

THE VOTE,
SEPTEMBER 27, 1918.
ONE PENNY.

Programme of the Women's Freedom League

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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

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WOMEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

MRS. ZANGWILL'S NEW DEFINITION OF "M.P."

The reason for allowing women Parliamentary seats is the same as for allowing them Parliamentary votes—that there is no reason against it! Even the one specious anti-suffrage argument, that political activity would divert women from domestic duty, is inapplicable to the present issue. Not more than half the House of Commons would ever be of the feminine gender and such a limited number could be recruited among those war-spinsters and widows, who are entirely free from domestic ties.

While suggesting that there are sufficient unattached women to supply the future female M.P.s, I personally do not feel that the fact of a woman having domestic ties is an objection to her candidature. On the contrary it seems to me an advantage. The bearing and rearing of children is an educational asset—a finishing course in the school of life. The mere fact that this course is closed to every man is, in itself, an argument for the admission into Parliament of the more experienced woman. Certainly, actual physical motherhood—as distinct from the subsequent intellectual motherhood—cannot well be combined with active political work, scrubbing, for instance, or child-tending, or cook-

ing. But by the time a woman has reached the average age of a Parliamentary candidate, her child-bearing period is usually over. With the knowledge gained, she would be qualified to represent that most important of all interests—the minors—and her "M.P." would take on a new significance—"Mother in Parliament."

This whole discussion of the Parliamentary eligibility of women appears to me, however, as academic. An honourable member observed, when the report of the Law Officers was under consideration, that he imagined there was no serious question of the admission of women into the House of Commons. There is no serious question. It is decided! The enfranchisement of women involved their admission into Parliament. And not only the polling booth, but also the munition factory had led straight to St. Stephen's. The one good resulting from these four years of mad horror is the alteration in woman's position. She is now recognised as a necessity instead of a luxury. She is a power, a fourth estate. The only serious question that remains is whether our present lawmakers will bow gracefully to the inevitable in time for this year's General Election.

E. AYRTON ZANGWILL.

IF you Believe in Equal Rights and Opportunities and an Equal Moral Standard for Women and Men

Join the Women's Freedom League.

Fill in your name and address and send it to the Secretary, Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

Name _____

Address _____

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.
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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.



**DARE TO
BE FREE.**

Admission Free. Reserved seats 1/- each. Tickets from W.F.L., 144, High Holborn.

Monday, September 30.—Mid London Branch Meeting, 144, High Holborn; 6.30.

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

Working Party for Green, White, and Gold Fair, 144, High Holborn, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, October 9.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 3 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Hall Simpson on "How Women of India and England can Co-operate." Chair: Miss A. A. Smith. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café, if desired, at 6d.

Wednesday, October 16.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Mr. J. W. Williams on "The Empire's Greatest Menace." Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café, if desired, at 6d.

Saturday, October 19.—Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1. Jumble Sale, 6 p.m.

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

Wednesday, October 23.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge, on "Child Welfare."

Wednesday, October 30.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn.

Friday and Saturday, November 22 and 23.—Green, White, and Gold Fair at Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 2 p.m.

PROVINCES.

Friday, September 27.—Middlesbrough Branch Meeting, Suffrage Rooms. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro.

Thursday, October 3.—Reading Branch Meeting at the Club, O. Ford-road; 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 9.—Southsea, Work Party, 17, Duncan-road. 3 to 7 p.m. Hostess: Mrs. Speck.

Tuesday, October 15.—Southsea, annual members' meeting, Girl Guides' Room, Kent-road; 6.30 p.m.

SCOTLAND.

Wednesday, October 2.—Edinburgh Branch Meeting at W.F.L. Room, 13, South Charlotte-street; 8 p.m. Speakers: Miss McLaren, Miss Jack, and Miss Dorothy Evans. Chair: Miss S. Munro.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Friday, October 11.—Reading Women's Council Meeting, Girls' Club, Queen's-road; 7 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Schofield Coates. Chair: Miss Anna Munro.

