by Mrs. Pankhurst for her new organisation—was asserted, but it was decided, in view of the fact that the women's cause might suffer loss if legal measures were taken to enforce our claims, that we would simply demand a balance sheet of moneys spent up to September 10, 1907, when the cleavage occurred.

The Head of the Poll.

We soon found that the retention of the old title "Women's Social and Political Union" was inadvisable, so a referendum of the branches was taken on the subject of a new name. Four were submitted: Women Emancipators; Women's Freedom League; Women's Enfranchisement League; Women's Association for Rights. Some National Executive Committee members—myself amongst them, I remember—had a decided leaning towards the first on the list, and others stood firmly by the last on the ground that the initials spelt the significant word "WAR." It was not until after the list had been sent out that someone remembered the precedent of the British Association, and pointed out that if it were adopted we should certainly be dubbed "The Women Asses" by an irreverent world. Needless to say after this the committee awaited the result of the referendum with considerable misgivings, and a heartfelt sigh of relief was breathed when it was found that The Women's Freedom League headed the poll! The adoption of this title was announced in *Woman's Franchise* with the following comment:—

There is no great enthusiasm for the name, but it has yet to earn affection and respect by the work done under it.
"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."
Our zeal for the cause we are working for is unabated, and we hope to fight to the finish as members of the Women's Freedom League.

That hope seems in a fair way to be fulfilled by some of us. As for the "respect and affection" for the name, it came so quickly that within a very few months any suggestion of a change would have precipitated a riot!

The First Home.

The audacious courage of the first National Executive Council was proved by the fact that, with a balance of only £2 2s. in hand after the Conference, they promptly took a suite of offices at 18, Buckingham-street, Strand. It was Mrs. Herringham's generosity in sub-letting the offices at a low rental and Mrs. Despard's characteristic offer to guarantee the first year's rent that made it possible for us to take advantage of such a suitable and central position, but none of us doubted whether we should be able to keep it up. Yet confidence was fully justified; before the year was out we found it necessary to remove to larger offices at 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, where the League remained until June, 1915.

It was amazing how quickly everything we wanted materialised. Tables, chairs, desks, cupboards were asked for, and came by return of post, so to speak, and very soon 18, Buckingham-street began to wear a most respectable "headquarterly" appearance.

Then we began almost literally to live in it. What jolly "scratch" teas we had on the bare office tables and what startling plots and plans we hatched round them! Everyone took a willing hand in the cleaning and washing-up, and it was no unusual thing to see Mrs. Billington Greig, Miss Irene Miller or another favourite orator suddenly "down" broom or tea cloth and rush off with a disquieting memory of an expectant audience. In one corner Miss Fitzherbert would write the caustically witty leaders that made the pages generously set at our disposal by Mr. Francis in *Woman's Franchise* a weekly joy and delight; in another Miss Hodgson would wrestle with accounts; while Mrs. Drysdale or Mrs. Eileen Mitchell would arrange distracting details about "literature" in a third, in the midst of a hubbub that would have driven any but Suffragists crazy! And when cheques or membership cards poured in freely how whole-heartedly we rejoiced. "The glory of the making" shone very vividly and encouragingly then, I assure you.

Audacious Advertising—

The friends who thought we had turned "lady-like" were swiftly disillusioned, for the Women's Freedom League soon attracted attention to itself by its original methods of both agitating and advertising. London laughed and scoffed good-naturedly when the first women "sandwiches" set out from 18, Buckingham-street, with light cardboard placards, but they achieved their object of cheaply spreading the news of a meeting at Essex Hall so successfully that other Suffrage societies adopted the idea with flattering celerity. To us, too, belongs the kudos of introducing the first Suffrage caravan. It set off from Leatherhead in the early summer of 1908 on its journey through Surrey, to the accompaniment of bells, whistles, trumpets, drums, rattles and other babies' toys, vigorously wielded by the Liberal élite of the neighbourhood. A fascinating volume could be written about the adventures of the van, quite apart from the immense value of the propaganda for which it was responsible, but it would contain one black chapter dealing with the dastardly attack on Mrs. Despard at Maidstone by some irresponsible—but doubtless enfranchised—hooligans. Other good propagandist and advertising "scoops" that we brought off were the first Suffrage bazaar—which, proving a financial success, was quickly imitated by the other Suffrage societies—and the visit of Madame Malmborg and Dr. Tekla Hultin, the latter a member of the Finnish Diet, and the first woman M.P. to come to this country. This last mentioned event was honoured by a phenomenal "Press." Interviewers and photographers simply besieged the office when the arrival of the Finnish women was made known, and their meeting in Queen's Hall and

subsequent tour through the provinces were in the nature of a triumphal progress.

