



# THE VOTE



(THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.)

VOL. I.—No. 2.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4th, 1909.

ONE PENNY.

## NOTICE.

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## What We Think.

The fifteen weeks waiting of the members from the Women's Freedom League outside the House of Commons has come to a dramatic finish. It is not that a belated sense of decency has induced the Prime Minister to behave in accordance with the dictates of courtesy and justice. He is apparently incurably deaf to all such appeals. The Women's Freedom League has made an effort, unparalleled in history for patience and endurance, to gain a peaceful and constitutional opportunity of stating their grievances. It has been contemptuously and persistently denied them. The National Executive Committee had no alternative but to adopt other methods. They have sent another message to the Prime Minister—via Bermondsey.

The following is a copy of the letter that has been sent to Mr. Asquith:—

To Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith, M.P.

Sir,—We are directed by the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League to bring before you the following facts:

1. That members and sympathisers of this League have stood outside the entrances to the Houses of Parliament from July 5th until October 27th, during the whole time that the House of Commons has been sitting. The women who have taken part in this peaceful and dignified protest have suffered a strain of a very painful character, but nevertheless over 250 women have cheerfully undergone it in the hope that you would grant their request, which is, "That you would fix a time and place for receiving a properly elected and representative deputation of the Women's Freedom League."

2. This desire has been endorsed by men electors at public meetings in every London constituency, as well as at other public meetings in all parts of the country.

3. Your refusal to receive any deputation of suffragists since you became Prime Minister, the unsatisfactory utterances of Cabinet Ministers on this question, and the recent pronouncement of the Speaker have shown us that the methods hitherto adopted have not been sufficiently effective. As the result of much thoughtful consideration, the National Executive Committee of the Women's Freedom League decided that the time had come to make a more direct protest against the injustice of electing members of Parliament without the consent of women.

Members of the League have therefore begun to-day a new militant policy at Bermondsey, and have invalidated the bye-election by destroying the recorded votes of the electors. This was done as a strong protest against your inaction and the unworthy treatment which has been accorded to our question in

the House of Commons. According to common usage in that House, grievances affecting a large section of the people are supposed to receive the serious attention of the House. Our bitter experience as women suffragists has been that this proper consideration of grievances can only be secured by voters, thus forcing us into the methods of protest and rebellion.

As though the official Parliamentary treatment were not sufficiently contemptuous, Cabinet Ministers have stooped to taunt women suffragists with "pin prick policy" methods of "silly disorder and petty violence" and similar expressions. Now, Sir, we wish to point out that this is a political protest deliberately made with a full realisation of how serious the consequences may be, but the Freedom for which we have struck a blow to-day is more precious to us than any considerations of personal suffering, and we know that our action will be endorsed by all those who earnestly wish to remove the present degrading sex-disability resting on women.

You have been deaf to constitutional appeals, you have ignored manifest unrest and discontent among women, you have callously allowed women to stand fifteen weeks praying for an audience. We had no alternative but to send you a stronger message, and it rests with you to decide whether we have yet done enough to convince you that it is not safe to evade this question any longer.

Again, therefore, we renew the request that you will receive a duly elected and representative deputation of the Women's Freedom League at your earliest possible convenience.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) C. DESPARD,  
SARAH BENNETT,  
TERESA BILLINGTON GREIG,  
EDITH HOW MARTYN.

No answer to this communication has yet been received.

A copy of the foregoing was sent to every London paper with the following explanatory note:—

Dear Sir,—Following up their action at the Bermondsey bye-election to day, the Women's Freedom League have sent the accompanying letter to Mr. Asquith.

Realising regretfully that the time has come for stronger methods the pickets have now been withdrawn from the House of Commons.

I must state emphatically that a corrosive acid was not used. The fluid was an alkaline solution of pyrogallol, and its use was decided upon only after many experiments had been made with it.—Yours faithfully,  
EDITH HOW MARTYN.

The *Liverpool Daily Mercury* brings a strong indictment against the Liberal Press as to the levity—almost glee—with which a section of it has written about the disgraceful use of the firehose on a woman prisoner. It recommends that the hose be turned on those who were responsible for the use of it. One can imagine the indignation of the good gentlemen concerned. Were they not playing the game? they might well ask themselves in bewilderment. Were they not following the brilliant example set by the Government, and more particularly the Home Secretary, of true consideration for the dignity of womanhood? Our M.P.'s—so quick to see a good joke—had laughed consumedly at the mention of the use of the stomach pump. Why not then at the use of the water pump?  
M. H.

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## BERMONDSEY BALLOT BOXES.

## A WAY THEY HAVE IN THE PRESS.

"The sensation of the Bermondsey Election was not the result of the poll, but the 'outrage' that was perpetrated by a few of the militant Suffragettes," says a writer in a provincial paper. It is surely time that a new dictionary was compiled for press use when dealing with our protests. Peaceful picketing outside the official residence of the Prime Minister is a "policy of silly disorder and petty violence." Fifteen weeks' patient waiting for the obstinacy of an autocrat to give way comes, of course, in the same category. An attempt on the part of a deputation of eight or nine women to force their way into the House of Commons causes an absolute volcanic eruption of vituperative adjectives.

No one, therefore, need be either surprised or alarmed at finding the latest protest of the Women's Freedom League described in the *Daily News* as a "dastardly outrage." It was the Parliamentary Correspondent of this Liberal organ, I remember, who wrote without rebuke of going out to "watch the fun" of women being arrested. Evidently the responsible staff of this paper has a unique sex-sense of the value of words.

One leader writer, however, seems to have grasped the idea that lay behind our action quite intelligently. I quote from the *Western Daily Mercury*:—"The thought simply staggers one. Ink or corrosive in a ballot-box, a few papers rendered undecipherable, and another election, with all its expense and trouble, would be rendered necessary. One imagines the perverse glee of the Suffragist leader into whose head the idea first came. To be able to hang up an election that the whole nation was waiting for by a more quick dash and throw—there is genius in the conception. . . ." That is indeed the motive that lies behind this new militant move—to invalidate elections, if possible; to refuse to allow any more members of Parliament to be elected without the consent of women; to obstruct and hinder national business until women's claims have been attended to.

## OUR REGRET.

That our first move in this direction has been attended with a slight injury to an innocent person is a matter of great regret to us. But only the most irresponsible of the gutter press dares to insinuate that it was anything but an accident. Indeed, every precaution was taken to render the proceedings as harmless to individuals as possible, and repeated experiments were undertaken with the object of securing as innocuous a medium as we could get. For the rest, we are content to let the following account of the "outrage" speak for itself.

Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans both volunteered for the difficult task, and were provided on the morning of the polling day with a glass test tube filled with a solution containing ink and photographic chemicals. Their instructions were to get into the polling-booth and break the tube over the ballot-box. No further violence was to be used, no other property destroyed.

## MRS. CHAPIN'S STORY.

"It was quite absurdly easy from one point of view. I had not visited the constituency before, and did not know where the particular polling-booth marked down for me was, but as I sat in the car a girl said, 'There are the Butcher Street Schools; they are polling there to-day.' 'My destination,' I thought, so I got down and walked slowly up the long school-yard. The policeman at the door had his back to me, so that I entered the booth unchallenged. I stood for a moment to take my bearings. There were three men seated at a table, but they were all too busy to take any notice

of me. I walked quietly to the ballot-box and broke my tube over the slit; some of the liquid remained on the top of the box, so I pushed it in

## WITH MY HAND.

knowing, of course, that it was harmless. There was a cry from one of the men that something had gone in his eye. I told him quickly that he need not be frightened, it wouldn't hurt him if it were washed off at once. They then rushed at me, dragged at my furs, and caught me by the neck. The constable came up, and I said, 'Tell these men to remove their hands at once, will you, please? I am perfectly willing to go with you; there is no need for them to interfere.' He did so. Then he took me into custody, and I was marched off to Tower Bridge Police Court, where I was charged first with 'maliciously throwing a liquid at Mr. Thorley with intent to do grievous bodily harm.' Of course, this was an entirely

## FALSE CHARGE.

and I indignantly repudiated it. A second charge was then made of 'fraudulently defacing ballot-papers,' which, of course, was just as false as the other. There was no fraud about my attempt to deface the ballot-papers. I set out with every intention of doing so, and it was done in the most straightforward manner possible."

