

THE VOTE.  
SEPTEMBER 7, 1917.  
ONE PENNY.

# Woman Suffrage in Russia.

# THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. XVI, No. 411.

(Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper and transmissible through the post in the United Kingdom at the newspaper rate of postage, but to Canada and Newfoundland at the Magazine rate.)

FRIDAY, SEPT. 7, 1917

Edited by C. DESPARD.

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

## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

WHAT AMERICAN WOMEN ARE SAYING.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN RUSSIA: CATHERINE BRESHKOVSKY.

OUR POINT OF VIEW: BRITISH WOMEN AND ELECTIONS.

FIFTY-NINE! - - - - - Beatrice Kent.

STILL TALKING! - - - - - C. Nina Boyle.

ON OUR LIBRARY TABLE: "MARY SLESSOR" - - - E.G.M.

DINNER TO MISS BOYLE. FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

## WHAT AMERICAN WOMEN are SAYING

### The Unceasing Demand!

### "AS A WAR MEASURE."

The Country is Asking of  
Women Service

AS

FARMERS

MECHANICS

NURSES

DOCTORS

MUNITION MAKERS

YEOMEN

BELL BOYS

MESSENGERS

ARMY COOKS

AMBULANCE DRIVERS

MEN'S SUBSTITUTES IN INDUSTRY  
AND TRADE

ADVISORS TO THE COUNCIL OF  
NATIONAL DEFENCE

AND

The Country is Getting It!

Women are Asking of the  
Country

## ENFRANCHISEMENT

Are the Women Going to Get It?

From the "WOMAN CITIZEN," 171, Madison Avenue, New York, U.S.A.

## Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.

Telegrams—"DESPARD, MUSEUM 1429, LONDON."

Telephone—MUSEUM 1429.

Colours—GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD.

President—Mrs. C. DESPARD. Hon. Treasurer—Dr. E. KNIGHT  
Hon. Organising Secretary—Miss EUNICE MURRAY.  
Hon. Head of "Vote" Street Sales Department—Miss ALIX M.  
CLARK.

Hon. Head of Literature Department—Miss MARGARET HODGE.  
Political and Militant Organiser—Miss C. NINA BOYLE.  
Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.



#### LONDON AND SUBURBS

Sunday, September 9.—Hyde Park, 12 noon. Speaker: Miss Dorothy Evans.

Saturday, September 15.—Political Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m. Speakers: Miss Boyle and Miss Dorothy Evans. Chair: Mrs. Marion Holmes. Tea can be obtained in the Café after the meeting.

Wednesday, September 19.—Public meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Mr. Laurence Housman, on "Prison Reform in America," and Miss Nina Boyle. Chair: Mrs. Mustard. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café.

**DARE TO BE FREE.**

Sunday, September 23.—Lecture by Miss C. Nina Boyle, "A Modern View of Ancient Macedon" (in aid of the Despard Arms), Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Tickets, 1s. Tea after lecture, 8d.

Wednesday, September 26.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Miss Margaret Hodge, on "W. T. Stead and His Work for the Woman's Cause," and Miss Nina Boyle.

Friday, September 28.—Croydon Sewing Party, at 32a, The Arcade, High-street. 3 p.m.

Wednesday, October 3.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. M. W. Nevinston, L.L.A., on "The Prospects of Success," and Mrs. Mustard. Chair: Mrs. Nourse.

Sunday, October 7.—Discussion Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. W. L. George, on "Will the position of married women be enhanced or diminished by the War?" Tea, 6d., 4.15 till 5 p.m. Lecture, 5 p.m. Admission by ticket only, price 1s., from W.F.L. Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

Wednesday, October 10.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Stanbury and Miss Nina Boyle.

Friday, October 12.—Croydon Public Meeting, at 32a, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle.

Sunday, November 18.—Discussion Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. Miss Rebecca West on "The Real Sources of the Inequality of the Sexes." Tea 4.15 to 5 p.m. Lecture 5 p.m., admission by ticket only, price 1s., from W.F.L., 144, High Holborn, W.C.

### Clyde Coast Campaign.

Organiser: Miss B. H. McLelland, 18, Windsor-place, Rothesay.

The campaign has ended, and it has been decidedly worth while. Although money is scarce and expenditure heavy, so that the balance, unfortunately, is a little on the wrong side, the meetings have been so keen and the interest aroused so great that we feel quite rewarded for the work expended. This year it was only possible to hold meetings in Rothesay, and only for one short week did the population reach nearly its pre-war summer standard, hence the fall in our takings. Perhaps some member who could not help otherwise will yet send a donation to Miss McLelland, 212, Bath-street, Glasgow. It has been delightful to note the keenness of the women. Encouraged by hope of attaining full citizenship they are eager to equip themselves to fulfil their political duties, and if the signs at Rothesay indicate the attitude of our countrywomen as a whole, the women's "day" will be the country's "crowning mercy."

A very pleasant afternoon was spent at Miss McLelland's rooms on August 26. After tea and the introduction of eight new members the business of the Branch was discussed, and the following additional office-bearers appointed: Mrs. Sinclair to be vice-president and Mrs. MacGrouther to be assistant secretary. A programme was conditionally arranged for the winter, and we all look forward to an active and enthusiastic session.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN RUSSIA.