—and Tactics.

But after all, gratifying as these successes are to look back upon, they are more or less side issues to the solid and valuable political work that was carried on by the N.E.C. during that first year of existence.

The policy of the Women's Freedom League has seen little or no change during the decade that has elapsed since then. Self-government, independence of party politics, unceasing agitation, both constitutional and unconstitutional, for the vote, and vigorous protest against all forms of legal and civil inequality between the sexes were—and still are—its dominant features.

The Women's Freedom League initiated the policy of tax-resisting, a form of protest that attracted so many followers that a separate League of Tax Resisters was soon formed. Police-court protests were also first carried out by Freedom Leaguers. Mrs. Billington Greig and Miss Irene Miller, who were, respectively, the first women to be imprisoned and the first women to be arrested in London, "opened the ball" at Bow-street Police Station on November 14, 1907. Their example was quickly followed by others both in London and other parts of the country, and magistrates began to get decidedly "jumpy" whenever they saw a woman in court.

Deputations to Cabinet Ministers were met by the Cabinet Ministers' blue-uniformed watch-dogs and marched off to listen to insulting harangues from the stipendiary magistrates whose salaries they helped to pay, and afterwards—as if this were not punishment enough!—were sentenced to varying degrees of "time."

Every by-election constituency—and there seemed to be a by-election every other day that year!—swarmed with our workers, who echoed and re-echoed the cry "Keep the Liberal out"; and if they did not always attain that desirable end they always made a lasting and favourable impression on the voters.

Watching Westminster.

And the watchful eye that was kept on the storm-centre at Westminster neither slumbered nor slept. Indeed, I doubt if it even so much as blinked! It was during the first two years that the Women's Freedom League gained its reputation for smart and unexpected political action, and put the fear of its tactics into the hearts of both politicians and policemen. Our "attacks" were never advertised. We knew too well the strategic value of the unexpected, and proved it up to the hilt in the famous "grille," and other, protests.

The Price Exacted.

I have said nothing so far about the price we paid, but it was exacted in full measure, pressed down and running over—make no mistake about that! We did no violence of any kind. We neither broke up meetings, nor threw stones, nor injured persons, nor property—but we were sent to prison all right! And our arrival in a new district was always the signal for an outbreak of violent hostility. The speakers at by-elections, in the van campaign, and wherever fresh ground was broken, had, for the first few days, to face volleys of stones and abuse, to stand unflinchingly as targets for filth of every description, and keep the flag flying calmly through it all. That they did it I can gratefully and proudly testify—and that they were happy in doing it I can well believe. For consciously or unconsciously they saw the vision of the "safe and beaten pathway" for those who would "follow in their stead," and that vision is one that has carried men and women through the ages safely and triumphantly through far greater dangers and much bitterer persecution than we had to face.

M. H.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BIL L

The Report stage of the Bill continues to occupy the attention of the House of Commons. Since the VOTE went to press last week women of 30 years of age, living with their husbands, have been included as municipal voters; conscientious objectors have been disfranchised for a term of years; the proxy vote for soldiers and sailors absent from this country at election time is to be permanent. The "Alternative Vote," passed last week, has been considerably affected by an amendment, which was carried on November 26. On this point the Parliamentary correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* writes:—

"Until the adoption of Dr. Chapple's amendment the Alternative Vote would have been worked on a very simple method. Suppose there are three candidates for a single seat. A voter at such election may place the figure 1 on his ballot-paper against the candidate of his first choice, and the figure 2 or 3, in the order of his preference, opposite the names of the other candidates. If, on the counting of the votes, no candidate obtains an absolute majority, the man at the bottom of the poll will be obliterated, and the second or third preferences of his supporters will be added to the totals of the other candidates. If on the second count either of the two candidates obtains an absolute majority he shall be declared elected.

