

THE VOTE,  
AUGUST 23, 1918.  
ONE PENNY.

## PANIC LEGISLATION.

C. DESPARD.

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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**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.

### PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

IF I WERE M.P.: A TALK WITH MRS. ARNCLIFFE-SENNETT. A.A.S.  
WOMEN M.P.S: PRESS PRONOUNCEMENTS, ETC.  
PANIC LEGISLATION — — — — — C. Despard.  
EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK: STRIKE OF TRAM AND BUS CONDUCTORS.

40 D — UNWORKABLE: MORE CASES: PRESS COMMENT.  
W.F.L. CLYDE CAMPAIGN. TO OUR READERS.  
THE PUBLIC AND THE NURSING PROFESSION.  
WOMEN SOLICITORS. WOMEN IN WAR-TIME.

### IF I WERE M.P.

#### A Talk with Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett.

On March 4, 1918, there appeared in *The Scotsman* a notice to the effect that the Northern Men's Federation for Woman Suffrage had invited its founder and president, Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett, to become a candidate for Parliament, and that if she consented she would probably be asked to contest one of the Edinburgh seats. In this way, and within a few weeks of the passing of the Representation of the People Act, a strong body of men voters expressed their belief that the enfranchisement of women carried with it women's right to stand for election as representatives of the people.

Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett is in no way perturbed, nor are the Northern men, by the announcement in the House of Commons on the last day of the session (August 8) that the Law Officers of the Crown, representing England, Scotland, and Ireland, had declared that women were not eligible to sit in Parliament. "It is bound to come, and very soon," said Mrs. Sennett. "Women cannot be kept out, and the men in possession know it! The time has gone when women could only approach the famous swing doors leading into the people's Chamber in the company of a man, and, as used to be permitted before the suffrage agitation became insistent, peer through a glass

panel at the more or less sleepy and bored male lawmakers beyond the barrier. The country is prepared for the innovation, and sees both the justice of the full enfranchisement of women and the crying need for their presence at Westminster."

"What would I do if I were M.P.? you ask." Quick as thought came the reply:

"If I were in the House of Commons to-day I should fight Regulation 40 D like a tiger!"

The flash of the eye, the determination of the voice, and the indignation of her whole being recalled the daring suffragette of days now happily past, and indicated the strength of will which fears no opposition. Oppression and injustice, especially when women are the sufferers, arouse the fighting spirit in Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett, and, even though the vote is won for six millions of women, that spirit cannot yet be lulled to sleep. The vote is the weapon by which oppression and injustice can be attacked.

"There should not be a moment's peace," she declared, "until that hateful degradation of women—40 D—were consigned to oblivion. It is making men into the meanest of creatures, into despicable cowards. If national honour has gone from them, fortunately there are women left to protect it. I

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have studied the Royal Commissions of forty and fifty years ago dealing with different aspects of this important question, and I find that in those days men refused to 'tell on' the women, and so prostitutes were registered."

"And you thought that Josephine Butler's work was done, once and for all?"

"Yes, certainly. I should like to see her evidence on State Regulation of Vice, given before the Royal Commission of 1871, published far and wide to-day, when the War Office, with Lord Milner at its head, and the Government at its back, is doing all it can to revive the shameful and discredited Contagious Diseases Acts. I am glad the women of the country are putting up such a fight against 40 D and its application 'to everybody everywhere,' to use the excellent and expressive words I saw in *THE VOTE* recently, in the new legislation which the Government is trying to push through Parliament before women have used their votes. It is an insult to women and a degradation to men."

"You are ready to take strong steps against 40 D and its progeny, the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Sexual Offences Bill?"

"Who would not be, when we have the evidence of the police-courts as to the futility of 40 D and such facts as Mr. Muskett's declaration at Lambeth on Aug. 9 that the authorities were doing their best to enforce the regulation in the face of great difficulties, and that there was no hardship so far as the prisoner—a woman charged under the hated Regulation, and found innocent after examination—was concerned. What are men coming to? Mr. Muskett, prosecuting for the Commissioner of Police, was obliged to withdraw the case and declare that in each of the five cases in which he had appeared there was no evidence of guilt, and the women had been discharged. I want to see a Coalition Government in power after the next General Election, as it seems to me dangerous to change horses in crossing the stream, but I am determined to oppose by every means in my power the return of the Coalition if it attempts this hideous legislation. I think the Women's Freedom League is doing magnificent service to the nation in its determination to kill 40 D!"

#### Abolish Barriers Against Women

"Women in the House of Commons would certainly be the most effective way of making the Government, and the men who rule over us, understand the indignation which has been aroused throughout the country. At the moment we have to bring influence to bear outside, not inside, the House, but we are determined to fight to a finish. The next Parliament, in which we hope you will have a place, will hear some home truths as a result of women's votes and women's presence at Westminster. What will be your special work?"