Wednesday, October 16.—Edinburgh I.L.P. Debating Society, Melbourne Hall; 8 p.m. Debate on "Equal Pay and the Payment of Wives," opened by Miss Dorothy Evans.

IMPORTANT.

In view of the expected vote on Woman Suffrage in the United States Senate on September 26 we hope to publish next week interesting information about the movement in America.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

Full Equality in Every Direction of Women with Men.

Political parties are busy preparing their programmes. Some have announced them; some remain silent. Here is the programme of the Women's Freedom League:—

1. Votes for women on equal terms with men.
2. Women members of Parliament.
3. Women judges, barristers, and solicitors.
4. Women magistrates throughout the country.
5. Women commissioners of prisons.
6. Women on all juries.
7. Women on all Local Government bodies and on all Reconstruction Committees, on Trades Boards, Education and Health Committees, and all public bodies which regulate the lives and surroundings of the people, and especially on all the Watch Committees of local Councils.

8. The opening of all trades and professions to women, with equal opportunities and equal responsibilities.

9. Equal pay for equal work in all trades and professions and Government Departments, with an equal chance to fill the higher posts.

10. The immediate restoration to British-born women of full control of their own nationality.

11. The recognition of an equal moral standard for men and women, and an even-handed justice in the administration of the law in sex offences, no laws to be passed which will in practice operate unfairly as between men and women, and all inequalities already existing to be removed.

12. No man or woman to be convicted on police evidence only.

13. Better education, better housing, better food, and better health for the community.

"THE SCANDAL OF THE STREETS."

Early last year when the Government was trying to turn its Criminal Law Amendment Bill into an Act of Parliament a weekly paper published a series of articles describing the perils to which soldiers of all ranks were subjected by women whom they encountered in London. The men, it declared were systematically met by undesirables of the opposite sex, lured by them to a public-house, or a house of ill-fame, and then doped, duped, and robbed, many a man becoming afterwards a sad ruin of his former self! For the last week one of our papers has been daily treating the British public to another lurid description of our streets and the dangers to which men are exposed by the "harpies" of our city.

We remind our readers that the Government is again contemplating the bringing in of another Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

The Press is urging the Government to take stringent measures. Against whom? Not against the men who pay for their indulgence and who only appear to complain when they are duped and robbed, but against the women who accept their money! We urge the Government to pay more attention to the men concerned, to teach them that immorality itself matters and not only the fear of robbery and disease. By its Regulation 40D the Government has tacitly acquiesced in men's immorality. It has done more; 40D has practically made our streets unsafe for women; they may be falsely charged by any member of his Majesty's Forces, and can only prove their

innocence by submitting to the degrading outrage of medical examination. It is sheer nonsense for the Press or the Government to put all the blame for the condition of the streets of our cities on to young, irresponsible girls, carried away by the excitement of abnormal times, and a few undesirable women. Surely it is ridiculous to maintain that a fighting man, home on leave from one of the battle fronts, cannot say "no" to an importunate woman! Let the Government attack the problem from the other side, and hold up to men a higher standard of morality. Harrying women will not solve the problem. It is the duty of commanding officers to instruct, influence, and, if necessary, to penalise their men. If this were done we should hear less of the "Scandal of the Streets."

REGULATION 40D.

Scottish Labour's Demand for Withdrawal.

At the conference of the Scottish Labour Party, held at Glasgow on September 21, a resolution demanding the repeal of 40D was carried unanimously.

"A Bad Law."

When a land girl was charged at Lewes, on the evidence of a soldier, with communicating disease, medical testimony was given that the woman was healthy. In dismissing the charge, the chairman (Mr. F. B. Whitfield) declared that a law which allowed a woman to be so charged on the word of a man who himself went free was a bad law.—*The Star*, Sept. 18.

"This Grossly Unfair Regulation."