Mrs. Chapin was brought before Mr. Rose at the Tower Bridge Police Court the same afternoon and remanded for seven days.

## MISS NEILANS' STORY.

"My entry into the Laxton Street polling-booth was, like Mrs. Chapin's, practically unchallenged, and the men who were sitting at the table seemed too taken aback to move for a moment or two after I had broken my tube of liquid over the ballot-box. They gave me time to lift the tube up, look to see if all the liquid had run out, and then hold it over the box again to let the last drop drain out. On the whole, I can sympathise with their stupefaction. Then a horrified voice wailed out, 'Oh, Miss! what have you done?' Another said indignantly, 'Look, you've spoilt my trousers!'

"I hope I've spoiled your voting papers, gentlemen," I answered. They came round the box then, and one of them got some of the liquid on his hand. He was very frightened, and asked agitatedly, 'Will it burn?' I reassured him at once. 'Go and put your hand under the tap and it will be all right; see, my hands are soaked in it.' I then gave my name and address and left them animatedly discussing what ought to be done, and whether they ought to give me in charge or send for the returning officer."

A warrant was issued for Miss Neilans' arrest, and served on her next day at the offices of the League. She also is to appear at Tower Bridge Police Court next Thursday.

We have been told by our solicitors that for the first time we have committed an indictable offence, and can claim to be tried by a judge and jury, instead of in an ordinary police-court. Needless to say that is the action that will be followed by the committee of the Women's Freedom League.

Next week's issue will contain

## "RIGHT OF WAY"

By

LAWRENCE HOUSMAN,

and the following number an article

by

I. ZANGWILL.

## WOMEN VERSUS THE BUDGET.

WHY NOT RECLAIM YOUR INCOME-TAX FROM THE GOVERNMENT and give it to the Women's Freedom League? If your Income has been taxed before you get it, and does not exceed £700 yearly, you are entitled to recover a portion of the tax.

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## HISTORY OF THE VOTES FOR WOMEN MOVEMENT

(continued).

By CICELY HAMILTON.

The General Election which followed on the Lords' rejection of the Bill is one which will live long in the memory of those who enjoyed it. Enjoyed is the right word—for the Suffragists spared no effort to amuse as well as interest the electorate. Their colours were everywhere, their bands blared in every borough, their prisoners, in appropriate costume, were on show in every town hall; while the theatrical performances of the Actresses' Franchise League were the despair of candidates striving to obtain a hearing. These new methods of political propaganda were keenly appreciated by the elector—too keenly appreciated, in fact! When the decisive moment arrived it became evident that he had enjoyed them so much that he looked forward to their repetition on future occasions. The liveliness of the Suffragette had endeared her to him so much that he felt he could not do without her. . . . Such, at least, was the explanation given by prominent feminists of the huge anti-Suffrage majority returned to the new Parliament.

The blow was a crushing one, and for a time the Suffragists reeled beneath it. In their darkest hours they had counted on the electors' sense of justice; and now the elector had failed them. What wonder if, at first, counsels of despair prevailed?

But not for long. The shock past, courage returned; and with the experience borne of adversity the leaders of the movement set to work to grapple with the situation. One thing was clear: spite of propaganda, spite of martyrdom, the average man did not yet take the Suffragist seriously. What was to be done to induce him to take her seriously? There lay the problem.

All the world knows how it was solved; but with whom the idea of the solution originated it is impossible to say. One story has it that the project was initiated by an anonymous supporter of the cause who wrote simultaneously to the committees of the various Suffrage organizations, pointing out the advantages of her plan; but the legend lacks confirmation, and it seems more probable that the project was one of those epoch-making inspirations which flash into several minds at once.

However the idea originated, it was quickly acted upon. With hope, courage returned, and a wave of enthusiasm once more swept over the Suffragist world. In deadly and earnest secrecy the needful preparations were made, and in the early days of summer the first blow was struck.

It fell like a thunderbolt from azure skies. The occasion was that most solemnly important of all Imperial functions—a Test Match at Lords. A hotly-contested struggle was in progress; the Australians had begun their second innings; the game was an even one; Hirst was about to bowl. He had raised his arm to deliver the first ball of the over—when a wild shout arose as a young woman, attired in the colours of the Women's Freedom League, and bearing a banner with a new and strange device, leaped over the boundary and darted towards the wicket. From every part of the crowd other women charged towards her, and, planting her banner with its legend of "Suffrage before Sport" in the centre of the crease, she proceeded to hold a meeting!

The scene of wild confusion that followed can better be imagined than described. An infuriated mob surged on to the ground, and only by the utmost efforts of the police were serious consequences averted. As it was, the tumult raged for over an hour, and when finally the ground was cleared it was trampled into a condition that rendered cricket unthinkable. The Test Match was a fiasco—and what that means to Englishmen only Englishmen know! The first blow had been struck to the war-cry of "Suffrage before Sport!"

And the second followed with lightning-like rapidity. It was the season of the year when every true-born Briton turns first to the betting columns of his daily paper—in other words, the Derby was at hand. But it was a Derby that was never to be run! Two days before the Epsom Meeting the astounding news was flashed along the wires—was staring from every placard, was screeched by every newsboy—that a large body of Suffragettes under the command of Miss Christabel Pankhurst, had made a nocturnal march upon Epsom and encamped upon the historic racecourse itself. Under the able advice of Mr. H. W. Nevinson, hasty but formidable entrenchments had been thrown up, and, side by side with the Union's standard of purple, white and green, the banner of "Suffrage before Sport" waved proudly from the fortifications.

And the country was still staggering beneath the shock of the news when, from another quarter, a fresh attack was reported. A detachment of the Women's Freedom League had effected a breach in the defences of the Oval and introduced a steam-plough into the enclosure. The guidance of the locomotive was in the able hands of Mrs. Despard, and while her followers were engaged in demolishing the seating accommodation the indomitable President of the W.F.L. proceeded to cut the turf into furrows by driving the plough from one end of the ground to the other.

All over the country the same tactics were followed. The exploits of Mrs. Billington-Greig at Ascot, of Miss Mary Gawthorpe at the St. Leger Meeting, hardly need recapitulation—and, on a smaller scale, they had their imitators in hundreds. Attempts were made to hold cricket matches and race-meetings in secret, but the Suffragists were on the alert, and these efforts at mystery usually ended in failure.

The N.U.W.S.S., true to its constitutional policy, refused to take part in any action involving destruction to property; but it by no means held aloof from the agitation. Its best-known exploit, perhaps, was the despatch of a submarine boat to Henley Regatta. Suddenly emerging in the middle of the course, the vessel effectively put a stop to the race for the Grand Challenge Cup, while the crowd of pleasure-seekers was offered an unexpected treat in the shape of spirited addresses from such well-known speakers as Mrs. Frawcett, Lady Strachey, Miss C. O. Ford, and Mr. Malcolm Mitchell (of the Men's League). The speeches were occasionally interrupted by the necessity of diving in order to avoid the attentions of audience and police, but, on the whole, the impromptu meeting was pronounced an emphatic success and the little party landed at the Old Swan Pier, carrying with them the memory of a thoroughly enjoyable trip.

The great heart of the British public was stirred to its depths. The flat-racing season had been ruined; was the football season to go the same way? With one voice the great heart of the British Public answered, No! The feeling of the country was too obvious for any Government to hesitate. "Suffrage before Sport" had brought victory at last!