"I shall, of course, fight against all barriers against women in every sphere of action—in the professions, in industry, and certainly in public service. I should like to see a woman appointed Home Secretary. Home is woman's sphere, but at present Home Secretaries seem to be only criminal prosecutors, attacking the home and busying themselves in sending people to prison. The Home Secretary should be the guardian of home and honour and endeavour to prevent crime. In education, too, a woman in power is needed, and when the much talked of Ministry of Health comes into being a woman should be in control. It is the mother who has charge of the children; who but she teaches them to walk, to talk, to eat, to read, to do everything, in fact; and who but she should be in control of the national health? There must be an end of masculine law-making. The men have had a long innings, and the result is the world as we see it to-day. All nations need the co-operation of women."

"I feel very strongly that women must have their places at the Peace Councils; unless they have a hand in settling the terms of peace this terrible war will not really be ended. I should like to see women from all the belligerent nations elected by the women of their own nation as their representatives. I have faith that the intuition, common sense, and clear outlook of women, unclouded by diplomatic double-shuffling, would prevent the sowing of seeds of future vendettas, for in the past it is such seeds which have grown strong enough to bring about wars. In this war the sufferings of women have been beyond description horrible, and they must not be left out of count nor regarded as negligible in the final settlement."

#### The Liberation of the Land.

"You have proved very effectively the power of a woman to organise and co-operate with men in the foundation of the Northern Men's Federation, and the excellent understanding and goodwill which prevail should encourage other men who fight shy of working with women. The Federation, by its excellent service to the Cause, has won the warmest thanks and appreciation of suffragists, who will not look in vain for further timely help. Given the attainment of full equality of men and women in service and responsibility, the shattering of masculine prejudice and its resultant barriers, what other question shall you take up when you are in Parliament—and the rights of private members are restored?"

"I shall devote myself to the liberation of the land. I have always maintained that woman, labour, and the land have been monopolised, sterilised, starved in this country. Labour, to a great extent, has freed itself; it stands now on its own feet and is well organised; it has power. Woman is now enfranchised, not fully, but partially, and the ridiculous restrictions against her are too ridiculous to last long. She has her feet on the ladder of progress; she is started on the road towards the great goal of attainment—equality. But as yet nothing has been done for the land. We are still held in the grip of the ancient feudal system; the law of primogeniture, or entail to the first male born, by which the land is tied up in perpetuity to one man, creates a vicious land monopoly which is responsible for nearly all the evils from which we suffer. Millions of acres of rich, fertile land are lying idle, and millions of men, women, and children are compelled to live in the appalling conditions of city slums. It is a slur upon us as a nation that we cannot feed ourselves, and that the people are outlawed from a right in the land by the deadening law of primogeniture."

"Have you put your ideas into concrete form?"

"Yes, a 'Great Land Charter' has been drawn up which urges the immediate need for the abolition of the law of primogeniture and of substituting a true freehold, such as was established in France at the Great Revolution of 1789, with peasant proprietors living on their own land. There would be an end of tied farms, and women, from whose hands dairy and other work has been taken, would again come into their own. I am convinced that on the lines laid down in 'The Great Land Charter' the liberation of the land could be attained without robbery, recrimination, or revolution!"

"That would be a great achievement. It has in you a prophet with vision and a woman who knows how to overcome obstacles."

"I believe in concentration. I have concentrated for many years on woman suffrage; the great, though not the final, victory is won. Now I mean to concentrate on the land question, just as Plimsoll devoted his time and energy to the now famous Plimsoll mark and Henniker Heaton to the penny postage."

"The sooner you can make yourself felt in Parliament the better!"

A. A. S.

## Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.  
Telegrams—"DESPARD, MUSKETT 1429, LONDON."  
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### FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

#### LONDON AND SUBURBS.

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#### CLYDE CAMPAIGN.—Headquarters:

Rothsay, 4, Mount Pleasant-road.

Meetings daily till further notice at the Pier Head, Rothsay, and at Dunoon.

Hon. Organiser: Miss ALIX M. Clark.

Speakers: Mrs. Mustard and Miss ALIX M. Clark.

Saturday, September 21.—Bowes Park Branch, Drawing-room Meeting, 121, Bowes Road, Palmer's Green, N., 3.30 p.m.

Saturday, September 28.—London Branches Council, Debate 3 p.m., Minerva Café, Opener, Mrs. How-Martyn. Subject: "That it is in the National Interests that Women should be Members of the next Parliament."

Wednesday, October 2.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Lind-af-Hageby. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café at 6d. if desired.

Wednesday, October 9.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 3 p.m. Mrs. Hall Simpson on "How Women of India and England can Co-operate."

Sunday, October 20.—Horne Hill Branch, Drawing-room Meeting at 69, Danecroft-road, 4 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Despard on "Women and the Future."

The Minerva Dressmaking and Exchange Department will be closed until Monday, September 2.