The resentment that is steadily growing as the facts become more known with regard to Regulation 40D will surely weigh with the Government and prevent such a grossly unfair regulation becoming permanent law. A man may make a charge out of malice, and subject a totally innocent woman to the shame of examination. Everybody knows that before everything else the war has got to be won, and that in order to win it both the sailor and the soldier must be kept a first-class fighting man; but that this regulation is vitiated by cruelty and futility in its operation may be gauged from the fact that out of fifty cases tried more than half have been dismissed for lack of evidence. It tends to give a man security in vice, and under cover of D.O.R.A. revives the worst features of the old C.D. Acts, which were swept away by a storm of public indignation.—*Hull Daily Mail*, Sept. 18.

"This Monstrous Regulation."

This monstrous Regulation 40D of the Defence of the Realm Act is daily proving its futility, more than 50 per cent. of the cases brought under it having to be dismissed. Up to the end of July we understand the War Office claim to have had over 100 convictions, which must mean over 200 charges. If a soldier has infected a woman there is no penalty whatever imposed on him. This regulation is obviously wrong from whatever point of view we take it. It has absolutely nothing to commend it on any ground, and it ought to be removed with the slightest possible delay.—*The Challenge*, Sept. 20.

REGISTRATION VAGARIES.

The Swansea Fight.

The Women's Freedom League wrote to the President of the Local Government Board, Mr. W. Hayes Fisher, M.P., with regard to the refusal of Mr. Lang Coath, Registration Officer at Swansea, to place on the register qualified women who took meals in the family dining-room, and requested that they should be placed on the register forthwith.

The following reply has been received:—

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W. 1.

September 20, 1918.

MADAM,—I am directed by the President of the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th inst., relative to the omission of the names of certain persons from the register of electors for the Parliamentary Borough of Swansea. In reply I am directed to state that the Board have no authority to decide questions as to the right of persons to be registered as electors, nor are they empowered to give any directions to the Registration Officer such as are suggested. They have, however, sent a copy of your letter to the Registration Officer.—I am, Madam, your obedient servant,

D. DOHERTY (for Assistant Secretary).

The letter will simply serve to strengthen the determination of women to secure justice in spite of the Department which, last June, distinctly negated such arbitrary action as that of the Swansea Registration Officer.

WOMEN IN WAR-TIME.

War Service Exhibition.

The women's section of the Imperial War Services Museum is organising an exhibition to be opened at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, on October 9, which will show the important services rendered by women. Miss Anderson, chief woman factory inspector, is organising a section showing the substitution of women for men; the munitions section will be arranged by Miss Monkhouse, chief woman dilution officer. Models will be a feature of the exhibition. Another section will be devoted to the many women who have lost their lives on war service. Medals presented to Mrs. Harley, Dr. Elsie Inglis, Miss S. Macnaughtan, and others will be exhibited. Admission will be free.

J.P.—in Australia.

Miss Matilda Hennessy, of the Court of Petty Sessions at Esk, has been appointed a justice of the peace. She is the first woman justice of peace appointed in Queensland.

At Last.

Women are to be consulted by the Local Government Board about plans of new housing schemes.

We await developments, insisting that equality and power are essential!

Land Girls at Market; Praise Indeed!

The land girls' early morning invasion of Covent Garden Market is a sight worth seeing. While most folk are abed these healthy-looking women are on their way to market with products from the home county farms. "They are a fine lot of girls, and we've got quite accustomed to seeing them about the market," said a fruit salesman to a *Daily News* representative. "One cannot help admiring the businesslike way they handle their pair-horse vans and steer them through the congested traffic near the market. They are also very quick at unloading."

Lens Makers Wanted.

To meet the demands of Navy and Army, women are needed for the manufacture of lenses and prisms. Maintenance is paid during training. An appeal is made to intelligent women between the ages of 16 and 30, not already engaged on war work, to apply for training to the Director, Optical Munitions Training School, Northampton Polytechnic Institute, 280, St. John-street, London, E.C. 1.

1914 Star for Woman Salvationist.

Miss Mary Murray, daughter of the late Lieutenant-General Sir John Murray, K.C.B., has received the 1914 Star. In the first days of the war Miss Murray, who is a colonel in the Salvation Army, went as a representative of that organisation with the British Expeditionary Force. For months she travelled by night and day on the lines of communication, rendering what service she could to the British troops.