One likes to remember that the new-made Citizens showed as much moderation in success as determination under defeat. . . . It was no ungenerous motive which induced the militant societies to organise a lavish series of banquets for the Metropolitan Police; and friend and foe alike had nothing but praise for the kindly feeling which prompted Dr. Garrett Anderson, as soon as the news of the victory reached her, to summon an ambulance corps and offer first-aid to the fainting editorial staff of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

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## THE HEROINES OF THE BALLOT BOX.

By ETHEL HILL.

Mrs. Chapin is an American who has made her home in England. She is a tall, fair woman, quiet and reposed in manner and eminently self-possessed. "I am not by any means a heroic woman," she said, smiling, "but I have the Puritanical fighting blood in my veins." Her principles made her wish to do something to show her active sympathy with the women of England in their fight for political freedom.

She has seen a great deal of the state of our streets, and she feels that the laws pressing upon women are fearfully unjust.

Mrs. Chapin is very happy in her home with her husband, her daughter and her son, and it is for the sake of other less fortunate women that she has taken such a prominent part in the election incident at Bermondsey. She does not regret her act, but only the



Mrs. CHAPIN.

("Daily Mirror" Photos.)

unfortunate accident to Mr. Thorley. It was at least unintentional, but the brutal behaviour of the male opponents to Woman's Suffrage is always deliberate—students may burn sulphuretted hydrogen at women's meetings, roughs may throw stones, with intent to harm, to their hearts' content and no arrests ever are made, no one seems to care what happens to the women in their struggle for common justice.

Mrs. Chapin thinks no man can be so brutal to women as the worst kind of Englishman, and to a patriotic Englishwoman it is very unpleasant hearing, but those who have had anything to do with the suffrage movement will be inclined to agree with her. Of course, there is the minority who feel and know and recognise the nobility of the women who are occupied with higher things than, to quote George Eliot, "the miserable aims that end with self." As Mr. Maurice Hewlett says in the "Open Country," "People with souls know these things, and people without souls don't count."

Mrs. Chapin has an excellent motto we can all take to heart:—"Feel a thing to be right, and go ahead."

Miss Neilans is young and pretty, two valuable assets, especially when allied to cool courage. She was born in London, of Scottish parentage, and has worked for Women's Suffrage since Mrs. Despard's first arrest, in February, 1907. We can imagine how the stirring spectacle of Mrs. Despard leading a handful of women against mounted police would awaken enthusiasm in a young heart ready to be roused to action. That she has not spared herself, the fact that she has been three times arrested and twice imprisoned is startling proof.

I asked her if she were nervous when she started out on her mission to the ballot box?

No. She was proud to do it; proud to protest against the indignity of their fifteen weeks day and night picketing at the House of Commons, which has entailed much physical suffering, undreamed of by the general public; proud to protest against the forcible feeding and the torture of Mrs. Leigh, at length released when at her extremity, but who can dare estimate with what terrible after effects; proud to show the Government that women are a force to be counted



Miss NEILANS.

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with, that one cannot with impunity goad the patience of women into desperation; proud to make an effort to render invalid any election in which women do not play their rightful part of dropping their votes into the ballot box; proud, even if it were to cost her five or ten years of imprisonment.

And, of course, we mentioned Mr. Thorley's eye. And, of course, she was sorry the accident occurred; but she fixed the responsibility where responsibility lies—with the Government. And she, too, recollected the many deliberate acts of violence to women that pass unnoticed, or if they are noticed at all it is with a "serve you right!"

Miss Neilans wants women to have the vote, because she recognises that it will be to help women in their industrial and economic war, in their hard, unlovely grip with life, never realised by the "comfortable" woman; recognises what a blow it will strike at false standards.

Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans are two more daring spirits we can number amongst those "who know the cross without the crown of glory."

NEXT WEEK

Miss BEATRICE HARRADEN,

the Author of

"Ships that Pass in the Night."

## The Woman of the New Age.

By S. GERTRUDE FORD.

She scans a far horizon; wistfully  
Her eyes yearn out to meet the unrisen sun.  
She stands, nor tires, till Dawn's great victory  
Shall show her shadowed eyes what light may be,  
What time the dark is done.

Hope's daughter she, and youth's, a soul new-taught  
The new work from a new world issuing.  
The day's first beam her prophet brow has caught  
And her rapt eyes, of fire and azure wrought  
To symbolise the Spring.

The land lies grim and dim about her; she  
Fears not the fears that haunt it, near and far.  
Her gaze is fixed in her expectancy  
Past Night's grey verge, and still and steadily  
Salutes the morning star.

Behind her Ignorance lies, the waste untilled  
Her toil shall clothe in flowers and crown with fruit,  
And prejudice, the land whose legions build  
Grim feudal forts which yet (so Heaven has willed)  
Empty shall stand and mute.

Behind her, these; before her, Freedom's face,  
Clear as the sun's, to light her on her way,  
Where she shall break the bonds that bound her race,  
And triumph in the throne that none abase,  
The right that none gainsay.

And on that throne I see her consort crowned  
Her comrade; neither lord nor slave to be  
Henceforth, but her ally and equal found,  
As she his; each to each with love-links bound,  
Yet both for ever free.

And we—we, too, beside her take our stand  
Watching, with eyes by tears washed clear and clean.  
We, too, look forth with her to that far land  
Where, with her foes broken on every hand,  
Behold, she shall be queen!

## Correspondence.

## A WOMAN'S WORST ENEMY.

To the Editor of *The Vote*.

Madam,—If Mr. Winston Churchill voted for woman's suffrage "seven years ago" as a Tory M.P., he surely cannot have meant very much by it. Now, as a Liberal Minister, he not only refrains from voting for it when he has the chance, but discovers, apparently, that his former championship was a good deal more than seven years too early. Anyhow, when done with counselling the wicked suffragettes, he seems to have had nothing to give the 1,500 good, well-behaved, loyal Liberal women of Dundee but another undiluted dose of budget-taxation minus representation. Thus is innocence exalted and virtue rewarded! And all because another of "woman's best friends" has been alienated by the discovery that her cause is no longer academic but real.

The only comment except its own admitted by the *Daily Chronicle* on the "Woman's worst enemy" homily is a letter entitled "The Suffrage Boycott," by Mr. Holford Knight, of the Reform Club, and Liberal candidate for East Berks. Mr. Knight seems to be either an opponent or another alienated "friend"—the difference is not material. All he wants, just at present, is that the Women's Liberal Federation should remember that they are Liberals and forget that they are women. He coolly suggests that they should abandon their policy of refusing to work for Anti-suffragist Liberals at the General Election. Why Anti-suffragist Liberals should expect, or even allow, women to work for them, Mr. Knight does not explain. He thinks the suffragettes mean "to tease Liberal women into deserting their old comrades in the great battle about to begin." But why should the suffragettes take that trouble? Do not Mr. Winston Churchill's "outsoken declaration" and such letters as Mr. Holford Knight's show up the "old comrade" game sufficiently?

Yours faithfully,

JOHN MANSON.

London, October 23rd, 1909.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1909.

### THE BERMONDSEY PROTEST.

Another type of militant protest has been initiated by the Women's Freedom League. A line for further action has been indicated by the protest at the polling booths of Bermondsey—a line which contains within itself possibilities of great power. The woman has begun to make history at the polling booth.

The Women's Freedom League knows that those who are denied the rights of citizens must either serve as slaves or fulfil the duty of rebellion. There is no other choice. The Women's Freedom League voices the spirit of rebellion among women, and threatens the strongholds of slavery. Its work is the work of rebellion, conscious and deliberate, expressing itself in definite acts whenever the hour ripens and the need calls. To rebel is not necessarily to run amok, as some of our enemies seem to imagine; it is to strike whenever a blow can be struck with advantage for the cause, to be ever keenly alert for the moment of promise—and then to strike hard.