#### WOMEN M.P.s.

#### Other Members Please Copy.

The following letter from Mr. T. Owen Jacobsen, Member of Parliament for the Hyde Division of Cheshire, has been received by the secretary of the Women's Freedom League. Mr. Jacobsen's emphatic statement will, we doubt not, be supported by equally emphatic action:—

"I have received copy of circular containing resolution passed at Rothsay on August 14, and I wish I had been at the meeting, as Rothsay in August is most delightful. The resolution, as you know, demands that the Government should legalise the position of women standing for Parliament.

"I suppose I shall receive some hundreds of these resolutions during the next month or so, and if I do not answer each one individually will you please take it from me now that I am absolutely in favour of women having the vote upon the same terms and conditions as men, and being qualified to sit in the House of Lords and House of Commons upon exactly the same terms and conditions as men.

"I have in my mind at least a dozen women whom I would like to see in the House of Commons."

#### The Very Strongest Reason.

Masculine logic in dealing with women's affairs is again strikingly conspicuous by its absence in the statement that because of the heated controversy over the Criminal Law Amendment Bill the suffrage societies will not concern themselves very much about the admission of women as members of Parliament. It is such degrading and reactionary legislation as the Criminal Law Amendment Bill which lends power to the demand of women that their right to represent the people shall be recognised. The Bill is the very strongest reason for, not against, a determined agitation in support of women M.P.s.

### More Press Pronouncements.

#### The Referee.

Mr. Bonar Law just before the rising of Parliament took a rise out of the fair sex by stating that women were not eligible for membership of the House of Commons. That is all right as far as it goes, but it won't go much farther. To give women the right to vote and not the right to vote for one of their own sex is an absurdity.

Women will not only sit in Parliament, but the day is not far distant when women will be Cabinet Ministers.

When they are Cabinet Ministers there will be no reason why a woman should not be the Prime Minister. If a woman is eligible for the Throne of England, surely a woman is eligible for a seat in her Government.

I prophesy that within the next twenty years more than one woman will be a Cabinet Minister. Make a note of it.

#### Daily Record and Mail (Glasgow).

Politicians are much more deeply interested in the question of women M.P.s than might be supposed from the little that has been said upon the subject in Parliament. I may say also that the huge army of new feminine voters is a factor which has had great weight in the anxious canvassing of the probable date of the next election. Ministers have not had time to bother their heads about it, but private members, and, above all, party officials, are gravely concerned about what to all of them is a terra incognita.

#### Manchester Dispatch.

The Liberal and Labour members of the Government have formed the opinion that women having got the vote cannot be kept from sitting in the Legislative Chamber for any length of time.

#### Yorkshire Observer.

We should have been glad to see the Liberal Party—the majority of whom in these days would welcome women members of the House of Commons—selecting some of its best women to stand as candidates. . . . It is to be hoped the Government will bring in a measure of their own.

#### Glasgow News.

All parliamentarians recognise that sooner or later women will be found on the floor of the House. No doubt it is a step in the direction of emancipation that the question of allowing men and women to sit side by side in the public galleries is at the moment being considered by the authorities of the House.

#### Church Family Newspaper.

I shall be very much surprised if a short Bill is not introduced when Parliament reassembles to amend the law. The desire for women members is by no means confined to women. A correspondent informs me that a well-known *Church Family Newspaper* contributor, Mrs. Hudson Lyall, recently addressed a series of non-political meetings in the North, and from three centres she had requests to allow herself to be nominated as a candidate at the next election. This is the more surprising because Mrs. Lyall never referred to her political views. It is certainly a sign of the times.

#### Christian Commonwealth.

The Law Officers of the Crown have decided that women are not eligible to sit in Parliament, but this can scarcely be a final decision, as there are about 8,000,000 women voters, and practically every women's organisation in the country demands representative government, while the list of women who have been invited to contest parliamentary seats grows longer and longer. It is not a very great while since there was a good deal of trouble in the country because women were refused votes. It would be a disaster if a similar struggle began around the resultant issue.

#### Lady's Pictorial.

In due course woman will find her way into Parliament; in due course she will be admitted as a solicitor; in time she will be called to the Bar. If she attains the Woolsack it will only be because she has won her way to it. If she has done so, why should she be denied her right? As well say, because Home is her supposed province, no man should be allowed to be a cook, or, because needlecraft is a feminine occupation, there should be no men-makers of women's clothes. It is only a matter of time before, in her race for life and liberty to use the gifts with which Nature has endowed her, woman will have cleared all obstacles—even legal ones.

#### Gentlewoman.

We allow women to take part in local administrative work, and they are consulted with regard to all movements having for their aim the improvement of our social life. That being so, it is only right that, as they are amenable to the laws, just as men are, they should have an opportunity of discussing in the Mother of Parliaments the making of those laws. Women should agitate, therefore, without delay to obtain a discussion when Parliament meets after its recess to remedy this wholly anomalous and unjust position.

## THE VOTE.

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### EDITORIAL.

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

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## PANIC LEGISLATION.