When the armies of Von Kluck marched into Brussels Miss Murray, with two other English Salvationists, Major John Aspinall and Nurse May Whittaker, were seized, and for 12 days held prisoners, until, by a daring ruse, they escaped. In the South African War Miss Murray served under the Salvation Army, and was awarded the Queen's Medal. She is secretary of the Naval and Military League directed by General Booth.

Indian Woman's Enterprise.

A woman "runner" is reported to be carrying mail bags from Shencottah to Puliyara, in Travancore, South India.

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FRIDAY, September 27th, 1918.

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.

DYING HARD; BUT—DYING!

There is no country, no community, in the world in which slavery—the domination by force of one human being over another—does not die hard, as is proved by the great civil war in America to put down chattel slavery, by the struggle of industrialism all over Europe for liberty of self determination, and by the desperate fight put up by women, here and in other lands, for political rights. In this country, both by Industry and by women, a partial victory has been gained; and it is earnestly hoped that the women who have obtained these rights will take a serious view of their responsibilities. But the battle for equality of status and opportunity is not yet fought out. Much remains to be done; the old leaven still lingers. It would indeed be amusing, if such tragic consequences were not involved, to watch the efforts made by politicians of the old school to ward off that day, so terrifying to them, when, on a freed earth, man and woman shall walk together, equal and free.

The marriage and divorce laws, for instance: How difficult it seems to achieve such reforms as would remove from woman the injustice of being unequally yoked with her life partner, being legally bound to one who is not, in the same sense, bound to her! The old marriage laws made the woman the chattel of the man, the children his possessions to deal with as he liked. This conception—slave-law in the family—is dying; we believe it will presently die altogether to the great advantage of the race.

So much has been felt, written, and spoken by the Women's Freedom League on the equal responsibility of men and women in safeguarding the laws of health and clean living, and the equal treatment of transgressors, that it is not necessary to enlarge upon it here, save for a reminder that the whole of the present procedure bears testimony to the sinister fact that still, by many men, women of a certain class are regarded as slaves, to be exploited at the will or caprice of their masters. A century ago no one in public life would have controverted that position. But it, too, is dying, and will presently pass away.

At the present moment we are up against the grave injustice of treating a British-born woman married to a German as an alien. A little reflection will show that this also has its basis in the old slave-theory which men and women of free mind find so hard to kill.

We use the word alien because there is no other to express our meaning. But we desire to say—and

we hope all our readers will agree with us—that it is a hateful word. As soon as ever we can reach a true conception, we shall know that the Father having made "of one blood all the nations upon earth," no human being can, in any logical sense, be alien to any other. In our present dimness of vision, when we set before ourselves great ideals and fail to see their implications, we must deal with the alien problem as a fact to be accepted. It ought to be a simple enough matter. Men or women, born in a particular country of parents who are also citizens, belong to it, can claim its protection, and possess certain rights within its borders. Men have always been able to make choice of country. If, being of adult years, they choose to leave their land for one other than their own, to obey its laws, and adopt its customs, they can register themselves as citizens. That seems fair.

But women, being regarded as chattels of their husbands, have had no such right since 1870. Married to British subjects they became British; married to a foreigner, if he chose to preserve his nationality, his wife lost hers. Literally she had no choice. In 1914 the law of 1870 was amended, but in 1918, when the hysterical outcry against aliens threatened to become dangerous, there was another amendment, and as the Bill stands at present the Home Secretary has power to denaturalise the wife of a man who, having been naturalised, has been found guilty of disloyalty. It is manifest that such an enactment is a distinct setback to the old stoutly-maintained theory that a married woman has no personality of her own; that while, therefore, a man is not penalised by disloyalty on the part of a woman naturalised through marriage, the British woman, though perfectly loyal, even ardently patriotic, bears the penalty of her husband's shortcoming.

We are glad to know that organised women here, in Ireland, and in the Dominions have no intention of looking on idly while retrograde measures such as these are passed. To acquiesce in them would be to put ourselves back to the days before women were recognised as personalities, responsible for their actions to themselves, their country, and their God.