The Women's Freedom League has ever grasped this truth. It has recognised the ever-present duty of rebellion. It has striven to take advantage of every circumstance and condition that has arisen in the political world. It has made logical protests always, dramatic protests whenever possible, active and passive protests. It has invented new methods as they have been needed. It has fitted its weapons and its warfare to the hour in which they have been used. And it now recognises that the hour has come for a change.

The life of this Government is drawing to a close, and it is evident that its leaders intend to resign their power without doing justice to women. The illegal refusal of deputations by Mr. Asquith, who will see the members of no Suffrage Society, the impertinences of Mr. Winston Churchill, are but corroborations of what has been plain for some time. The miracle of patient picketing that has been enacted for fifteen weeks at Westminster would have shamed into decency any men who intended to do justice to women—even at the last. This passive and persistent protest they would have recognised as their opportunity, and some statement of their purpose would have been forthcoming.

That statement is not forthcoming. Almost it appears as if the Government is planning to resign before the decision of the higher Courts shall impose upon the Prime Minister his obvious duty. Then now is our time to give to the Government a hint of further possibilities, of things that may happen, of dangers that may arise if they fail in carrying into law the measure that will free the women of the nation. The polling booths of Bermondsey have merely indicated the fact that there are open to us avenues of protest

which may entail great loss and disorder upon the whole people. It is well that the Government should know this, for upon the shoulders of its members will lie the responsibility.

Like every other new departure this ballot-box protest has been greeted with condemnation. Some newspapers have referred to it as an "outrage," others as a piece of "hysterical vandalism." It is neither. Yet there was an outrage perpetrated at Bermondsey. There is one perpetrated at every election that takes place in the land. The women of the country are outraged and insulted whenever the national concerns are settled over their heads. Against this outrage our protest was levelled. Against it similar and sterner protests will be continued. We protest against any national business being carried through without the consent of the women of the land. We protest against any election taking place from which women are excluded. And if our protest is not listened to at the door of the House of Commons, if justice is shelved and postponed by the cowardice and selfishness of politicians, then we shall interfere as much as possible with the orderly conduct of that public business which is our business, and from the control of which we are excluded.

We demand the right to vote. If this is denied us we shall make our protest. We shall make that protest every time our right is denied. We shall make it where our right is denied—in the polling booth where women ought to be voting. It may be that this policy will cost us dear. It may be that it will be misrepresented. But it will cost the country dear, and the Government dear as well. And when all considerations of right and justice, and honour, and truth, and reason have failed, perhaps the consideration of *cost* may be found potent to move our ministers.

Be that as it may be, the Women's Freedom League has turned a page in making the polling-booth protest. And with the history of the last three years in mind—nay, with only the passive waiting of the last fifteen weeks—none can say that the turning of that page has not been more than justified. All honour to the brave women who have risked more than their sisters to turn it.

TERESA BILLINGTON GREIG.

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"the prettiest she had ever seen of the personal kind." Since  
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**PERSONAL GREETING CHRISTMAS CARDS**  
agreeing with the famous authoress that the word "personal"  
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### THE MORALS OF "MID-CHANNEL."

"Mid-Channel," as you know, is the name of Pinero's latest play that has just concluded an unsuccessful run at St. James's Theatre. Varied were the opinions I heard expressed upon it. Many women were delighted with it, many said it was immoral; many men were bored by it, and as many more were disgusted. I am sorry all Suffragists did not see it, because it seemed to me to constitute one of the greatest arguments in favour of woman's Suffrage I have ever seen on the stage. Now, when I say it constituted one of the greatest arguments in favour of Woman's Suffrage, I mean it must have made the minority of thoughtful men and women seriously think, and arrive at the same conclusions long ago reached by Suffragists.

Zoe Blundell is slowly reaching middle age. She has retained much of her youth, her elegance, and her good looks, and is still exceedingly attractive, but much more attractive to her male friends whom she terms her "tame robins" than she is to her husband. Platonic friendship is a Paradise for which society, as at present constituted, has not evolved the Angels. Of course one of the "tame robins" through the general trend of circumstances develops into the lover, a certain result, often pointed out by the leaders of the woman's movement, of sex-consciousness predominating in the intercourse between men and women, instead of that purer comradeship built on a basis of moral and mental equality, with the background, and not the foreground, occupied by sex.

In this play the chief cause of unhappiness between husband and wife is the lack of any close human interest in their lives. Everything, however, might have come right between them if it had not been for the existing deplorable and execrable double standard of morality. The husband has contented himself with another woman during his wife's absence—she forgives him. She expects, or rather hopes, for the same leniency with regard to herself and the "tame robin." He knows the world will take no notice of his sin, will not even give it so harsh a name, but with his wife it is another thing—his own self-pride suffers. He will not marry Mrs. Annerly—the idea is laughable, even the audience laugh at that, but he must divorce Zoe and she must marry the "tame robin," the poor "tame robin," who by this time has become engaged to a young girl he can love and who will, unhappily for women, think none the worse of him for having sown his wild oats. It is the woman who suffers, and who will suffer until the broadened social conscience ordains that there should be but one standard of morality for men and women.

Zoe Blundell commits suicide. She once said she knew it would happen in the winter time. The play was too serious for the public, and the closing episode of the wife's suicide too unpleasant. It sent people home to think, and John Bull wants to laugh and forget. But some women remember, and the best of them look forward to the time when social inequalities will not exist, and a woman's life will be richer in responsibility and not depend upon caprice and circumstance, and be so often wrecked against the rock of conventionality.

What, we may well ask, may not happen to us in our "winter time"?

E. H.

### AN APOLOGY.

The directors desire to express their regret to those who were unable to obtain copies of our first number. In spite of the fact that we printed double the number we originally estimated, the demand so far exceeded the supply, that our whole issue was sold out by Thursday afternoon.

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## MAINLY ABOUT WOMEN.

## WOMEN AND DIVORCE.

A Royal Commission, with women members, has been appointed on the question of divorce. Lady Frances Balfour and Mrs. H. J. Tennant represent their sex. Inquiries will be made into the present state of the law and the administration thereof in divorce and matrimonial causes and applications for separation orders, especially with regard to the position of the poorer classes in relation thereto, and the subject of the publication of reports of such causes and applications, and to report whether any or what amendments should be made in such law or the administration thereof, or with regard to the publication of such reports.

Such is the official wording of the terms of reference. We are glad to learn that the Commissioners will further have power to recommend such steps as they may think desirable to be taken for the redress of any hardship from which in their opinion the poorer classes may suffer under the existing law and administration.

Lady Frances Balfour is the sister of the Duke of Argyll, and sister-in-law of Mr. Balfour; Mrs. H. J. Tennant, wife of the Liberal M.P. for Berwick, was formerly a superintending inspector of factories.

## WOMEN IN THE AIR.

The first English lady aeroplane passenger has made her appearance in the person of Mrs. Locke King, wife of the owner of Brooklands. In this elevation of her sex an Englishwoman has not been the pioneer. France claims this distinction in the Baroness de Laroche, the first woman to drive an aeroplane.

Mlle. Marvingt, another Frenchwoman, is the heroine of a thrilling balloon adventure. She and M. Garnier were caught in a gale and blown across the North Sea. Mlle. Marvingt is an experienced aeronaut. She holds the world's championship for twenty miles balloon pilotage for ladies, and is the first lady to cross the North Sea in a balloon. She is, in addition, a doctor of medicine, has passed all the law examinations, holds the twelve-mile swimming record in Paris, is an adept with the foils, and has climbed 92 ft. up the face of an Alpine precipice by means of a rope.

## SUPERWOMAN.

Mr. Alfred Sutro says that the heroines of contemporary fiction are mostly superwomen unhappily married, who discover affinities. It certainly, if this is true to life, seems unfortunate for the superwomen, that the affinity should be a "follow-on" of matrimony, and not precede it. Mr. Sutro finds cruelty the dominant note of this new school, a certain brutality, and a certain callousness. Is it not rather the fight of women into self-development, an intellectual fight that may temporarily put into the shade the less virile virtues—the brief eclipse of what Nietzsche would call slave morality.