### Catherine Breshkovsky's Testimony.

The *Woman Citizen*, of New York, just to hand, brings most welcome testimony from the venerable and venerated "Grandmother of the Russian Revolution," Catherine Breshkovsky, concerning woman suffrage in Russia. There has been some doubt as to the "equality" of adult suffrage—whether women would vote equally with men. Catherine Breshkovsky declares that Russian women have the rights of citizenship, and are exercising them. This gratifying news is contained in a message to the National American Woman Suffrage Association, acknowledging an article in the *Woman's Journal* (now known as the *Woman Citizen*), giving an account of her life.

After an affectionate greeting to her American friends, and appreciation of their continued recognition, she says:—

*I am happy to say that the "Woman's Journal" can be sure we Russian women have already the rights (over all our country) belonging to all citizens, and the elections which are taking place now, over all our provinces, are performed together by men and women. Neither our government nor our people have a word against the woman suffrage.*

(Signed) CATHERINE BRESHKOVSKY.

Petrograd, May 20, 1917.

### "Thirty-Three Years of Prison and Siberia."

It will always stand to the credit of the Russian Revolution of last March that it set free this dauntless woman whose name will be venerated wherever the struggle for liberty is carried on. Nothing could crush her spirit; she refused freedom for herself in order to remain with, encourage and comfort those other men and women banished to Siberia, whose physical and mental strength were scarcely equal to the sufferings they were called upon to endure.

A great reception was accorded to Catherine Breshkovsky on her return from Siberia to Russia. The journey was a triumphal progress, and she was received in Petrograd by the important members of the Provisional Government. Speaking recently at Moscow, at a great meeting called by the League to Promote Equal Rights for Women, she told something of her past experience and plans for the future. After a great ovation she said:—

You have received me as a heroine. As a matter of fact, you have never heard of anything heroic done by me, unless it be that all my life I have held my post like a faithful soldier and have done my work quietly. At that, I could not do it all the time. Thirty-three years of prison and of Siberia kept me practically idle; only eleven years of "underground" life gave me the opportunity to engage in the active work as my heart dictated. And that was not heroic work; it was ordinary, everyday work, yet the kind of work the people need.

There is no need of heroic deeds. Unfortunately, many inactive persons imagine that it is necessary to do something wonderful, heroic—that one is either to sit in passive idleness, or else to ascend to the summit of a lofty mountain and there perform an act of such extraordinary heroism as would reverberate throughout the world. In consequence, these people sit idly at home and do nothing. I want you to bear in mind that there is a great deal of work to be done in ordinary times—ordinary, not heroic, work that is of great importance and is much needed.

After thirty-three years of struggle and suffering—a wonderful record of dauntless devotion—this noble woman could yet declare her intention to continue her efforts for full freedom. She said:—

My greatest treasure is my infinite love for the people. Many of those who worked and suffered with me shared that treasure. Only I have been more fortunate in that I happened to have a stronger constitution and survived, while the others succumbed. We all aimed at bringing light and freedom to the people. Now it is the duty of the survivors to work harder for the realisation of that aim.

THEY SUPPORT US!

It is my desire now to organise a great publishing house for the purpose of producing and circulating among the plain people the sort of literature they need—the books to be written in the simplest language, so that any one can understand. It is likewise necessary to organise a corps of young people to engage in disseminating the literature throughout the length and breadth of the land. Within a few days I shall begin to work along these lines. I may, perhaps, be granted the use of a railroad car—I have no home—and travel from one end of Russia to the other, to meet and speak to those who need our word and deed.

Such an example is an inspiration to suffragists and all workers for freedom in all countries. The beloved "Grandmother" will be a power for good in Russia as long as she lives.

### ON OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

#### Mary Slessor of Calabar:

Missionary and Administrator.

A remarkably interesting biography\* is that of Mary Mitchell Slessor, the pioneer missionary. She lived in Dundee, and the atmosphere in which she spent her youth was not such as to promise a striking career or an original personality. A factory girl, with a delicate mother and an intemperate father, Mary Slessor worked hard, rising every morning at five o'clock to be at her work as six o'clock chimed; yet she found time to educate herself. A friend lent her "Sartor Resartus"; she sat up all night devouring it. "How do you like it?" inquired her friend. "It is grand," she replied. "I sat up reading it, and did not know the time until I heard the factory bells call me to work in the morning." She worked and learnt and taught, and, when still a mere girl, determined to offer herself to the Church as a missionary. After some talk she was accepted, and sailed in August, 1876, for Africa. Calabar was her destination.

At first her work was uneventful, but from the first she refused to work along conventional lines. She was essentially a pioneer. Gradually she was convinced that her work lay among the wild tribes of the interior—the tribes who were untouched by civilisation. "I am going," she wrote, "to a new tribe up-country, a fierce, cruel people; everyone tells me that they will kill me. But I don't fear any hurt; only to combat their savage customs will require courage and firmness on my part." Alone she ventured forth into the unknown; by her own personality she quelled fierce warriors, and forced savage chiefs to their knees.

Her great work was for women, subjected by cruel customs to degrading thralldom. She loved them and won their love; she fought against the ruthless slaughter of mother and children when twins were born; she took the twins and cared for the mother, and often compelled the father to show kindness to them. She combated the evil superstitions of the people—the poison ordeal administered on the death of a chief; she waged incessant warfare against wrong, and improved the conditions of the oppressed. She became the friend of chiefs, and was invited by them to sit as judge in their primitive courts of justice. Many hours she spent in pow-pows, and on most occasions her decisions were accepted—wonderful result, as they were generally totally opposed to the black men's idea of justice. After seven years of work at Okoying she wrote: "Raiding, plundering, and stealing of slaves are almost things of the past. Any person can now trade for pleasure, and stay where they choose."