Laws made in a panic have always in them elements of danger. Of this the merest tyro in political knowledge ought to be well aware. That the Regulation known as 40 D would be dangerous in its effects thousands of men and women asserted when first it became law. Seldom, however, have the results of a law, made in a panic by persons too busy or too indifferent to look at it in all its bearings, been so swiftly proved disastrous as in the case of this particular Regulation.

Pressed upon the Government, we are told, by a section of militarists, and passed in a hurry under an Order in Council, without any reference to the people, it has already been found by those who are called upon to administer it futile in the sense of protection of those who, under its cover, may have thought it safe to indulge in vicious practices, unjust to women, and degrading to the whole country.

There can be no doubt that much of its practical working has been hushed up. But the public generally are aware that, on the flimsiest evidence, women have been arrested, and that in many cases, ignorant of their rights even under the Act, they have—to save themselves from what they conceive would be worse shame—submitted to the humiliation of medical examination, only to be proved innocent of the charge brought against them.

Such are the results which are before us now. *The Daily News*, in one of its fine and vigorous protests against the Order, gives a case in which, the accused woman having firmly declined to submit to the cruel ordeal of examination, the magistrate before whom she was brought was asked by the prosecution to sentence her to a term of imprisonment as a vagrant. He refused to do so, and she was released. But how about the others—the obscure women, the helpless women—girl workers it may be, who by gaiety of manner have incurred the suspicion of the police or, by not-to-be-tempted rectitude, the ill-will of a member of his Majesty's fighting forces? Why, one can almost hear the threat thrown out: "I'll make you smart for this!" And it can be done. For while defamation of character is a punishable offence, and compensation can be demanded if it is proved that the defamed person has suffered in body or estate, there is here no possibility of appeal. The accuser is sheltered. He can tell his story secretly, with none to contradict him; and the maligned and outraged victim, because she is a woman and helpless, has no redress. Can women be blamed for feeling that of all the cynical, one-sided laws that have ever been passed this is the worst? We take leave to thank Heaven

that there is something in our nation stronger than even a War Cabinet. Let the effects and results of this last monstrous Order in Council become fully known, and these stronger things—the judgment, common sense, and spirit of fair play of the whole body of the community—will rise up against it.

We are not ignorant of the arguments that are used to shut the mouths of protesters. "We must win the war; that is the great essential. When it is over, when our enemies are completely crushed, we shall have time and opportunity to study these matters; and then regulations which many supporters acknowledge as makeshifts will be withdrawn." But will they? It was said once, "Give a lie five minutes' start and you will never catch it." Give our panic legislators rope enough; let them, working on our patriotism, which, if it were rightly understood, is larger and more reasonable than theirs, do as they will with us now, can any of us be so foolish as to imagine that we shall easily regain our lost ground? Especially the women, classed as non-combatants. We have been fighting for equality of rights, of reward for work, of moral status between men and women. By this one Order all we have striven for is being thrown into the melting-pot. Do they still say: "Be unselfish! Think of the great things. Forget all these grievances for a time!"

We wonder how many remember now the old-fashioned words: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The living soul—that which, because it links us with the Divine and makes us human—can only act, can only grow, in Freedom. Shut the plant in an airless room and it will wither. Enclose the living spirit in an iron cage of regulations and it will shrink and dwindle. Not only 40 D but other panic legislation forced upon us during the war does actually spell slavery. If we are to descend into that gulf, if the living spirit is to be bound with chains, what will it matter whether from the physical standpoint we win the war or not? The indomitable soul, through which alone freedom is made possible, will have gone out from us.

We of the Women's Freedom League, with other Women's Societies, have made our protest, and many of the best men of the country have protested with us. We had hoped that before this the Government would have given way, and that legislation on this crying evil would have been delayed until both men and women could consider the best and fairest methods of dealing with it. Our hopes have been disappointed. The battle is not over. Our protests must continue; they must be more vehement; and, if we are able to see, beyond the present darkness, the vast issues that are involved, we shall not hesitate.

Meanwhile let us answer those who, urging expediency, taunt us with lack of Love for our Country, that ours is the true patriotism. A big Britain—what is that to us; what is it to the myriads whose lives are spent in close factories and sunless courts? Our patriotism has as its aim to see and to keep our country great—great because free—the home of valiant, clean-souled men and women, who are strangers to the vile thing, fear, and who, when they are called upon to choose their representatives, will elect men and women wise enough and strong enough to resist pressure, even if it were with an army behind it, when the pressure is towards injustice. So may we escape the danger of panic legislation, having instead laws worthy of a great nation—wisely conceived, patiently worked out laws to which all those affected by them may willingly and joyfully consent.