Our growing power makes us hope that the Government Committee set up to consider the whole question of nationality laws will be wise enough to recommend that the amendment pressed upon them by large bodies of organised women, which would place women on exactly the same footing as men in this respect, shall become law. Meanwhile let us women, organised for freedom, never forget that our chief object is and must continue to be to kill or make ineffective the spirit of domination out of which slavery is born. So subtle and withal so plausible are the workings of that ancient enemy of peace, that we must maintain our watchfulness if we would circumvent them.

A clever Indian, commenting on our national hymn, "Britons never shall be slaves," said that it wanted another stanza which should run, "Britons never shall be masters." That is true, though its very obviousness prevents it from being generally seen. But, up to now, it may be said, women have not been citizens, that is to say not really British. They are citizens now; they have seen in their movement how masterhood—the sense of absolute dominion of one human being over another—has been gradually passing away. They must press their advantage; not yet is the battle of freedom won.

Nevertheless, as regards several questions that are now pressing their way to solution we can observe a change in the tone of our opponents. Sadly they are recognising that the theory on which they built up their swiftly-falling-to-pieces society has no longer any hold upon humanity.

Dying hard, it may be, but it is dying!

C. DESPARD.

THE HOUSE OF THE FUTURE.—I.

Amongst the many items which figure in our "after-the-war" programme for social reconstruction, that of better housing stands easily first. The shortage of houses, fairly acute in pre-war times, is becoming more serious as the days go by, and it is recognised by the President of the Local Government Board that 300,000 new dwellings will have to be built as soon as sufficient labour and material can be released. The responsibility for their erection will rest upon local authorities.

To what standard will these 300,000 houses conform? This is a question we should, as citizens, ask ourselves. Are they to be patterned on the kind of shelter we have built before unto seventy times seven 300,000 on the good old jerry-planned lines, as like unto each other as peas in a pod, forty or fifty to the acre; are they to be built in long rows with dark back parlours and squalid back yards (abutting on dust destructors, gasworks, or other cheerful institutions of a like character), and destitute of gardens? Or are they to be something roomier, brighter, healthier, and more beautiful than anything that has gone before? Women must make their voices heard in answering these questions and ensuring that the home of the future shall not perpetuate the evils of the past. We must place our ideas before the Housing Committees of our various local authorities and make them realise that as matters of health and happiness are involved, we—with the wider power of the vote behind us—can approve nothing short of the best.

Air, light, and space are common needs, and vitally essential to sound physical growth. Like plants, we must have the right conditions for proper development; when these fundamental conditions are absent we pay the penalty in high death rates, sickly, diseased, and distorted human bodies. To make these essentials of life accessible to the inmates of every house, and thus ensure a clean bill of health for their districts, is the greatest duty devolving upon local authorities, but a duty with the far-reaching effects on the race which is as yet but faintly and imperfectly realised. By recognising the true value of this task, women citizens, voters, and members of local authorities can quicken the pace towards betterment, and thus render an immense public service.

We must show that, living in a world with abundance of fresh air and light as our free heritage, there is no excuse for anyone of us to go short of an adequate supply; that the "jerry-building" of homes and the "jerry-planning" of the sites is foolish and suicidal; that a bright, roomy home, provided with space enough to enable members of the household to live together without jostling each other is possible for all, and not only a beautiful dream that can never come true. Difficulties, real and imaginary, will confront us, but, given the right spirit and understanding, we can win through. About slum clearances we need not worry ourselves, for if we can get an active movement on foot to increase the supply of good houses, many slums will disappear, from the simple fact that no one will live in them. Slums are inhabited to-day, and their value thus kept up, because nothing better can be obtained. If there is a famine of good houses, the only sane remedy is to increase the supply.