When the British Government succeeded in establishing a protectorate over the Niger coast, it was proposed to send a vice-consul to Okoying as to

\* "Mary Slessor of Calabar: Pioneer Missionary." By W. P. Livingstone. (Hodder and Stoughton. 3s. 6d. net.)

other districts. Miss Slessor opposed this, fearing it would lead to trouble. With great good sense and tact Sir Claude Macdonald avoided the difficulty by appointing her to organise and supervise a Native Court. Later on the High Commissioner offered her the post of member of the native court, with the status of permanent vice-president. She accepted, as she thought it would further her work and increase her opportunities "to preach the Gospel, create confidence, and inspire hope in these poor wretches, who fear alike black and white men." She preached the gospel of love, and in her person taught what caring for others meant. She was beloved by men and women, black and white; all strove to render her help. She lived like the people themselves. In order to save money for her work she dressed poorly, went about bare-headed, bare-footed, yet she commanded respect wherever she went. The Government officials all trusted her, and many interesting talks had she with them. On the recommendation of Sir Frederick Lugard she was awarded by King Edward the Order of St. John of Jerusalem for her meritorious services. At first she refused it, but finally accepted it as a sign that the Government was favourably disposed to missionary work.

She was a wonderful woman, and not a page of the book but reflects her greatness. She was a strange mixture of fearlessness and shyness. At home she feared to speak if a man were in the room; yet in Africa she could box a chief's ears when she had commanded him to be quiet and he had not obeyed. She could scold a man well who told a lie. "I never shake hands with the people," she explained on one occasion to Sir Frederick Lugard. "They don't understand it, and one must maintain one's position." When she died in January, 1915, she was sincerely mourned by countless people in the land she had adopted as her own. She had the defects of her qualities. She herself admits that she was no organiser, and her work suffered from want of method. Sometimes she forgot the day of the week, and would cheerfully turn Monday into Sunday, explaining that she had "lost a day, but the Lord's work must not suffer for her mistakes." One of her helpers wrote: "You might enter her house feeling pessimistic; you left an optimist." She was ever dissatisfied with the past, busy in the present, and hopeful for the future. She opened doors that were shut to others, and as her biographer says, "In the African bush she will be remembered in hut and harem, and by forest camp fire, and each generation will hand down to the next the story of the great White Mother who lived and toiled for their good."

E. G. M.

### BRANCH NOTES.

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

Will all members please look for announcements of meetings, etc., under "Forthcoming Events"? Will they also send in suggestions for autumn work? Those who have not subscribed to the "Birthday Fund" this year are asked to subscribe to the second instalment.

Dundee.

A meeting was held in the Steeple Club on August 30, Miss Husband presiding. Miss Helen Wilkie's resignation of the office of treasurer was accepted with much regret. Reference was made to the faithful services of Miss Wilkie, and the loss the Branch (but not the League) will sustain by her departure to Glasgow. The good wishes of all follow Miss Wilkie to her new sphere of labour. Miss Husband, in a very felicitous speech, presented Miss Wilkie with a silver manicure set and leather hand-bag, as a recognition from the members of the treasurer's earnest work on behalf of the Branch. Miss Gibson was appointed to the vacant office. It was remitted to committee to arrange for Mrs. Despard's meeting on October 9. It was also agreed that the Branch should meet in the Steeple Club on the first Thursday of each month.

## THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd.  
Offices:—144, High Holborn, W.C.

FRIDAY, September 7th, 1917.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—

To the Editor—on all editorial matters.  
To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.  
To the Secretary—on all other business, including Votes orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.  
Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

### EDITORIAL.

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

### SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

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

### AGENTS.

International Suffrage Shop, 5, Duke-street, Charing Cross, W.C.; Messrs. Horace Marshall and Co., Temple-avenue, E.C.; City and Suburban Publishing Company, St. Bride's Churchyard, E.C.; E. Marlborough, Old Bailey, E.C.; A. Ritchie, Pemberton-row, Gough-square, E.C.; Simpkin, Marshall and Co., Orange-street, Haymarket; John Heywood, Manchester. Can be obtained at the Book-stalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son and all newsagents.

### STILL TALKING.

The Anti-suffragists have always been a great joy. In the good old, bad old days of heated struggle and cut and thrust, it was always an unmitigated delight when the spirit moved them to speech. In the driving months and years, when one week saw our hearts beat high with hope and the next week found us plunged in gloom, a pronouncement from the Antis never failed to revive our drooping spirits. A "great speech" from an Anti leader gave us "cannon-fodder" for months. So egregious was their sentiment, so still more egregious their logic, and so perfect in its complacency their righteousness, a break into speech on their part was like a whiff of sea breeze, or rain after parching drought. It is borne in upon us, in these latter days, that we really loved the Antis!

For now there are no more of those heartening "great speeches." *The Times* and Mr. Twells Brex no longer fulminate in mingled horror and disgust against the indecent intrusion of women into public life. Mr. Austen Chamberlain is silent. In place of the invigorating thrills supplied from these sources, we have "great speeches" by the converted Antis—not one-half so delightful, because they only say the things we can say better ourselves and have been saying for fifty years and more. And not only are they not amusing us any longer, but they have taken on a new and rather special line in what might, if it be not indiscreet, be described as impertinence.