## MR. ZANGWILL AND "THE VOTE."

Last Sunday night, Mr. Zangwill presided at a meeting of the Playgoers Club at Hotel Cecil. In his opening speech from the chair he paid a great compliment to the Women's Freedom League because of their action at Bermondsey, and remarked upon the mastery with which they had carried out the plans so calmly and deliberately made.

In the course of his remarks he also quoted at length from the first number of "The Vote," in order to emphasise the present attitude of the Government towards the woman's movement.

## ACTRESSES' FRANCHISE LEAGUE.

The next public meeting of the Actresses' Franchise League will be on Thursday, November 4th, in the Grand Hall of the Criterion Restaurant. Miss Winifred Mayo will be in the chair, and the speakers will be Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Evelyn Sharp, etc. Hostess, Miss Margaret Halstan. Speeches will begin at 3 o'clock. Doors open at 2.30. We shall be delighted to welcome any members of the Women's Freedom League or their friends.—ADELINE BOURNE, Hon. Sec.

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## See Testimonials.

"Prince of Wales" Hotel, South Cliff, Scarborough.  
"Lady Whittaker received her Coat and Skirt quite safely. She is very pleased with it, the skirt is a particularly nice shape, and the jacket too."—September 12th.  
Mrs. CALLINGHAM writes:— Cadogaa Hotel, Sloane Street.  
"She encloses cheque value £— in payment of her daughter's Coat, with which she is very pleased."—Feb. 7th, 1902.  
Mrs. M. MAY writes:— Bickley, Kent.  
"I am very pleased with my Coat and Skirt."—July 4th, 1906.  
Mrs. D. C. BANKES-JONES writes:— Green Street, W.  
"The Black Velvet Coat and Skirt fits perfectly, and I am charmed with it, I could not wish for better work."  
Madame EILEEN RUSSELL writes:—  
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TOWARDS WOMAN'S LIBERTY, by TERESA BILLINGTON-GREG.

AGAINST PREJUDICE, A Reply to Prof. Dicey, by W. LYON BLASE.

WOMAN UNDER THE LAW, by W. G. EARENGEY, B.A., LL.D. (Lond.).

Price 4d. (by post 5d.) each from

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE,

1, Robert St., Adelphi, London, W.C.

N.B.—EVERY WOMAN interested in the Suffrage should send for the full List of Literature published by the Women's Freedom League.

Church League for Women's Suffrage.

## INAUGURAL MEETING,

Essex Hall, Strand, December 2nd, 1909.

Apply HON. ORGANISER, 11, St. Mark's Crescent, Regent's Park, N.W.

## What are YOU Doing

FOR THE

## Albert Hall Yuletide Festival?

DECEMBER, 1909.

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## To the Proprietors of THE VOTE,

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## PARLIAMENTARY NOTES.

The Budget has at last reached the report stage, after perhaps the most wonderful exhibition of prolonged Parliamentary pettifogging that history has yet shown. It has been said that the chief function of a Government nowadays is to elude the obstructive tactics of the Opposition, and certainly the epigram is being amply supported by facts. Practical men and women may well complain of the criminal waste of time and opportunity that is going on in "the best club in London," but until women have a voice in the matter it seems likely that the procedure sanctioned by isolated masculinity will remain undisturbed by effective criticism. Men alone make singularly poor housekeepers, in national as well as in domestic affairs.

The Housing and Town Planning Bill passes this week through the penultimate act of the usual farce. The Lords have solemnly amended it; the Commons are instructed with equal solemnity to annul the work of the Lords; after which the Lords in their turn will annul the entire Bill, if they dare. The women, who are so largely affected by the provisions of the Bill, have, of course, not been consulted. They may be excused for finding the farce less amusing than wearisome.

Mr. Keir Hardie has once again upheld the sense of national decency and honour which seems, in Parliament, to be confined to himself and Mr. Snowden, by raising in the House the question of Miss Davison's disgraceful treatment for which prison officials are now famous; he merely disclaimed responsibility for the occurrence. The Home Secretary, with momentary lack of imagination, did not reply that fire-hose treatment had been applied with all the gentleness and kindly consideration for which prison officials are now famous; he merely disclaimed responsibility for the occurrence. But who, we may ask, is responsible for the moral atmosphere which makes such outrages upon political prisoners possible? In this case no plausible defence could be made out; so Miss Davison has been released to save the face of His Majesty's Government. Thus are some consciences satisfied.

Meanwhile the fact that Mrs. Leigh, a working woman, was being daily tortured in Winson Green Goal, while Lady Constance Lytton, a peer's sister, who carried out the same acts of protest, was at liberty, has been successfully slurred over as far as the majority of the House is concerned. One cannot envy the spirit of the party-bound legislators who have thus acquiesced in Mr. Herbert Gladstone's unmanly evasions.

K. R.

## MEMORIAL HALL MASS MEETING.

On Saturday night, the Memorial Hall, in Farringdon Street, was filled with people eager to listen to Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans's account of the spoiling of the ballot papers at Bermondsey. The meeting was held, as Mrs. How Martyn, who presided, pointed out, not to excuse the incident, but to explain it, explanation having been rendered necessary by the exaggerated and hysterical outbursts of the public Press.

Mr. Baker, the solicitor in charge of the case, had promised to speak, but was, unfortunately, prevented at the last moment. Mr. Manson and Mr. Kennedy kindly filled the gap, the former spoke as an "ex-Liberal" and a militant, and the latter as a Liberal and a non-militant, but both alike paid a glowing tribute to the brave action of the two women.

We were curious to see how the general public would receive the two Bermondsey heroines. There was not much uncertainty. A perfect outburst of cheering and applause greeted the appearance of Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans. The word of both were followed with intensest interest as they related the simple facts of the case, stripped of all the exaggerations and embellishments of the Press. The harmlessness of the liquid used, the precautions taken to ensure against accident, the calmness of the women, the deliberation with which they performed an action which would have such grave consequences to themselves, created a deep impression on the audience.

Mrs. How Martyn announced that, according to the solicitor, the suffragists had at last committed an indictable offence. The news that justice can now take its course, and a political action emerge from the police court was received with the greatest satisfaction by the audience. Judge and jury will decide the fate of Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans, and the case will have a chance of being properly thrashed out in public.

The following resolution, when put to the meeting, was enthusiastically received and carried with three dissentients:—"That this meeting expresses its regret at the unfortunate accident to Mr. Thorley, and learns with satisfaction that he is well enough to leave the hospital. At the same time it must be emphatically stated that the entire responsibility for all such accidents rests with the Government that leaves no other form of effectual agitation open to women."

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Status of Women Under the English Law. By A. Beatrice Wallis Chapman, D.Sc. (Econ.), and Mary Wallis Chapman, B.A. (Geo. Routledge and Sons, Ltd. Price 2s. 6d.)

Modern Woman and How to Manage Her. By Walter M. Gallichan. (T. Werner Lawrie.)

Women in Political Evolution. By Joseph McCabe. (Watts & Co. Price 6d.)



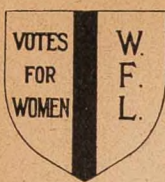
## REJECTED!

A BERMONDSEY BALLAD.

By "Sub-Rosa."

"Who fought the fight so keen and well  
That, baffled, bruised, and broke, I fell?  
'Tis true!—tho' I don't like to tell—

SUFFRAGETTES!



### Women's Freedom League,

Offices: 1, ROBERT STREET, ADELPHI.

President ... .. Mrs. C. DESPARD  
 Hon. Treas. ... .. Miss S. BENETT  
 Hon. Org. Sec. ... .. Mrs. T. BILLINGTON GREIG  
 Hon. Sec. ... .. Mrs. E. HOW MARTYN

Telegrams: Tactics, London.  
 Telephone: 13143 Central.