C. DESPARD.

## EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

### Strike of Tram and 'Bus Conductors.

The great strike on behalf of women 'bus and tram conductors from which London has suffered for the last few days, and which is spreading to various parts of the country, including Brighton, Hove, Hastings, Bristol, Bath, Weston-super-Mare, and Folkestone, will be remembered as the great dislocation of normal life in which men recognised that it was to their interests to support the women and establish the vital principle of Equal Pay for Equal Work. The flagrant disregard of justice to women and of the nation's innate sense of fair play evoked almost universal sympathy for the strikers, in spite of the demands of war service and the widespread public inconvenience. As we go to press the settlement does not appear to be in sight, but it is to the interest of the community that justice should not be delayed.

### The Missing Five Shillings.

The strike is a protest, and a very effective one, against the award last month of the Committee on Production to give the men conductors a war bonus of 25s. and only 20s. to the women. Men and women are doing the same work under the same conditions, and the award is a gratuitous piece of sex differentiation. Mr. Ben Smith, secretary of the London and Provincial Licensed Vehicle Workers' Union, declares that "The women are doing the same work as the men; in fact, now that the Commissioner of Police allows the omnibuses to be overloaded to the extent of five extra passengers, the women are called upon to do more work than men did in pre-war days."

The old excuse is made that women have not family responsibilities as have men; the women teachers have had to meet that form of attack, and have pertinently pointed out that there is no salary differentiation between married and unmarried men teachers. Nobody knows better than we do that wives and little ones must have money to live upon, but this must not be used as a pretext to exploit the women workers of the country. Some other way must be found to ensure to them all that is necessary for health and happiness. In the great fight for Equal Pay for Equal Work it is efficient work, not sex or responsibilities, which must count. *The Manchester Guardian* describes it as "the simplest and most incontestable principle in the ethics of work and wages," and adds:

"If the advent of women into what have hitherto been masculine preserves is not to be a grave injury to the interest of the workers as a whole, if women are not to undercut men, if a sex war in industry is to be averted, the principle of equal pay for equal work must be insisted on from the outset."

It is a significant sign of the times when *The Times* is moved to point out that there are two motives involved:

"The ordinary economic motive which operates with most people, to be paid at the same rate for equally good work as anyone else, and the motive of establishing sex equality. . . In both the strikers will, broadly, have the sympathy of the public. This happens to be work that women do quite as well as men, often under very exceptional difficulties; and it is clean against the general interest that the sex of the employee should be a disability in the wages market."

Having committed itself to the doctrine which suffragists have preached for many years, it remains for *The Times* to advocate its application to all spheres of activity.

### MUNITION WORKERS AGITATING.

It is not only teachers and tram and 'bus conductors who are demanding equal pay for equal work. Munition workers are also agitating.

A mass meeting of women workers in Woolwich Arsenal and Dockyard a few nights ago demanded a 10s. advance to women and 5s. to girls, whose wages are much lower than those of men doing the same work. The minimum wage for women is 30s. and that for men 50s.; the men's war bonuses are proportionately greater. 750,000 women munition workers throughout the country are agitating for the weekly increase of 10s. According to Miss Mary Macarthur, the position is as follows:

Since March 1, 1917, the men-time workers on munitions received an advance totalling 15s. 6d. and 12½ per cent., and the men piece workers received 15s. 6d. and 7½ per cent. The women during that period received only 6s. Though they may be doing exactly the same work and receiving the same piece rates, yet their earnings would be 15s. to 25s. less. The advance also refers to overtime, so that the greater the number of hours worked the greater the discrepancy. This has led to great discontent. An announcement from the Ministry of Munitions is expected at any moment. If the Government act wisely they will not delay it even for a day."

### ITEMS OF INTEREST.

There is no woman on the Committee on Production—yet "women workers are winning the war!"

When women's services were first utilised on the trams and buses the expectation of the employers was that they would only be able to work five days a week, and that a staff of spare workers to fill the gaps would be needed. The principle of equal wages was then agreed to with these facts in mind. The women are only paid for the actual time they work.

According to an official of the London General Omnibus Company, the great majority of the women employees are full-time service workers, who are able to work six days if they like. The spare women are guaranteed a wage of 30s. a week, but while they are actually employed on the 'buses they receive the standard wage and bonus proportionate to the time worked.

An official of the Vehicle Workers' Union said they hoped to get a supplementary ration for the omnibus girls. "On an average the girls climb the omnibus stairs two hundred times a day," he said, "and working out in the open air they naturally require extra food."

A number of bluejackets and petty officers, with their leave luggage, were stranded at Holborn Viaduct Station. A few of the lucky ones secured taxis, but the majority smilingly shouldered their boxes and started to walk to Euston. They took it all in good part, though it meant missing the connection. "If the lasses deserve their 5s. I hope they will get it," said one with three blue chevrons and two wound stripes.

### WILL YOU HAVE C.D. ACTS?

You will have them unless you take action to prevent it. The Women's Freedom League is fighting tooth and nail against the reintroduction of State Regulation of Vice in this country. Josephine Butler did her part and secured the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. You have the easier task of preventing their re-enactment. The Government will not move in the face of the people's determination. Do all you can yourself by writing to your Member of Parliament and talking to all your own friends, and send your contributions to the Women's Freedom League to maintain the fight to victory.