"Very different is the Chapple method adopted by the House. This provides that if no candidate is found to have more than one-half the number of votes recorded, the returning officer shall take into account all the second and third preferences recorded on all the ballot papers. It is even provided, in the case of those ballot papers where second or subsequent preferences are not recorded, that the returning officer shall distribute these unrecorded preferences equally amongst the other candidates. Major Chapple has elaborated an ingenious schedule for carrying out his proposal, but though it won the support of a distinguished mathematician, Sir Joseph Larmor, its complexity baffled the average member. This very complexity was a virtue in the eyes of the Conservative members, and Mr. W. C. Anderson bluntly accused them of a desire to reduce the alternative vote to a nullity. Mr. Herbert Samuel, who has been most assiduous in his attention to the Reform Bill at every stage, strongly opposed the amendment."

After the Report stage comes the Third Reading in the Commons, and then the Bill will be sent to the Lords. It is said that the Lords intend to deal with this important Bill with careful deliberation, for which they will require two to four weeks. According to the *Times*.

"Although an adjournment of both Houses over Christmas seems practically certain, there should be little difficulty in securing the prorogation of Parliament early in the New Year. There is no disposition in any quarter to hamper the preparation of the spring register by undue delay in the passing of the Reform Bill. The Government are confident that the first register under the new order will be ready for use, if the occasion should arise, at the end of July, when this Parliament will end the fourth extension of its life."

Parliament and Women's Interests.

On November 20, the following questions and answers were given in the House of Commons:—

BOY AND GIRL WORKERS.

Lord H. Cavendish-Bentinck asked the Minister of Munitions how many boys and girls and how many male and female young persons are now employed on night shifts in the national and controlled factories and establishments, respectively?

Sir G. Cave: My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this question. It appears, from the returns recently collected at the noble lord's request, that the boys under 16 years and the girls between 16 and 18 years employed on night shifts in the national and controlled factories number about 14,000 and 8,000 respectively. The night employment of girls under 16 is nowhere permitted. The figures include boys employed in factories where night work is permitted under the ordinary provisions of the Factory Act, as well as boys employed at night in pursuance of Emergency Orders. The whole matter is now under review by the Home Office and Ministry of Munitions; but no definite statement can yet be made.

Lord H. Cavendish-Bentinck: Is not the employment of young boys on night shifts directly contrary to the spirit and letter of the Factory Acts, and not only most uneconomic, but most injurious to health?

Sir G. Cave: As my noble friend knows, special relaxations have had to be given.

COME TO THE FAIR!

Mr. Whitehouse: Does the number also include boys under 14 years of age?

Sir G. Cave: Boys under 16.

Mr. Whitehouse: But it does include some boys under 14?

WOMEN'S STRIKE (GLASGOW).

Mr. Anderson (by private notice) asked the Minister of Munitions whether he has investigated the circumstances of a strike involving 400 women employed by Messrs. Beardmore at their East Hope-street Factory, Glasgow; whether he is aware that the origin of this strike was the dismissal of four women who were charged with restricting output; that three of the women have been in the employment of the firm for two years; that they catch a 5.25 train every morning, and do not return home until 7.25 at night; that one of them was the most successful fine borer engaged by the firm in 1916, and gained the highest bonus for ten weeks in succession, and she now attributes her decreased output to the state of her health, due to the strain of the long hours; that the fourth woman is the mother of four children, and, in addition to her work, has had to look after them and attend to a paralysed husband, who died three weeks ago; whether he knows that the circumstances of this dispute have aroused much feeling in the district; that the organised workmen are contributing to the support of the women on strike; whether he will ask the firm to reinstate the four women, and, if so, state what reply has been received?

Mr. Kellaway: This question only reached me at a quarter to two, and I have not been able fully to inform myself as to the facts. But I have given instructions that the women on strike be informed that the Ministry is prepared to investigate their grievances, or to refer them to the Ministry of Labour as soon as they return to work.

WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

Heroic Nurse Receives Military Medal.

The King has awarded the Military Medal to Sister Julia Ashbourne Herbert, of the Territorial Force Nursing Service.

For conspicuous devotion to duty when, after being wounded in the head by an aerial bomb, she came on duty in the operating theatre, and continued to work there the whole night and all the next day.

Sister Herbert's name appears in the "London Gazette" at the end of a list of new V.C.'s "If the V.C. were awarded to women it would assuredly have been conferred on her," says the *Daily Express*.

Brave Nurses at Home Thanked.

At the inquiry made by the Manchester coroner into the cause of the fire at the Guardians' Delauney-road institution, when fifteen bedridden old women were burned to death, great gallantry, it was stated, was shown by the nurses on night duty. The coroner thanked the nurses for their heroic conduct, after Nurse Fairhurst, who discovered the fire, described how she and other nurses, some of whom were overcome by the smoke, succeeded in rescuing nineteen of the inmates.

Oxford University Moves.

The first Bachelor of Medicine examination at the University of Oxford is now open to registered women students, and special provision says the Vice-Chancellor, has been made for them to study human anatomy. An *annexe* has been added to the department by the generous aid of the Clothworkers' Company, and a woman demonstrator, Miss Alice Chance, a former home student, appointed, who will work under the superintendence of the Professor.

4,766,000 Women at Work.

Remarkable statistics as to the increased employment of women since the war began are given in the Board of Trade *Labour Gazette*.

The chief increases of new women workers are:—

| | |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Industries | 518,000 |
| Government Establishments | 202,000 |
| Transport and trains | 88,000 |
| Finance and banking | 54,000 |
| Commerce | 324,000 |
| Professions | 20,000 |
| Hotels, cinemas, theatres | 22,000 |
| Post Office | 45,000 |
| Civil Service | 53,000 |
| Agriculture | 82,000 |

The total number of women who have been employed since the war commenced is given as 1,421,000. There are now 4,766,000 women employed in the country, and it is estimated that about 670,000 are working on munitions and that 632,000 are engaged on other Government work, such as the manufacture of clothing and food for the troops.

Shorter Hours, More Munitions.

"The time is now ripe for a further substantial reduction in the hours of work." This is the finding of the Health of Munition Workers Committee, which has now submitted its report to Mr. Winston Churchill. Dr. Vernon, who has investigated the matter for the committee, considers that for women engaged in moderately heavy work a 50-hour week yields as good an output as a 66-hour week and a considerably better one than a 75-hour week. Professor Lovedal, in a memorandum on "Causes and Conditions of Lost Time," is in favour of food before work, and considers that the abolition of work before breakfast would be compensated by the greater vigour of the worker after taking food.

OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

On November 22 Miss Margaret Hodge gave a delightful address on the use which Australian women have made of the "vote," and the many benefits that great country had derived from women's vote and work. Mrs. Despard followed with a short address on the Power of Thought, and urged women to think well and hard about the problems which beset the countries of the world at the present time and the problems of reconstruction which face all peoples in the near future. The chair was taken by Miss F. A. Underwood, who gave a summary of the attention given by men in Parliament to women's concerns during the previous week.

Home Workers' League.

A very successful meeting of the Home-Workers' League was held at Oxford House, Bethnal Green, last Monday afternoon. Mrs. Despard was the speaker, and said how delighted she was to address the women members of the league. She hoped that it would not be long before those present had the Parliamentary vote, and explained what use they would be able to make of it for the improvement of their surroundings. She urged them to make every possible use both of the Parliamentary and the municipal vote for this purpose. The lives of most of us at present were clouded by anxiety or grief, but we must never lose hope, and she trusted that the future of the world would be radiant with hope.

Women Tax Resisters.