### THE BALLOT BOX.

"Heartiest congratulations from the Scottish Council and Despard!" This was the first message to reach us when the news of our splendid protest at Bermondsey was made known. It is a message of encouragement. A startling blow has been struck at one of the most cherished traditions of the British people, a blow fraught with the gravest consequences to those whose courage and firmness enabled them to strike effectively. But while the general public holds its breath, the members of the Freedom League, true to the stirring watchword they have chosen, "Dare to be free!" will cast aside all cowardly hesitation, and will rally closer round the standard of truth and justice.

Once more the tongue of calumny is busy twisting, distorting, debasing our action. More than usually hysterical outbursts on the part of the Press have misled the general public. It must lie with the conscience of our members to make the true facts known.

The full extent of the damage we aimed at doing, and did, was to render undecipherable a few ballot papers. As was to be expected, the accident to the eye of the presiding officer has been exaggerated by the Press, and though most of the papers have allowed that it does not seem to have been intended, yet by their sensational headlines and the use of the words "corrosive acid," the effect has been to make it appear that the Women's Freedom League went into the polling booth with the intention of throwing vitriol. Nothing could be further from the truth. Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans walked calmly into the polling stations unchallenged and broke a glass tube, with a mixture of chemicals containing no acid, over the opening in the ballot box. They realised the gravity of their action. They knew that they were making themselves liable to a long term of imprisonment, but knowing also that this was a sound political move, knowing that the time had come for a further step forward by the militant suffragists, they registered their protest. If we had suspected for a moment that the officials would have been sleepy enough to allow it, we should have arranged to have uncorked the bottles and so have poured the liquid into the box.

There was no violence, there was no damage to persons or property, why then has there been such an outcry of indignation. Because we have attacked one of man's most cherished possessions, the ballot box, his feelings of respect and reverence for that symbol of his political freedom have been outraged. But we have made him realise that until women, who are as fully qualified as himself, have the right to place their voting papers in the box, they must, if they have any self-respect, register their protest against their unjust exclusion. The ballot box to women is the symbol question has received in Parliament, when we remember tyranny. The question for members of the League to face is, that it is necessary for us to take every opportunity to protest against our unfranchised condition. Whatever the consequences may be, we must not allow our activities to be limited to the degree of agitation considered by the Press and the public as within reasonable bounds. When we remember the treatment our question has received in Parliament, when we remember the unexampled courage and patience shown by the sixteen weeks siege of the House of Commons, when we remember the injustices daily and hourly suffered by women, then there can only be one definite aim before us. We must protest, we must rebel, we must not rest until the ballot box is no longer the symbol of sex tyranny but the symbol of political sex equality.

EDITH HOW-MARTYN.

### SCOTTISH NOTES

Head Offices: 30, GORDON STREET, GLASGOW.

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. JULIA WOOD.

Office Secretary: Miss KIRBY.

Organisers: Miss ANNA MUNRO, Miss OLIVE ROBERTSON.

Telegrams: "Tactics," Glasgow. Nat. Telephone: 5905 Royal.

**Glasgow.**—This has been a week of weeks in and around Glasgow for the W.F.L. Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett are with us, and are simply indefatigable. Even so, they are not able to respond to all the calls upon them "to come and speak for us."

The "At Home," on Wednesday, in the Ewing Galleries, Glasgow, was eminently successful from every point of view. Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett were in good form, and their speeches were much appreciated. In response to an invitation from Springburn, a meeting was held there on Wednesday evening to form a branch of the W.F.L. with Miss Kirby in the chair. Mrs. Despard, who is everywhere greeted with enthusiastic cheers, gave a rousing speech, which was listened to with the closest attention. At the end a gentleman in the audience moved and a lady seconded that a branch of the W.F.L. be formed there and then, whereupon eleven ladies gave their names, and a secretary was secured on the spot.

On Thursday evening, a public meeting was held in Pollok-shields. The Rev. David Graham, who has done so much for woman's enfranchisement in Glasgow, was in the chair. Miss Semple gained the hearts and sympathy of the audience at once, her quiet "pawky" fun causing ripples of laughter. Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett's spirited, brilliant, yet earnest address was much appreciated by the audience.

Denistown also has held a successful meeting in the Blackfriars Hall for Mrs. Despard. Mrs. R. Wilson was in the chair, and Miss Anna Munro also spoke. When Mrs. Despard rose to speak, the entire audience rose to their feet, cheering and applauding our President. Another such ovation greeted her at the meeting arranged by the Western Branch on October 26th. Miss Eunice Murrey was the other speaker, and Mrs. R. Wilson took the chair. Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G., who was billed to appear, was unfortunately prevented owing to bereavement. Many influential local people were present, and great enthusiasm was manifested by the audience. A good collection was taken.

At all these meetings a resolution has been passed calling upon Mr. Asquith to refuse the freedom of Glasgow, which could only be a barren honour when opposed by the women of Glasgow who had not yet obtained their freedom.

**Paisley.**—Saturday was the closing night of our Paisley shop. Thanks to the indefatigable efforts of Miss Brown, of Govan Branch, and Mrs. Swan, a large open-air meeting was held at which we disposed of all our literature, including *The Vote*, which was immensely popular, several permanent subscribers having been obtained. A most successful meeting was held in the Town Hall, at which Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett, and Miss Munro were the speakers, with Miss Eunice Murrey in the chair. The names of twenty-one future members of the Paisley Branch were handed in.

**Edinburgh (Central).**—The energy and enthusiasm with which our members are taking up the winter's work were proved on Tuesday, 26th October, when we were able to fill the Queen's Hall twice in one day. At both meetings the Sheridan Company (Glasgow) produced the suffrage play "How the Vote was Won." This form of propaganda work—novel in Edinburgh—was immensely appreciated, and very favourably noticed in the local press. The unanswerable logic of the play was driven home by the speeches. In the afternoon Mrs. Joseph Dobbie occupied the chair, and Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett delivered speeches; in the evening Miss Anna Munro presided, and Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett spoke. Good collections were taken, much literature was sold, and several new members joined. We are especially grateful to Mrs. Despard, who came through from Glasgow to speak in the afternoon, as Countess Russell's illness had deprived us of one of our speakers. The afternoon "At Homes," which were so successful in the summer months, are to be held fortnightly during the winter.

**Dundee.**—Mr. Winston Churchill's recent "candid" utterances at Dundee have roused the indignation of the citizens. An enormous protest meeting was organised by the men of the city in the Kinnaird Hall on Monday, October 25th. The hall was packed from floor to ceiling, the area being entirely filled with men electors. Mr. Sturton, J.P., was in the chair, and the speakers were Councillor Walsh, Councillor Paton, Mr. John Ogilvie (Municipal candidate), and Mr. J. Percy Sturrock, the grandson of Sir John Leng, who so long represented Dundee in the Liberal interest. All the speakers were cheered to the echo, and the resolution calling upon the electors of Dundee to withhold their support from the Government until they promise to grant the vote to qualified women was carried without amendment. This is the first meeting of its kind ever held in Britain, and special thanks are due to Mr. Sturrock, who was largely responsible. A vote of thanks to the men of Dundee has been passed by the Dundee Branch. Arrangements have been made by the Branch for selling *The Vote* at meetings, in the street, at the railway stations, and at the weekly stall in the market.

### LONDON ACTIVITIES.

Hon. Organiser: MRS. BORRMAN WELLS.

### Bermondsey Bye-Election.

RESULT.

MR. JOHN DUMPHREYS (Unionist) ... .. 4,278  
 MR. SPENCER LEIGH HUGHES (Liberal) ... .. 3,291  
 DR. ALFRED SALTER (Socialist) ... .. 1,435  
 Liberal Majority in 1906—1,759.