E. KNIGHT,  
Hon. Treas.

144, High Holborn,  
London, W.C. 1.

## 40 D UNWORKABLE.

## Opinion in the Country.

This week the Press seems to have suddenly discovered that the system which has maligned, tortured and thrown out of work without redress hundreds of innocent women is not one under which six million women voters (or is it sixty million now in the imagination of some people in high places?) can be expected to sit down and do nothing.

According to the War Office statement that 100 women have been convicted under 40 D, there must have been to every case reported in the Press at least three others not reported or not noticed. Every man and woman can materially help in this fight against shameful injustice and the pernicious C.D. Acts by sending reports of cases mentioned in their local papers to the Women's Freedom League as soon as they see them.

## CASES OF THE WEEK.

## Lambeth Police Court.

Mrs. OLIVE CALLAGHAN, aged 21, wife of a soldier on service (see THE VOTE, page 357), charged on remand (August 16). The prison doctor had examined this prisoner, and Mr. Muskett felt able to proceed with the charge. Mr. Leicester asked whether it was necessary that a woman should know that she was suffering?

Mr. Muskett was not aware that the question of knowledge had ever been raised. Knowledge was not essential. The regulation would become unworkable if knowledge had to be proved.

The magistrate suggested that the prisoner should obtain legal assistance, and she was further remanded.

## Westminster Police Court.

AN UNNAMED YOUNG LAMBETH WOMAN, charged on remand (August 13) under 40 D. She had declined to be examined by the prison doctor. Mr. Muskett delivered an interesting lecture, reported in *The Times*, on the evils of venereal disease and its prevalence in the Army, the history of 40 D, and the difficulty of enforcing it, chiefly because of that lack of hearty co-operation in their own prosecution shown by the prisoner in the dock and others. "*Compulsory examination was not to be thought of.*"

The young woman was again remanded, on bail, to August 20. She was finally examined by a private doctor, recommended by the court missionary, specially summoned to the court on August 16 to hear that the medical evidence was entirely in her favour, and released to appear again on August 20. This young woman has, therefore, already had a week in Holloway, four appearances in the police-court, impertinent remarks from Mr. Muskett, prolonged controversies with officials, a search to find an available doctor willing to assist in carrying out 40 D, with the final horror of medical examination, and all this to prove herself innocent and rebut evidence which did not exist.

## Aldershot Police Court.

Mrs. MARGARET TIPPINGS, aged 30, wife of a soldier and mother of four children (see THE VOTE, page 358), charged on further remand (August 12) with infecting on June 18 Private Bowers, a Canadian soldier, admitted to hospital on July 31 in an early stage of syphilis. Prisoner was further remanded, bail being refused by request of the Military Police. She was again brought up (August 15). The result of the blood test was stated to show the presence of venereal disease, and she was sentenced to four months' imprisonment, with as much hard labour as the prison doctor thinks proper to give her.

Mrs. Tippings all along maintained that she had never seen this soldier. She was sentenced because he accused her, because he had written her address in his notebook, and because her blood gave evidence that she had once had the disease. The unsupported word of a soldier and an address in a notebook cannot be seriously regarded as evidence; and if the blood test is to be taken as sufficient by itself to give a woman four months' hard labour, we shall have to ask for further investigation into its results as applied to the general married population of the country, and how far it can indicate infectious disease.

## Newport Pagnell Petty Sessions.

Mrs. GERTRUDE KNOWLES, aged 21, charged (August 14) under 40 D with infecting Sapper William A. Bean, R.E., who gave evidence. Dr. H. T. Wickham examined defendant, and could find absolutely no trace of disease. Remanded for a week to await the result of microscopic investigation by the Medical Research Association.

## Condemned by its Own Futility.

## Lancet—

It must be as a public health measure that the Regulation stands or falls, since it was introduced as such, and was not held out by its promoters either as a device for making promiscuous sexual intercourse safe for men or as a form of duress for women of loose morals.

In practice no medical examination suffices to ascertain the presence of infection, and this negative aspect in itself, we believe, discredits the Regulation as a public health measure. Also difficulty may arise in regard to positive medical evidence. In a case where the woman is shown to be infectious, length of time elapsing may leave the medical examiner himself in doubt as to which party infected the other. Either the man alone, or both the man and the woman, may have been suffering from communicable disease at the time they met, and the statement of either party as to the date of possible infection is evidently always to be taken with reserve.

We have confined our criticism thus far to the purely public health aspect of Regulation 40 D. We are not sorry to find wanting as a public health measure a regulation which has aroused such widespread opposition from all who wish to see the law dispensing even-handed justice. We believe that the cause of public health, which the medical profession has increasingly at heart, will not be advanced by any legal measure which does not commend itself to the moral sense of the majority; but which ever way that sense may work in respect of Regulation 40 D, the enactment appears to be condemned by its own futility.