A small but representative gathering of old friends of the Tax Resistance League met at the house of Miss Gertrude Eaton, 3, Gloucester-walk, Kensington, on November 2, to wish God-speed to Mrs. Kineton Parkes, prior to her departure for Dunedin, New Zealand—whither all our best wishes will follow her, a little enviously, perhaps, for in these sad days many of us would welcome the chance of starting afresh in a new land of sunshine and blue skies! The meeting was partly of a business nature (Mrs. Cobden Sanderson presiding) to talk over sundry affairs of the League, before its indefatigable and indomitable secretary took leave of these shores. The most important announcement from the chair was that Mrs. Kineton Parkes had written a book, the manuscript of which she is leaving with the Committee of the League. It is a brief history of the tax resistance movement in Great Britain, and a record of the work done by the Women's Tax Resistance League in helping to win the Parliamentary vote for women. The members present welcomed this news with great enthusiasm, and a publishing committee was formed to see the book through the press when the right moment comes. Many letters of regret were sent by friends unable to be present, all joining in heartiest good wishes to Mrs. Kineton Parkes for health, happiness and prosperity.

BRANCH NOTES.

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

Friends and members are heartily thanked for all gifts which they have contributed to the Branch's collection of articles for the Fair. The working party, though small, has made a good number of useful garments for sale, and the money sent in by several members will be used to make "home-made" goods for the provision stall.

Wanted.—Jumble goods for a sale on December 12. Parcels should be sent to the Secretary before December 10. Members living at a distance please help in this matter, as the Autumn Sale has been delayed, owing to the few members who responded to an earlier appeal. The cheap goods help the women, and the financial result helps the Branch, which has to prepare for payment of rates and taxes in the near future. For other fixtures—December 5 and 15, refer to "Forthcoming Events" for particulars.

Edinburgh, Suffrage Shop, 13, South Charlotte Street.

On Wednesday, November 14, Mrs. Shaw McLaren told to the Branch the fascinating story of the Scottish Women's Hospitals of the N.U.W.S.S., the story in which Mrs. McLaren's sister, Dr. Elsie Inglis, plays so prominent a part. Apart from the good work done by these hospitals in the alleviation of suffering, the speaker made it clear that all women owe a deep debt of gratitude to those who have demonstrated in so practical a fashion the powers of organisation and management which hitherto have had to lie almost dormant. The following week Councillor John A. Young, Convenor of the Public Health Committee of the Town Council, discussed the all-important subject of Housing. He showed the necessity of State action in the matter, and emphasized the need of enlightened public opinion being brought to bear on the schemes that will be proposed. A practical question locally, for instance, will be that of the perpetuation of the tenement system versus that of separate cottages. A good discussion followed. Miss Sara Munro presided at both meetings. The Branch acknowledges with heartiest thanks a donation of £12 from Mr. John Hunter, for literature for the troops.

Reading.

A well-attended and very successful drawing-room meeting was held in conjunction with the United Suffragists, at Calthorp, Redlands-road, by kind invitation of Mrs. Cobb. Miss Nina Boyle, who spoke on "The Present Political Outlook," was heard with keenest attention and interest. Miss Anna Munro, President of the Reading Branch of the Women's Freedom League, took the chair, and her opening remarks were an inspiration to the members. Warm thanks were tendered to Miss Olive Cobb for her kind hospitality, and the hopes were expressed that Mrs. Cobb, who is one of the oldest suffragists in Reading, and nearing her century, would soon be able to record her vote. Tea was provided by Miss Cobb, and literature was on sale. Mrs. Tregay expressed the appreciation and thanks of the meeting to Miss Nina Boyle and Miss Munro.

Education: Women Attendance Officers.

We are pleased to hear that the Education Committee of the Borough of Gateshead-on-Tyne has decided to appoint four women attendance officers. This proposal of the chairman of the Attendance Sub-Committee was unanimously adopted, the chairman stating that he hoped much from this new departure.

Women's Freedom League Settlement, 93, Nine Elms-lane, S.W. 8.

The chief attraction of the Settlement Stall at the Fair will be the latest portrait of Mrs. Despard, drawn by Mr. P. H. Miller, A.R.H.A., specially for the Children's Dining-room at Nine Elms. We want every visitor to the Fair to look at it, and to help the artist by criticisms. We have a good variety of pretty and useful goods for the Stall, and hope everyone will try and buy one of them to help on the work of the Settlement, so much needed now the winter is setting in, and food and coal scarce and dear. Miss Baker, Miss Riggall, and our Letchworth friends, Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Kent and Miss Green are thanked for their contributions; Mrs. Wilkins (5s.) and Miss Kearton (£1) towards expenses; Mrs. Thomas, tea; Dr. R. O'Brien, vegetables; Mrs. Delbanco, a knife-board. Our baby guest, "Bobby's," new mother (Mrs. Matthews) has sent us £1; we seem to have found him a very happy home with her.

The Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1.

Who'll send, who'll send *immediately*, old clothes to our Jumble Sale, Saturday, December 8, 6 to 8 p.m.? We need many more parcels. Clothing and boots for men and boys urgently wanted; also women's and children's garments, coats and skirts, frocks, warm underclothing, etc. Household utensils are much appreciated. Address all parcels to The Manageress. "The sooner, the quicker!"

FRIDAY,
NOV. 30,
1917.

THE VOTE

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VERY SUPERIOR NEW REAL SEAL MUSQUASH COAT, with large skunk collar; stock size; this year's pattern; 38 guineas.

NEW PALE BLUE CREPE-DE-CHINE SEMI - EVENING BLOUSE; 16s. 11d.

SEVERAL SILK AND SATIN JUMPERS, fur and embroidery trimming; cheap.

ANTIQUÉ FRENCH CLOCK and ORNAMENTS to match; Derby pattern; £9 the set.

SEVERAL CHILDREN'S DRESSES and COATS; very moderate.

SEVERAL STYLISH VELVET AND VELOUR HATS, at very moderate prices.

HANDSOME ROSEWOOD CHIP-FONNIER, marble top, glass doors and mirror back, perfect condition, 3ft. 6in. wide; £2 15s.

COSTUME LENGTH FINE BLACK SERGE, with white stripe; 35s.

SET OF BLACK FOX FURS, £3 10s.

FOR SALE—cont.

A 2ft. 6in. IRON BEDSTEAD, spring mattress and hair ditto; 24s.

EMBROIDERED BLACK SATIN COAT, and HAT to match; suit girl of 8 to 12 years; 17s. 6d.

INDIAN CARPET, 9ft. 6in. by 9ft. 8in., centre cream ground, border light blue ground, good colouring, woven right through, very handsome, equal new; £9 9s.

HANDSOME OLD RED MAHOGANY CHEST DRAWERS, 3ft. 6in., 4ft. high, pillars at sides, crack across middle of one drawer; price £4 14s. 6d.

LARGE THICK FELT CARPET, 12ft. by 18ft., peacock blue, not much used; £5 5s.; quality and dye pre-war.

ORANGE SATIN EVENING COAT.

TWO NEW OSTRICH FEATHER CAPES, navy and natural; 27s. 6d. each.

SILVER CHAIN PURSE, 2½oz.; 25s.

TWO SOUP LADLES and some FORKS and SPOONS; cheap.

VERY SUPERIOR LONG SEAL MUSQUASH FUR COAT, with whole-skin black fox collar; 25 guineas.

GENTLEMAN'S REAL LEATHER, SILVER MOUNTED CIGAR-ETTE CASE; best quality; 12s. 6d.

STRONG ART CARPET (two-sided), grey ground, 8ft. by 9ft., slightly soiled, but not worn; 24s.

VERY FINE IRISH LINEN FIVE O'CLOCK TEACLOTH; hem-stitched, with hand crochet lace, 48½in.; £2 10s.

FOR SALE—cont.

TWO SUPERIOR SEMI-EVENING DRESSES, suit slim, tall lady; GERANIUM TAFFETA, and GREEN VELVET and SILK, perfect condition; 35s. each.

BLACK SEMI-EVENING SATIN and NET DRESS; small size; 14s. 6d.

VERY FINE SECOND - HAND LIGHT BEAR SET, long stole and muff; 12 guineas; cost more than double.

WANTED.

WANTED, a BISSELL CARPET-SWEEPER, in part exchange for a Box Vacuum Cleaner.

MISCELLANEOUS.

LESSONS in PIANOFORTE and SINGING by Mrs. Silvester Sparrow; engagements solicited as Accompanist at Concerts, Dances, &c.—43, Black Lion-lane, Ravenscourt-park, W. 6.

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