How can we begin? The first thing to do is to determine the kind of dwelling we want, not necessarily the ideal house or the luxurious residence, but one fulfilling the minimum of requirements for health and comfort, one which would provide a standard below which no home, however poor, should be allowed to fall. In the planning of such a home among the questions to be considered are the number of houses to an acre of land, the planning of sites and gardens; the arrangement of rooms, the quality

of the woodwork and other materials, the provision of suitable larders, washhouses and baths, hot and cold water supply, lavatories, sheds for bicycles, perambulators, etc. These points will come under review in the next article. Meanwhile we leave the following story to point the moral:

Mrs. X., calling on a stranger, knocked at the front door; there was no reply. The process was repeated with some vigour. Eventually the stranger appeared from the side passage and invited Mrs. X. to enter by the back door. "We cannot use our front door," she said, regretfully, "because owing to the wet weather it is badly swollen." "Won't it open?" asked Mrs. X. "Well, it might, but the point is, if we once got it open we should never get it closed again all the winter!" O. A.

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

Women Teachers' Plans.

The National Federation of Women Teachers will hold an Educational Conference in London on October 26 and 28, and, in conjunction with the conference, there will be a demonstration in favour of equal pay for equal work at the Albert Hall, on Saturday, October 26, at 7 p.m. The Women's Freedom League will co-operate in the demonstration, recognising that the appointment of a Government Committee to inquire into and report upon the relation of men's and women's wages makes the present the psychological moment to press upon the authorities, with the strong support of the public, the justice of the demand.

The following resolution will be moved:—

"That this meeting denounces the prevailing custom of paying a double standard of wage to men and women for the same type of work, and calls upon the Government to give a lead to the country by establishing the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' in all branches of its service."

"On Her Terms."

"A Professional Woman," writing in *The Daily News* recently on the woman's point of view on the Equal Pay question, shows that "this seems to be the last thing usually considered." The effect on capital, labour, man, the race, is discussed before any inquiry is made into the effect of the lack of equal pay on women.

"Mr. Sidney Webb thinks, and truly, that the general levelling up of women's wages to the rate of men's will bring about something of an economic revolution; will involve, in any case, tremendous industrial consequences. Any sort of justice, granted after long injustice, necessitates a change of conditions; and it is as well to remember that precisely the same grave warnings were uttered in regard to the woman's vote not long ago. But the granting of the vote became an act of simple elemental justice which could not longer be denied; and so will the granting of the same pay for the same labour, solely because the woman's point of view will have to be taken into account. Her work we must have; and we can have it only on her terms. The strike of tram and bus girls has made that perfectly plain."

She continues: "I pass over Mr. Robert Hichens's appeal to the primary selfishness of the old Adam, through the apprehension that 'there will not be enough wages to go round' if women get their fair share of them; merely remarking that the undercutting of men's wages constitutes a far more serious danger, and may well bring about a sex war." With regard to Dr. Saleeby's misgivings as to racial consequences, she writes: "Thousands of women will always prefer marriage and motherhood as a career to every other; especially the safeguarded, endowed motherhood for which Dr. Saleeby so justly pleads. But what he and many of his sex fail to consider is the existence of the opposite, the virginal instinct in women obviously

unfitted by nature for motherhood, and as obviously destined for other work; work not without importance to the race. Even in the days when 'the cloister or the hearth' was, as he reminds us, woman's sole alternative, there were not a few who left the hearth and chose the cloister. Have single women no gift to the world?

"Finally, how would men like, for the good of the race, or for any other reason, to do precisely the same work for inferior pay? Women like it so little that they won't have it, as both the teachers and the transit workers have lately shown. And that, after all, is the last word on the question."

Women of Italy: Past and Present.

During this week, when attention is focused on Italy and her service in the war, it is of special interest to hear what is said of Italian women to-day by Signora Dora Melegari, vice-president of the Lyceum Club, in Rome, a writer and leader of women:

Italian women of to-day are not well known to the British public. S. Caterina, Caterina Sforza, Vittoria Colonna are not really like to-day's women, nor are Lucrezia Borgia, Caterina dei Medici, nor the women of Italian opera. When husbands and brothers began to die for their country, womanhood rose to the call. The women of to-day wish to live in the stream of to-day's life.