## Nation—

If Parliament were sitting it is possible that the case which came this week into court might have made an end of the shameful ordinance, 40 D. A young woman, charged with the offence of communicating venereal disease to a soldier, refused to submit to the disgusting process of examination. Mr. Muskett, for the Crown, attempted to argue that her refusal alone entitled him to a conviction. We are glad to see that the magistrate refused to accept this plea. How often, we wonder, has the threat to bring a charge, and force the hateful examination, reinforced the hold of bullies over women?

## Daily News—

Under the heading, "A Travesty of Justice":—If knowledge is essential, the regulation is confessedly unworkable; if it is not, then women are to be punished for offences which they were quite ignorant they were committing; and this not from ignorance of the law—an excuse which is properly inadmissible—but from ignorance of facts which the victim may have had no reason whatever to suspect.

Under the heading, "The Scandal of 40 D":—It means that any soldier can bring a charge against any woman, from which she can only clear herself in nine cases out of ten by submitting to a grossly offensive physical examination. It is not surprising that cases are already being quoted of charges brought by men out of pure malice, for the satisfaction of submitting the woman to the gross indignity of such an examination. In at least 50 per cent. of the cases where women have been forced in self-defence to undergo physical examination they have been found to be entirely free from disease. The secondary effect of the regulation on the soldier is little better than its direct effect on the woman. The result in his case is twofold. The issue of the regulation is regarded as an official recognition and condonation of vice, while at the same time an illusory belief in immunity from physical consequences is fostered. The regulation itself is an echo of the discredited C.D. Acts, and its consequences are precisely what everyone familiar with those Acts has predicted.

## New Statesman—

Regulation 40 D has now been at work long enough to afford conclusive proof that the results of this measure are going to be precisely what its opponents predicted they would be. . . . We suggest that women voters should write to their members requiring them to pledge themselves to press Mr. Lloyd George for the withdrawal of this disgusting Regulation.

## Yorkshire Observer—

Mr. Muskett assumes unwarrantably that in every case the woman was guilty of the offence, and his excuse for the failure of the Regulation is quite unacceptable. But his statement amounts to this—that the Regulation cannot be properly enforced. In this it is typical of much of the frenzied and ill-thought-out legislation of the present time. The Regulation does no good, and it may be the instrument of an incalculable amount of harm.

## Herald—

Labour has submitted to a good deal during this war, but surely it will not submit to these women being treated in this fashion.

## Primitive Methodist Leader—

The appeal is to every clean-minded man to leave nothing undone until this abominable Regulation is withdrawn. It is stated on valid authority that girls and women are to be rounded up indiscriminately, that they are to be forced to undergo an abominable examination in order that the diseased may be separated from the clean. And this in order to protect unclean men! So we come back to the old days of licensed vice and equally to licensed injustice. The whole subject is pitifully deplorable; but let us have British justice and equality of treatment as between man and woman. As in other instances so will it be in this. A great moral outburst of public sentiment will bring to the ground Regulation 40 D.

## Western Mercury, Plymouth—

Feeling against Regulation 40 D, which virtually re-establishes the C.D. Acts, without the preliminary of legislation, is very strong and widespread, and it must be admitted that recent police-court experiences have done a great deal to discredit the regulation and confirm the prophecies of its opponents.

## W.F.L. CLYDE CAMPAIGN.

Headquarters: 4, Mount Pleasant Road, Rothesay, Bute.  
Hon. Organiser: Miss Alix M. Clark.

There is abundant proof in Scotland that the principles laid down by the Women's Freedom League will form the fundamental subjects on which candidates will be asked to give definite promises before they can hope to receive the support of the women in their constituencies. Night after night Mrs. Mustard speaks from the Women's Freedom League wagonette on the Pier Head, Rothesay—also at Dunoon and Largs—on all the vital problems of the day, and the increasing crowds which come to hear her only prove how necessary it is to hold these Campaigns year by year. Very often it is only in this way that many women have the chance of hearing these vital questions discussed.

Wednesday, August 14, was a Red Letter Day for the Campaign, as Miss Eunice Murray came and spoke for us. The crowd numbered over 1,500, and the enthusiasm and applause which greeted her was ample proof of the support she will have in her Glasgow constituency (Brighton) when the General Election takes place. The following resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously: "That this meeting calls upon the Government to introduce a Bill early next Session legalising the right of women to become Members of Parliament."

Mrs. Mustard is receiving many tributes of thanks and appreciation from the men and women of Scotland for the clever and fluent way in which she handles her subjects.

One thousand VOTES have been sold during the week. I must still appeal for continued financial assistance; the Campaign will close in about ten days and I do hope that all members and sympathisers will send their donations as early as possible to enable me to bring this Victory Campaign to a successful end and free of debt.

ALIX M. CLARK.