After spending many years in belittling the intelligence of women, their capacity for public affairs and their grasp of political economy, we find these newly-converted advocates of Women's Rights very much perturbed for fear we should not push our claims far enough. We find a great show of anxiety lest we should not maintain a higher standard than men; we had always been told that it was not so high! We find intense concern lest we should join men's parties and not stand shoulder to shoulder in

a party of our own; yet this was the very danger that had to be guarded against! We find a declaration in *The Daily Mirror*—Ye Gods!—that "men cannot agree upon real domestic legislation, that affecting women, children, and the home," and we are admonished that "it is high time the authentic rulers of the household, women, marched shoulder to shoulder and stampeded men into activity." We should have thought this was too barefaced even for the Harnsworth Press; but it is nothing compared to the overwhelming concern for our success, welfare, and greatness set forth in *The Daily Mail*, which cannot issue a single sheet without advertising its great desire to see women live up to their opportunities, their standard, and the great expectations entertained by those who, like the talented inventor of *The Daily Mail*, know our capacity and our possibilities so well and rate them so high.

"Times is changed," said the cat's meat man"; and so is the Anti-suffrage tune; but they are still at the old game under a new guise—lecturing women and telling them what their duty is. These people who have not been able to make a success of any one thing except profiteering still think themselves entitled to deal out advice! One is driven to suppose that, being bankrupt of sense, logic, and discretion, advice is the only thing left for them to give. (And it costs nothing.) In the words of their faithful feminine champion, Mrs. Gwladys Gladstone Solomon, "there is one strong argument for women's suffrage. . . . It lies in the amazing stupidity of men." And we have hopes from this that the Antis will not entirely abandon the habit of supplying us with diverting matter. Their present line is really too heavy.

Having for years insisted that women were not necessary for national life other than as wives and mothers, these strange people are now acclaiming the way in which women have left their homes for their country's service. Having said that men alone could fight, and that, therefore, women should not vote, they now find that men cannot fight without women behind them in the factories. Having messed up the alien immigration business they now demand that women shall divorce their German husbands. Having systematically slaughtered millions of babies, they now discover that these are the items that really count, and that the babies must be saved. Having declared that women could never be good citizens in the fullest sense of the word, they now discover that they can be the very best and are in haste to admonish them not to make so poor a job of it as men have done. In a word, having been unimaginably wrong in everything they said or believed, they still have the assurance to imagine we can accept them as advisers and listen to their admonishments. It is inconceivable, but it is true; and when we cease to be angry at their absurdity it will once more amuse us.

In the meantime, what we really crave for is to be let alone. This ceaseless feeling of our pulse and recording our mental, moral and intellectual temperature is beyond words irritating, as well as impertinent. If only they would leave us alone! If only they would leave off chattering, writing, lecturing, talking for a little! One feels as if the whole female world should address to man, with a capital M, the immortal words of the sprightly Beatrice: "I marvel you will still be talking, Signor Benedick; no one heeds you." C. NINA BOYLE.

### Logic Indeed.—From an Anti-Suffragist

According to the *Anti-Suffrage Review*, women have not equalled men in industry, nor should they do so! But Gwladys Gladstone Solomon asserts that "there is one strong argument in favour of woman suffrage. . . . It lies in the amazing stupidity of some men. One can hardly help arguing, 'If men are so utterly and hopelessly illogical, could women be more so?'"

### FIFTY-NINE!

Fifty-nine! Fifty-nine! Fifty-nine! The cryptic word was reiterated in a clear, resonant tone. I turned my head to see whence it came. I saw two small men, and one of them was a dwarf. Their arms were linked, and each carried the case of a musical instrument. Their pitiable condition was at once obvious. "Do you want to be directed to a house of that number?" I enquired. "No, the tram, madam, thank you," was the cheerful response, as the pair approached a little nearer to the curb. "Has it come up yet?" "No, not yet. Do you go about London alone?" "Oh, yes, we manage quite well, but when we want a 'bus or tram, I call out the number, and someone will always help us." "It is very clever of you." "Well, you see," said he, modestly disclaiming the compliment, "it is easier for us, because we have never seen, we were born blind—we are brothers." The eyelids moved somewhat nervously over the sightless eyes, but there was quite unusual intelligence in the face. The other listened with apparent interest to the questions and answers, and a smile flickered across his pale face, but he did not speak.

A whole world of tragedy is bound up in the cruel truth, so cheerfully and submissively admitted, "we were born blind." In former times ignorance was bliss, and we complacently accepted disagreeable facts without enquiring into their causes, but, thank God, we have a higher grade of conscience now, a conscience that warns us that we are our brother's keeper, and we want to know why those two young men are blind from birth. The pathos of their heroic courage and cheerfulness adds to our compassion. Nature has compensated them to a remarkable degree for the deprivation of the precious gift of sight; but what we want to know is—why are they blind from birth?