The election has been fought and won. The closing days were days of wind and heavy rain; but, though meetings were impossible, the Suffragette spirit rose superior to the opposing elements, and several stalwarts were to be seen parading Bermondsey in the storms, with their message dangling from their shoulders instead of flowing in smooth and logical sequence from their lips. Bermondsey was surprised, but pleased and interested, and many were the expressions of sympathy and encouragement we met with on our watery way. The night before the poll meetings were held in every part of the constituency up till 11.30 at night; the Freedom League was the last political party in the oratorical field.

Our meetings have invariably been the largest, most sympathetic, and most orderly of any held in the contest.

On Thursday morning every polling booth was manned by 7.55 in time for our picketers to say "Keep the Liberal Out" to the first voter in each ward. Our post cards were signed by Liberals who had voted against the Government on our account. We were very careful not to ask voters who were wearing party colours to sign, for their vote had evidently not been changed by our policy. Up till 2 o'clock—when we left the polling booths on account of the successful carrying out of the election protest by Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans (an account of which appears on another page)—one hundred and seventy of these cards had been signed. As we stood at our posts, women passing by gave us encouraging words. During the whole of this election Suffragettes have been the most talked of and the most popular people.

"But why should we keep the Liberal out?"  
 "Because Asquith won't give 'em votes; that's why. I hope they succeed, too. I'm not voting Liberal, anyhow."

And evidently these many friends kept their word, for the election is over, and the Liberal is out.

MARGUERITE A. SIDLEY.

The election has cost us £35. Who would like to help pay this cost?

### PORTMAN ROOMS "AT HOME."

A perfect downpour of rain decreased the attendance at last Wednesday's "At Home," but the name of Mr. Joseph McCabe was potent to draw together a fair-sized and thoroughly interested and enthusiastic audience. Mr. McCabe's statesmanlike and lucid treatment of the political situation and of the effect of militant methods thereon, made one wish that there were more minds of such a calibre with so firm a grasp of political principles in the different political parties to-day. Mrs. Nidd made an admirable chairman, and, as before, the stewarding and tea room owed their success to the energy of Mrs. Richmond and Mrs. Fisher respectively. The hostesses were Mrs. Railton and Mrs. Richmond.

Next week we shall have Mr. Lawrence Housman as speaker.

### REPORTS FROM THE PROVINCES.

**Liverpool.**—Headquarters: 25, Canning Street.

Organisers:  
 Miss Broadhurst, M.A.  
 Miss Farquharson, M.A.

**Manchester.**—Organiser's Address: Harper Hill, Sale, Cheshire.

Hon. Organiser:  
 Miss Manning, B.A.

**South Yorkshire.**—Organiser's Address: 12, Athol Road, Manningham, Bradford.

Assistant Organiser:  
 Miss L. Irene Tillard.

**N.E. Yorkshire.**—Headquarters: Northgate, Roman Road, Middlesbrough.

Organiser:  
 Miss Alice Schofield.

**Liverpool.**—Our interest has centred round the long looked for visit of Miss Cicely Hamilton to Liverpool. On Tuesday, November 2nd, an "At Home" is being held in the Adelphi Hotel, at which Miss Cicely Hamilton, distinguished as an authoress and dramatist, will appear in the role of an advocate of "Votes for Women." A note of variety will be given by the production of Miss Beatrice Harraden's comedietta, "Lady Geraldine's Speech." Members of the Liverpool Branch will also take part in a little curtain raiser, the well-known scene from "Pride and Prejudice," in which Mr. Collins, the smug, respectable, arch-egoist, proposes to Miss Elizabeth Bennett, which part is being admirably played by our Norwegian friend, Miss Omar. The scene has been chosen for its mid-Victorian sentiments, and specially suitable for throwing a light on Miss Hamilton's new book, "Marriage as a Trade." Handbilling, chalking, and house to house visiting have been the order of the week. Our thanks are due to our energetic workers, and we hope their efforts will be rewarded in a most successful function.

M. M. FARQUHARSON.

**Manchester.**—Our energies this week have chiefly been devoted to advertising the "At Home" on November 3rd, when Miss Cicely Hamilton will be speaker. Handbills have been distributed and chalking and sandwiching undertaken. On Friday, October 29th, Miss J. A. Heyes addressed a meeting arranged by the Swinton Bowling Club. A second meeting at a later date was requested, in order that the opposition might prepare their arguments. On Wednesday, October 28th, I spoke to the women of the Ancoats University Settlement, and found them full of sympathy for the militants. Next week we have speakers visiting the Monton Green Debating Society and the Sale Social Guild, in addition to our own meetings, viz., the Central "At Home" in the Memorial Hall, the "At Home" in St. Stephen's Schools, Swinton, on November 4th, and the Cafe Chantant given by the Sale and South Manchester Branches on November 6th, in the Free Library, Sale. Two articles bearing the signatures of members of the Freedom League have appeared this week in the *Manchester Evening News* (Thursday's and Friday's issues) in answer to those of Mr. A. C. Gronne on a Woman M.P. We have to thank Miss Neal, the energetic Press Secretary of the Central Branch, for obtaining us an entrance into the columns of the *Evening News*, and for her joint authorship. We wish to draw the attention of all Manchester members and sympathisers to the joint "At Home" on November 17th, when B. Iden Payne, Esq., of the Gaiety Theatre, will be our speaker.—M. E. MANNING.

**South Yorkshire.**—This week has been spent in getting the arrangements in hand for our big meeting in the St. George's Hall, Bradford. An already enormous list of sympathisers grows daily. A number of women, who at present do not know anything about the movement, have expressed their intention of coming to the meeting to learn something about it. From all accounts a strong Branch of the League ought to be formed as a result of this meeting in December. I am much struck by the number of women who are sympathetic, but who do not, as yet, belong to any Suffrage Society. Much indignation has been expressed at the forcible feeding treatment permitted by the Home Secretary. A number of calls have been made with successful results.

**North-East Yorkshire.**—There are evidences in York that there are many suffragists in that city bent on keeping the question well before the populace. Mrs. Thompson, one of our enthusiastic workers, is continually speaking and debating on Women's Suffrage. Two adult school audiences were addressed on the subject this last week and a number of new W.F.L. members made. The York Branch is to have a social evening and a public meeting during November. Our new Sunderland members are already very active. A local secretary, treasurer, and committee have been chosen, and the first meeting is to be at St. Peter's Church Hall on November 17th, when women only are invited. A public meeting is to be held on November 25th, at the Alexandra Hall, with Mrs. Cobden Sanderson as principal speaker. The West Hartlepool Branch is having an "At Home" on Monday, November 1st, as a preliminary to a meeting in the Alexandra Hall on November 22nd, where Mrs. Cobden Sanderson will also speak. Our open-air meeting at Bishop Auckland has won us a number of friends, who are proposing an indoor meeting for November 11th, when Mrs. Amy Sanderson will be the chief speaker. As a result, we hope to get a branch at Bishop Auckland. With the expenses of three big meetings to meet, money assistance is urgently needed. Much of the district is almost virgin soil, and a great deal of educational work has to be done to bring converts to the militant stage.

ALICE SCHOFIELD.

### TREASURER'S APPEAL.

Those of us who took part in it, will never forget the strain of the long weeks of sentinel duty outside the House of Commons. Neither enthusiasm for the cause, the interest or charm of the surroundings, the study of the passers, nor even the sympathy of friends who helped to while away the time, could make one oblivious to the torture of prolonged standing, but we held out. Faithful volunteers came again and again, and fresh ones constantly came forward, so it was with no sense of weakness or failure that our pickets in a body withdrew from their posts on the 28th ult., it was done because stronger measures had become necessary, and through the action of Mrs. Chapin and Miss Neilans the Government has received a warning that the suffragettes will not submit to having their claims treated with contemptuous indifference. We shall have to be more militant as time goes on, and if we have hesitated in the past to urge friends to risk arrest and imprisonment, we shall be more reluctant still to do this in the future.