## TO OUR READERS.

We call the attention of new readers of THE VOTE to the important facts given this week, continuing a custom with which our regular readers have long been familiar, concerning subjects of vital importance to women. No present or potential voter, man or woman, can afford to remain in ignorance with regard to the right of women to be elected as Members of Parliament; the fight against Regulation 40 D and its extension in the form of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Sexual Offences Bill; or the strenuous struggle to establish the principle of Equal Pay for Equal Work.

In addition to keeping our readers well informed on these questions we shall publish further articles from Members of Parliament on Women in the

House of Commons, following on Mr. H. G. Chancellor's which appeared last week, and interviews with women candidates, "If I were M.P.," begun this week with Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett.

The Women's Freedom League keeps a watchful eye on the Government and on Parliament, and records what it sees, as also upon the interests of women in all spheres of activity.

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## THE PUBLIC AND THE NURSING PROFESSION.

Miss E. L. C. Eden, hon. adviser to the National Union of Trained Nurses, of which Miss Heather-Bigg, matron of the Charing Cross Hospital, is president, in calling attention to the immense importance to the community of the nursing profession, lays stress on the fact that it is of great interest to the public that nurses should be organised on right lines. All the proposals which are connected with the reorganisation of public health must, for their efficient treatment, depend greatly upon the work of nurses.

An upward turning point comes in the history of a profession when its members realise that the responsibility for its development rests on their shoulders, and that the keynote of a corporate organisation must be self-respect, self-government, self-development, self-support. The National Union of Trained Nurses has developed on these lines, and is the only self-governing national society of nurses in Great Britain. It has had for a number of years a system of branch organisation, providing for post-graduate lectures, opportunities for discussion and practical demonstration. It assists its members with free legal and professional advice. It upholds the interests of nurses in Parliament and on public bodies. It runs an employment bureau for nurses, which has proved to be of great value. Many nurses—members and non-members—have expressed their great appreciation of the friendly welcome and expert advice they receive at the central office, 46, Marsham-street, Westminster.

The society has a very carefully thought out democratic constitution, and is managed entirely by members of the profession on the system of local representation on a central body. It is run on practical business lines for the benefit of nurses, but it has from the beginning always borne the good of the country in mind, thus avoiding one of the great pitfalls of similar organisations—a narrow professionalism. It is of the utmost importance to the public as well as to nurses that there should be in existence a strong society such as the National Union of Trained Nurses, representing trained professional opinion, whilst the Bill for State Registration of Nurses is being considered in Parliament, and after the Act comes into force, in order that the beneficent effect of a wide range of free opinion may be brought to bear on all matters affecting the profession.

FRIDAY,  
AUGUST 23,  
1918.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

## WOMEN SOLICITORS

In the course of a letter to Members of Parliament, asking for their support in pressing the Government to grant facilities for the remaining stages of the Solicitors (Qualification of Women) Bill in the House of Commons early next session, the Women's Freedom League points out that

It is a great hardship for women not to have the opportunity of being represented in a Court of Law by a woman should they so wish. In many cases a woman will be able to put the case for a woman plaintiff or defendant much more forcibly than can be done by any but the most exceptional male solicitor, so that this Bill is absolutely essential in the interests of justice.

There is, too, the other question that, now that, for the existence of our country, sex barriers have had to give way in so many directions, it is a great injustice to women to shut them out of a profession for some of the branches of which some women are eminently suitable.

The Bill is urgent as a war-time measure because the ranks of the legal profession are now very much depleted, and, as is the case in the medical profession, there must be a shortage for some time to come, which makes it all the more necessary that women, who already in considerable numbers hold law degrees, should be able to take their share of the necessary legal business of the community.

Promises of support have been received from more than 250 members. The Bill, it will be remembered, has already passed the House of Lords.

MISS MAUDE ROYDEN preaches in the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, E.C., next Sunday at the 6 p.m. service. Subject: "The Beauty of Christ's Teaching."

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## WOMEN IN WAR-TIME.

### After Four Years.

Lord Sydenham recently introduced a deputation to urge the Home Secretary to form a body of women police in the principal cities and towns, and to establish women special constables during the war, with the main object of protecting the interests of women and children. Sir George Cave expressed himself as entirely in sympathy with the proposal. In August, 1914, the Women's Freedom League had a prolonged correspondence and interviews with the authorities on this subject, and offered to organise a body of women special constables—only to be received with scorn. Our own Women Police Volunteers, organised in 1914, proved the extreme value of a body of independent, trained women, always on the watch over the interests of women and children.

### The Latest Recruit.

Following the example of King's College Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital, St. George's Hospital, and the London Hospital, we now have University College Hospital deciding to admit women as medical students to the school and hospital in October next.

### A Chinese Woman Doctor in England.

Miss Martha Hunter Hoa Hing, a Chinese woman doctor, has just been elected house surgeon at the Alexandra Hospital for Children, Dyke-road, Brighton. Miss Hoa Hing, who is L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., Edinburgh, and L.R.F.P.S., Glasgow, has been in England about seven years, and took her diplomas in 1916. She has a brother in the British Army.

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