We know that "in the beginning" every separate work of creation was "very good," including the crowning act, the creation of man. Made in the likeness of the Great Creator, all the gifts and faculties with which he was endowed were perfect. He was a perfect human being. Of normal stature, good sight and hearing, and free from the taint of any form of disease. That was the prototype of the present degenerate man; the divine likeness so blurred and disfigured, his god-like stature decreased and often dwarfed, his faculties impaired in the heyday of his youth and strength, and oft-times wholly destroyed. We have not far to look to find a reason for these tragic facts. We can easily learn if we wish, why innocent people are deprived of their birthright. Consultation with scientific experts—whose authority cannot be doubted—will reveal to us all the painful truths we ought to know. Listen to what the well-known Dr. Mary Scharlieb, M.S., M.D., says in her book, "The Hidden Scourge":—

Among the many headings in the Registrar-General's vital statistics we find that a large number of infants suffer from ophthalmia neo-natorum.\* To those who understand, these words tell a pitiful story. Most of these poor babies have had their eyes infected with gonorrhoea in the process of birth. . . . Probably one-third of the blindness in the country is due to infection of the eyes during birth with gonococcus, but the ravages of this micro-organism are made more virulent, and are less amenable to treatment, when they are combined with the *spirochaeta pallida*. To these two micro-organisms are due approximately half the cases of blindness.

So here we have in a few plain, unmistakable words, the hidden cause revealed, of the tragedy of congenital blindness. Health is the birthright of every child, and those who rob infants of their birthright are among the most cruel of mankind. It is "frightfulness" at its worst. Let us repeat the awful truth, and think about it, "lest we forget."

\*Purulent inflammation of the eyes of the newly-born.

Half the cases of blindness in this country—and probably in every other—are due to two deadly micro-organisms which are caused by *vice*. This is bad enough, but it is not anything like the sum of all the maiming and the murder that is caused in this way. One of the chief causes of infant mortality is venereal disease. During "Baby Week"—in which it was my privilege to take part—we heard the shameful statistics in this connection. No baby should ever die, and yet something like 100,000 babies die every year in the United Kingdom, and about the same number before birth! The horror of it, the unpardonable iniquity of it! We are all full of compassion for the victims of the war, but it is not so bad a thing as this. The war will have an end, but there seems no end to the maiming and murdering of defenceless babies; verily a war against infants! How long are we women going to submit to it? The conspiracy of silence is only partially broken. The Churches, which ought to lead and direct us, do little to help in this matter. From how many pulpits do we hear this supreme social evil denounced, and in plain, unveiled language? Quite recently, to my surprise and gratification, I did hear it dealt with by a courageous priest of the Church of England. All honour to him and any others who "boldly rebuke vice."

In dealing with babies we are dealing with fundamentals. A baby is the beginning of life, therefore, in dealing with this one particular cause of infant mortality, and the damage rate of infants, we must get down to bed-rock. The preacher alluded to, did this; he condemned what he called that "damnable thing, promiscuous fornication," for it is this which causes unending misery to children born and unborn. He also spoke severely of certain doctors who tell young men that continence is injurious to health. We prefer to believe the words of some of the noblest men and highest authorities in the medical profession who hold the opposite view. Such men as Sir James Paget, Sir Andrew Clarke; Sir George Humphrey, of Cambridge; Professor Millar, of the Edinburgh University; and Sir William Gowers, the great men's specialist, who counts as an authority on the Continent as well as in this country. He says:

The opinions which, on grounds falsely called "physiological," suggest or permit unchastity, are terribly prevalent among young men, but they are absolutely false. With all the force of any knowledge I possess, or any authority I have, I assert that this belief is contrary to fact. I assert that no man ever yet was in the slightest degree the worse for continence, or better for incontinence. From incontinence during unmarried life all are worse morally; a clear majority are in the end worse physically; and in no small number the result is, and ever will be, utter physical shipwreck.

The need for moral reform is instant; physical degeneracy must stop. Venereal disease, which spells child-murder, suicide and homicide, must be stamped out, the continuance of it is jeopardising the health of the nation. The increase of a healthy, vigorous and sane population will alone make England great. We have reliable evidence that a higher standard of national purity and public health has been the result of women's political enfranchisement in the American States and other parts of the world. An inhabitant of Seattle—one of the large towns of the State of Washington—stated that the town had been "cleaned up" after the power to vote had been conferred upon women in 1910. God grant that we women may lay upon ourselves the paramount obligation to "clean up" England when the same power becomes ours.

Do you ask, what has all this to do with the pathetic cry—"Fifty-nine!" I reply *everything*, because it is cause and effect, beginning with effect.

BEATRICE KENT.

## OUR POINT OF VIEW.

## That "Nationalisation" Business.

It is a pity that the laws which grant the suffrage to women should always be so branded with that masculine sense of justice from which we so fervently pray to be delivered. The daily Press publishes the following:—

## BRITISH BORN WOMEN IN CANADA TO VOTE.

Under the Suffrage Act recently passed in Canada all British born women in Canada will receive the franchise without restriction, but the wives of aliens will be disfranchised, although naturalised alien males will retain their right to vote.

We would suggest that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle gives this matter his immediate attention. If he could tear his attention from the divorcing of German husbands and ask why a greater measure of loyalty should be expected from genuine though naturalised aliens than from British born persons, even though those persons happen to be women, he would greatly oblige. Even in the act of enfranchising women it seems impossible for men to be really generous or to accept a genuine equality; and so they continue to pile up the score against them. We trust that enfranchised Canadian women will not forget this last outrage.