We cheerfully accept full responsibility in urging fellow-workers to give money, because we feel quite confident that those who give all they can will be better, and stronger, and happier. If the League consisted of a handful of devoted women, we could perhaps work without money, but it is rapidly becoming a large and

complicated organisation, and the head office directs the activities of voluntary and paid workers all over the kingdom. These activities will be set forth in the pages of THE VOTE.

I earnestly appeal for funds, and will, in conclusion, quote from a letter I received lately. " . . . As I am unable to take part in the splendid work of picketing at the House of Commons, I feel bound to make some other sacrifice, and have decided to increase my annual subscription to the funds. In place of the quarterly subscription of 10s., I purpose sending either 7s. 6d. or 10s. every month." This lady may be giving up what many would consider necessary expenditure on food, journeys, etc. I should like to suggest to wealthier members to find out how little they can spend on themselves and how much they can send to the League, that our work may not be crippled nor the hour of victory delayed.

SARAH BENETT.

#### THE P. AND A. BRIGADE.

A new feature of the Women's Freedom League's London organization is its Publicity and Advertising Department, which will manage the publicity work of meetings and demonstrations as apart from Press and literature work.

Miss Dorothy Spencer is taking over this work as Organizer and will be responsible for sandwiching, handbill distribution, and all the thousand and one ways of making known to the world the activities of the League. Many new and striking features are being adopted for this part of our propaganda, and members are urged to volunteer for service in the P. & A. Brigade.

B. B. W.

Will the lady who took by mistake two books on Art from 1, Robert Street, on October 12th, kindly return them immediately, either to the Office or to the Eltham Public Library?

#### LADIES' ORCHESTRA.

**Ladies' Orchestra.**—One of the great attractions of the Yuletide Festival at the Albert Hall, on December 11th, will be a Ladies Orchestra. Will any ladies willing to join kindly communicate with Mrs. Borrman Wells at 1, Robert Street?

A **Special Meeting** will take place at the **Small Queen's Hall** on Thursday, **November 4th, at 8 p.m.**, if no member of the Men's League for Opposing Women's Suffrage appears to debate with **Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett**.

#### BRANCH NOTES.

**Hampstead Branch.**—Our first meeting this autumn was held early in October at the Hampstead Library, Prince Arthur Road, where the Committee welcomed Members with tea and coffee, ably presided over by Mrs. Clayton. Mrs. Hicks took the chair, from which she gave a stirring little inaugural address, which was followed by the speech of the evening from Miss Nelson, M.A. A good collection was made, and several new members joined. Our second meeting was on Friday last, October 22nd, in the same room. With Mrs. Thomson Price in the chair, we began with a business meeting embracing a number of urgent questions such as the placing of our six dozen copies of "The Vote" at twelve different newsagents; how best to secure 500 people at our public meeting at the Wellington Hall, St. John's Wood, on November 22nd, when Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett, and our Treasurer, Mrs. Nevinson, are billed to speak; the Yuletide Festival, and various other important matters. Mrs. Nevinson then gave an intensely interesting paper on "The Poor Law in its relation to Women." Mrs. Borrman Wells has promised to come to our next Branch meeting at the Prince Albert Road Library, to tell us all about the Yuletide Festival, and how we can best help this gigantic undertaking. It is confidently hoped that every Hampstead Branch Member (and her friends) will be present on Friday, November 12th, to listen to and welcome Mrs. Borrman Wells.

ELIZABETH RUSSELL.

GERTRUDE M. LUCAS, Hon. Secs.

**Swansea Branch.**—In view of the Bermondsey incidents, our mass meeting on Wednesday next is very opportune. With Mrs. Cobden Sanderson in the chair, and Miss Muriel Matters and Miss Phipps as speakers, people must be convinced that the recent meetings of Liberal and Conservative stars omitted the

question of the hour—Women's Suffrage. Our banner has been designed by Miss Dorothy Salmon, and all workers on it are to meet at Mrs. Seyler's Hindfell, Sketty (who is kindly lending her drawing-room every Saturday afternoon). It must be finished for the Yuletide Festival. We are taking a stall at the Festival, and have entered for the decorated box competition. Instead of weekly Branch meetings, we are visiting Debating Societies in the town and district, and by this means hope to do successful propaganda. Misses Matters, Neal, and Phipps will bear the brunt of the earlier debates, but we must have more help in this direction, and all members are asked to turn up at the first fortnightly meeting of our speaker's class, to be held at Chez-Nous, Sketty, on Tuesday, November 9th, at 8 o'clock. We are all delighted this week to read our own paper, "The Vote," and the branch will buy 12 copies every week for free distribution. Miss Salmon is making arrangements with waiting rooms, institutions, hotels, etc.—M. McLEOD CLEEVE, Hon. Sec.

**Sheffield Branch.**—"The Educational Value of the Vote" was the subject under the consideration of members and their friends at the first meeting of this Branch's newly-formed Discussion Society on the evening of October 25th. Miss Midgley was in the chair, and Mrs. Wallis opened the discussion. Great interest was shewn, and the quantity and quality of the views expressed were happy auguries for the fulfilment of the chief aim in the formation of the Society, namely, the discovery and training of speakers for future meetings. D.E.

#### PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

- Nov.  
Thurs. 4. **Small Queen's Hall**, Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett  
8 p.m.  
St. Stephen's Mrs. Manning, Rev. B. Hey-  
Schools, Swinton, wood, M.A., Chair, Miss  
"At Home," 7.30 Manning, B.A.
- Fri. 5. **Hackney Branch** Miss M. Nelson, M.A.  
Old Swan, Liverpool Miss Broadhurst, M.A.  
Miss Farquharson, M.A.
- Sat. 6. **Sale Free Library**, By Members of Sale and South  
"At Home": "How Manchester Branches.  
the Vote Was Won."  
Abbey Gates, Pais- Miss Anna Munro.  
ley, 3 and 7 p.m.
- Sun. 7. **Labour Church**, Mrs. Emma Sproson.  
Wolverhampton, 3  
p.m.  
Lyceum Theatre, Miss Anna Munro.  
Govan, 6.30
- Tues. 9. **Swansea, Speaker's Class**, Hostess, Mrs. Cleeves.  
Chez-Nous,  
Sketty, 8  
Manchester, Willert Miss Manning, B.A.  
Street Domestic  
Mission, 8
- Wed. 10. **At Home, Portman Rooms, Baker St.** Mr. Lawrence Housman;  
3-6 Chair, Mrs. Borrman Wells;  
Hostesses, Countess Russell,  
Mrs. Percy Thompson.  
Glasgow Masonic Mrs. Wilson (Western Branch).  
Hall, West Regent  
Street, 8.
- Thurs. 11. **Birmingham Liberal Association**, 2 Miss Broadhurst, M.A., Miss  
Farquharson, M.A.  
Bishop Auckland, Mrs. Amy Sanderson, Miss  
7.30 Schofield.
- Fri. 12. **The Library, Prince Arthur Rd., Hampstead**, 8  
**Cardiff Royal Hotel, Reception, and Speaker**, Hostess, Mrs. D. A. Thomas;  
Miss Muriel Matters.  
"How the Vote was Won," 7.15  
Paisley Y.M.C.A., Miss Anna Munro.  
7 p.m.
- Mon. 22. **Wellington Hall, Finchley Road**, 8 Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Arncliffe  
p.m. Tickets, 2/6, Chair, Mrs. Hicks.  
1s., 6d.
- Mon. 29. **At Home, Portman Rooms, Baker Street**, 7.30-9.30 Miss Margaret McMillan, Mr.  
John Russell, M.A.; Chair,  
Mrs. Nevinson.
- Sat., Dec. 11. **Yuletide Festival, Albert Hall**, 3-10

All communications for the W.F.L. pages to be sent to the Press Secretary, 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, not later than first post, Monday morning.