## Women and Commerce.

Contributors to *The Daily Chronicle* are this week expressing grave doubts about the success of women clerks in commercial life. They complain that in spite of women's "adaptability, skill and dexterity," "the average feminine output falls lamentably short of that attained by their male competitors," and that "the woman clerk is a laggard at heart," etc. What these contributors fail to tell the public is that women are not offered any satisfactory inducements to take up a commercial career seriously. They have been employed in commercial houses as shorthand-typists or invoice clerks without any chance of further promotion. When a boy enters a commercial house he is trained from the beginning in office work; if he is fairly intelligent his seniors give him every opportunity to assist them and incidentally to learn the business thoroughly, encourage him to attend evening classes in shorthand-type-writing, book-keeping and foreign languages at their (the employers') expense, giving him the chance subsequently of soliciting orders for the firm at home and abroad, and frequently offering him a directorship. Not so with women. Women have usually no option but to remain shorthand-typists or invoice clerks, their only reward being a few shillings weekly advance for long and faithful service. Let men give women better and fairer opportunities to gather some of the plums of the commercial world, and employers will not have cause to complain of women's lack of initiative or of their indifference to the advantages of a commercial career.

## The Old, Old Plea.

Russian industrial legislation has begun rather badly. Suffragists will always be on the look-out for the cloven hoof of sex-differentiation until real power has been safely secured to women; and they will consider it unfortunate that one of the first decisions come to should have been that women and children of under 17 are not to be employed at night. This interference with the liberty of women under pretence of studying their safety or the safety of the race, is one of the oldest devices of masculine domination. We shall think very little of the Russian democracy if this sort of thing continues, and if the Russian women sit down under it.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

## BRITISH WOMEN AND ELECTIONS.

Writing in *The Englishwoman* for September on "The Electoral System before 1832," D. L. A. says:—"Women played an important part in elections, and it seems probable that on one or two occasions they even personally recorded a vote. For instance, at the Gatton election of 1554, and the Aylesbury election of 1571, Mistress Copley and Dame Dorothy Packington respectively are believed to have exercised the franchise. On the whole, however, the activity of women in elections was shown in other ways. Women were able to transfer the burghage vote to their fathers or husbands, and widows occasionally exchanged a burghage for a non-burghage house at a specified price, when it was usual for the male tenant to occupy the house for three weeks preceding and two weeks following the election. Again, the right to vote as a freeman was in some instances transmitted through women, and the daughters or widows of freemen were doubtless much sought after in cases where the franchise was a part of their dower. Great ladies often took a direct part in electioneering, thus affording an excellent target for the political pamphleteers of the day:—

But say, ye Belles, whose beauty all admit,  
Do you in politics dispute the prize?  
Or do ye near the hustings proudly sit  
To take the suffrage of admiring eyes?

Other interesting articles in the number are "The Plays of Brieux," by Florence G. Fielder; "Kosovo after 500 Years," by the well-known Serb, Dr. Curcin; "Marriage and Mr. Wells's Religion," by A. B. Targett; "Stockholm," by M. Lowndes; and an amusing Irish sketch, "As I was going to Puck Fair," by Susanne R. Day. "Problems of the Day" are concerned with education.

## WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

## Branch Secretary, N.U.R.

For the first time a woman has been appointed Branch Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, at Ashton-under-Lyne.

## Superintendent of Constabulary

Miss Ferguson has been appointed Superintendent in the Bristol Constabulary to supervise the staff of plain clothes policewomen in that city. Miss Ferguson, who is the first woman to hold the rank in an English police force, was educated at St. Andrews University.

## Steeplejill.

Irlam, near Manchester, has now a steeplejill, who takes the place of a steeplejack.

## A Heroine of Verdun.

Mr. H. Wood, special correspondent of the United Press of America with the French Armies, writes of the splendid hospital service rendered by women. He says that 70,000 French women are now serving in hospitals and ambulances in France, Algeria, Morocco, and the Orient; and 10,000 foreign women, including the Scottish Women's Hospitals and the Japanese contingent. Many have received the highest military decorations. There is a long list of nurses who have been killed or wounded on active service, and he tells of the narrow escape of Mademoiselle de Baye thus:—

Mlle. de Baye, who recently received the Legion of Honour, was in charge of the service at the hospital installed in the Château de Dugny, near Verdun, where the Germans dropped incendiary bombs and fired with machine-guns on the nurses and patients as they ran out. Mlle. de Baye remained at her post of duty and gave orders for all the nurses to put their steel helmets on immediately. All except one obeyed, and Mlle. de Baye handed her own steel helmet to this nurse. A moment later Mlle. de Baye fell stricken with a bomb splinter in the head. For a while it was feared she would lose her eyesight, but she is now out of danger.

THEY SUPPORT US.

## PRESIDENT'S BIRTHDAY FUND.

The second list of contributions will be published in our issue of September 14. Belated donations from Branches and friends and additional sums from all quarters are very urgently required to make this year's Fund worthy of this great occasion of our triumph. Generous support is vital to ensure the Victory.

Please send as early as possible next week for inclusion in the second list. E. KNIGHT.

## DINNER TO MISS BOYLE.

An enthusiastic welcome home was the dominant note of the dinner to Miss Boyle last Friday evening and of the public meeting which followed. The demand for dinner tickets was so great that the rooms of the Minerva Café were crowded to their utmost limits, and even then many were left lamenting that no more tickets could be obtained. Everyone fortunate enough to be able to pass the ticket collector at the entrance to the Café expressed keen appreciation of the dinner provided and the excellent service. The Minerva Café is to be warmly congratulated on its achievement. We may well hope for more of these enjoyable dinners and meetings.

When Mrs. Whetton took the chair for the meeting it was a case of "standing room only," but, nothing daunted, more and more people crowded in, and the comment at the end was that "standing, or strap-hanging" had been quite worth while!

There were two regretted absences through illness, Miss Anna Munro, who was to have presided, and Miss Eunice Murray, one of the speakers. Mrs. Whetton, in opening the meeting, said how glad everyone was to see Miss Boyle back again, ready to join in the strenuous work still to be done until votes for women became the law of the land.

Mrs. Despard, in a speech of welcome as President of the Women's Freedom League, spoke of Miss Boyle as one who always rouses enthusiasm and brings light to bear on the dark places which need to be made clean. "Now she has returned we shall find her plenty of work to do! That is the way we shall show our gladness!" Mrs. Despard laid stress on the power of thought, and said that if there were the right sort of thinking the world would be a better place. When there was true democracy and women had effective influence, people would be ashamed of abuses that now go on; they would not be tolerated. The recent education debate had shown how necessary it was for women to be Members of Parliament.

Miss Boyle, in acknowledging the hearty welcome given to her, said how deeply she was touched by it, and how she rejoiced to be among Freedom Leaguers again. As to her experiences in Macedonia, nothing truer had been said than "The nearer the Front, the further from the war!" There were no great excitements; her first duty was to write the menus for the Christmas dinner—a very good one—and for many weeks afterwards she was scarcely ever without a needle in her hand, her patching and darning of linen and all kinds of stores being works of art! Then she was called upon to undertake the responsibilities of Night Sister for the whole hospital, and carried them through without killing anyone. One of her many amusing stories was about the lambs presented to the hospital at Easter by the grateful people; they were kept at night in the basement; on the occasion of an air raid there was a keen contest between the lambs and the Macedonians seeking shelter, and the latter were completely routed by the

former! Dealing with the political situation at home, Miss Boyle pointed out that for the first time woman suffrage is in a Government Bill, and has reached the Committee stage. The victory for women depended upon the stability of the Government and the absence of a great crisis which would make the naval and military situation the focus of concentration. She urged all interested in the progress of women to stand by the League, as an organisation was essential to successful work.

Mrs. Schofield Coates brought a welcome from the North-east of England, and Miss A. A. Smith, welcoming Miss Boyle back to work for THE VOTE, said she hoped to see her a Member of Parliament and at close grips with politicians in the House of Commons.

## FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF "ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS."

*The Suffrage Correspondence School*, published by the New York State Woman Suffrage Party, Room 2,003, 303, Fifth-avenue, New York City, price 30 cents, post free.

Here is a chance for busy suffragists to do real propaganda cheaply and without much personal effort. Send a money order for 1s. 3d. and request the New York State Woman Suffrage Party to forward a copy of this Correspondence Course to the most stubborn Anti you know. The unfortunate Anti will be faced not with theories, prophecies, or possibilities, but with facts and figures, for in twelve of the United States Woman Suffrage is an accomplished fact. The Correspondence Course is arranged in twelve lessons with two examination papers. The aforesaid Anti will not find it hard to get full marks in the examination after reading some of the facts contained in the twelve lessons. Here are a few of the facts. The oldest suffrage State, Wyoming, has no public debt, and a large balance in the treasury, which shows that woman's knowledge of housekeeping might be used with advantage elsewhere. In Kansas, where the women won the vote in 1912, the infant mortality rate has dropped from 120 to 90 per 1,000. Are not British babies worth saving? Again, we hear a good deal of talk to-day of equal work for equal pay; but in Chicago talk was not enough for the women, the principle was established in all public offices twelve months after the women got the vote.

The history of woman's suffrage in the U.S.A. contains a warning to those who count too much on man's generosity after the war. During the American Civil War women dropped their propaganda and worked to free the slaves. Result: slaves freed and made voters, but what of the women? "This is the negroes' hour and the women must wait." Last but not least, there is some sound advice to suffragists, of which the burden is "Talk suffrage in season and out of season; some can work and some can pay, but all should talk." Freedom Leaguers, don't forget this advice!

W. G.

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

Our rooms are gradually filling up with permanent and passing friends. We wish the permanents to predominate, but shall try to keep some beds for the passing ones. We are still in need of tables and table-covers, easy chairs, rugs or strips of carpet, looking-glasses, cushions, etc. Who will supply some of these things? Address all parcels to the Manageress.

Miss Boyle's Lecture. — When speaking on August 31, at a dinner given in her honour, Miss Boyle said she would reserve the story of her experiences for the lecture in aid of the Despard Arms. Make sure of your tickets, 1s. each, and make a note of the date, Sunday, September 23, 3.30 p.m., at the Minerva Café. Tea afterwards, 8d. each.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 352.

FRIDAY,  
SEPT. 7,  
1917.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

ISLINGTON DENTAL SURGERY,

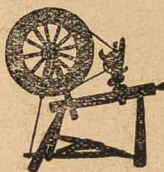
69, UPPER STREET, N.

**Mr. CHODWICK BROWN, Surgeon Dentist,**

Mr. Fredk. G. Boucher, Assistant Dental Surgeon.  
Established 35 Years.

Gas Administered Daily by qualified Medical Man, Fee 7s. 6d.  
Nurse in attendance. Mechanical Work in all its Branches.  
Send Postcard for Pamphlet. N.B.—No Showcase at door.  
CONSULTATIONS FREE. Telephone: 3795 North.

**A SPINNING WHEEL IN EVERY HOME!**



Spin your own wool for knitting sports coats, jerseys, boys' suits, etc. Wears well, washes and dyes beautifully. One-third the cost of machine spun yarn.

**YOU CAN LEARN IN A FEW HOURS.**

Lessons given in Spinning and weaving at The Alston Studio, 8, New Bond-street, W. Send for terms and particulars. Free demonstration every Tuesday from 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Hand woven materials for sale, made in the Dauntless Hall Workroom. Children's Frocks from 6s. 6d., Sports Coats from 14s. 6d.

**WE CAN WEAVE YOUR HAND-SPUN WOOL.**

## MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS.

**HAMPSTEAD.**—TO LET, furnished, Sitting-room, Bedroom, and use of kitchen and bathroom. Pleasantly situated and convenient for tube, bus, and tram. Convenient for one or two ladies.—Apply, by letter, X., 5A, Eton Houses, Hampstead, N.W. 3.

**THE HANDICRAFTS, 82, High-street, Hampstead, N.W.**—Hand-weavings, Hand-made Laces, Home-spuns, Jewellery, Basketwork, Pottery, etc.

**64-PAGE BOOK ABOUT HERBS AND HOW TO USE THEM, free** Send for one.—**TRIMMELL, The Herbalist, 144, Richmond-rd., Cardiff. Est. 1879.**

**A THEENIC UNDERWEAR** is made from best materials, is comfortable, durable and guaranteed unshrinkable.—Write for free book, with patterns, and buy direct from makers, Dept. 30, Atheenic Mills, Hawick, Scotland.

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

**RESIDENT HELPER WANTED** for the Children's Guest House of the Women's Freedom League Settlement, Nine Elms. Accustomed to children. Vegetarian. £26 per annum.—Apply by letter, The Hon. Sec., 93, Nine Elms Lane, S.W. 8.

### FOR SALE.

**NEW MUSQUASH FUR COAT,** skunk collar and cuffs, stock size; 20 gns.; a great bargain.

**GREY SATIN JUMPER;** 10s. 6d.

**SET SABLE MINK FURS;** 28s.

**BLACK JUMPER DRESS;** 11s. 6d.

**ANTIQUE GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK;** £9.

**COSTUME LENGTH SUPERIOR SAXE BLUE GABERDINE.**

**NEW MOLE superior velour cloth COAT FROCK;** 29s. 6d.

**BLUE AND WHITE STRIPED SILK MOTOR-SCARF;** 6s. 6d.

**STONE COLOUR GABERDINE COAT FROCK;** 38s. 6d.

**HANDSOME SET MALTESE LACE;** 30s.

**SEVERAL NEW CREPE DE CHINE BLOUSES,** also a few Second-Hand ditto.

### FOR SALE—cont.

**SET OF SUPERIOR QUALITY WHITE FOX FURS,** new; £7 10s.

**18-CT. GOLD PENDANT,** set pearls and turquoise; 27s. 6d.

**DOULTON WARE DINNER-SERVICE,** full set (12 each), including soup.

**NEW, superior quality COVERT COATING RAIN-COAT;** £2 10s.; stock size.

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

**NEW, superior quality TUSSORE JUMPER - PLEATED SKIRT;** 27s. 6d.

**SEVERAL NEW STYLISH HATS** at moderate prices.

**SEVERAL SILK and WOOL DRESS LENGTHS,** art shades, from 16s.

**ONE BROWN and ONE OLD ROSE ZENANA DRESSING - GOWN LENGTHS;** 27s. 6d.

**NAVY BLUE TAFFETA SILK COAT;** 17s. 6d.

### FOR SALE—cont.

**VERY HANDSOME MAHOGANY DRAWING-ROOM SUITE;** one canopy, two arm-chairs, two small upholstered violet damask; £7.—Can be viewed at 13, Theobald's Road, W.C. 1.

**A REMINGTON TYPEWRITER** (No. 7); nearly new and in perfect order; price £14.—Can be seen and tested at "THE VOTE" Office any day between 11 and 1.

**A BLICK TYPEWRITER,** in perfect order; price £8.—Can be seen at "THE VOTE" Office any day between 11 and 1.

**FOUNTAIN PENS** which will NOT LEAK, highly recommended by members of the Women's Freedom League; price 6s. 6d.; try one.—Apply SECRETARY, "THE VOTE" Office.

**A SHAWL-SHAPED CARACUL CAPE,** with musquash flounce, very wide, falling in full godet folds; with revers, high collar that turns down, and brocade lining; perfectly new; only worn a few times; price 10 guineas.—Box 22, "THE VOTE" Office.

The Articles for Sale are on view at the Minerva Exchange, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 10 to 6. Saturdays, 10 to 1.

NEAR THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

## KINGSLEY HOTEL

HART STREET, BLOOMSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1.

Well-appointed and commodious **TEMPERANCE HOTEL.** Passenger Lifts and Bathrooms on every floor, Lounges and Spacious Dining, Drawing, Writing, Reading, Billiard and Smoking Rooms.

Perfect Sanitation, Fireproof Floors, Telephones, Night Porters.

Bedroom, Breakfast, Attendance & Bath, 6/6 per night per person. Full Tariff and Testimonials on application. Tel.: Museum 1232 (2lines).