Italy was the first to open her universities to women, and girls now take the full course of studies side by side with young men. About twenty years ago women began to organise their social work. The Contessa Raspioni organised everywhere the committees of "Assistenza Civile"; there are 2,000 nurses, their president is the Duchess of Aosta, who are qualified by Red Cross examinations, which are a good deal stiffer than in England. At Turin Princess Letizia, in Rome, Queen Helena, have given up their palaces for hospitals, and visit them daily. Queen Margherita has a hospital for officers.

For other services women have been organised. Children's war schools are tended by women; popular kitchens, *cucine d'economia*, and public or communal kitchens from which food must be fetched away, have been started. Women make the *Scalda rancio*, a specially treated little cylinder, made out of newspaper, tar, and petrol, which serves to warm food in the trenches. Countess Cavaggi, of Bologna started an information bureau; *posti di ristoro*, canteens and rest rooms combined, are served by women. General Dalbio has written a special account of women at munition work; three months ago 400,000 women were employed in the work, and in certain districts 70 per cent. of the workers are women. Signora Melegari says she greatly admires the combination of liberty and discipline which characterises Great Britain doing war and other service.

Women and the New Spiritual Impulse.

In response to many requests for similar conferences to those held in May last, the Free Church League for Women Suffrage have arranged a further series to be held at Memorial Hall.

Miss A. Maude Royden will speak on Tuesday, October 1, 5.30-7 p.m., on "The Application of Spiritual Truths to Modern Conditions." Other subjects for discussion will be: "The Women of Tomorrow in Religion," "A New Conception of God," and "A New Conception of Prayer."

Speakers include Mrs. Lucy Re-Bartlett, Miss Ethne Tatham, Mrs. Ford Smith, Miss Beatrice

Hope, and Miss Miriam Barber. The dates are: October 1, 5.30-7 p.m.; October 22, 3-4.30 p.m.; November 19, 3-5 p.m.; December 10, 3-5 p.m.

Tickets for the four conferences, 3s. 6d.; single, 1s. Full particulars can be obtained from the F.C.L.W.S., 30, Holborn Hall, Gray's Inn-road, W.C. 1.

WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

Ministry of Health.

At the instance of the Prime Minister, it is stated, the national memorial which advocated the immediate establishment of a Ministry of Health as an urgent war measure has been laid before the Committee of Home Affairs.

The Home Secretary, in a communication to Sir Kingsley Wood, states that the Committee have recently been engaged in considering the details of the scheme, and that the object of the Committee is to provide for the establishment of a Ministry with as complete power as possible. The President of the Local Government Board, who is a member of the Committee, has also announced that the Committee are about to conclude their deliberations, and that the scheme is practically completed.

It is anticipated that the Bill will be introduced at the commencement of the next Parliamentary Session.

We repeat our assertion that the only way to ensure success is to consult with competent women, and give them power. A woman at the head of the Ministry, or at least co-operating with equal power with a man, is what is expected in these days. Miss Julia Lathrop, who, since its inception, has been at the head of the Children's Department of the United States, is a "sign of the times" which should be heeded.

Dearer Milk.

Children have been described as a nation's greatest asset, and it is well known that the health of children very largely depends on a plentiful supply of fresh milk. The Food Controller, however, announces that milk is to be 10d. a quart! How is it possible at this price for women with small allowances and large families to get a sufficient supply of milk for their children? This arrangement is the result of sheer incompetence on the part of our Food Controller—an incompetence for which our country is likely to pay heavily.

And Wasted Meat.

The following is taken from *The Star*, of Wednesday, September 18:—

At a meeting of the Bermondsey Borough Council attention was drawn by Councillor Kirby to the enormous quantities of meat that were being destroyed at their East-lane depot.

Whole sides of beef, he said, were brought from a wharf in Tooley-street to be dealt with, and he understood it had been kept in cold storage until it was rotten. Several tons had been destroyed.

Meat was going up next week 2d. a pound, and yet they were called upon to destroy tons of it because it was allowed to rot. He asked that the facts should be placed before the Food Controller, with a view to this being stopped.

How long will it be before the nation insists that women, beginning with the position of the Minister, shall have equal control with men throughout the Ministry of Food?

Bradford's Franchise Sunday.

Bradford is to have a Franchise Sunday on October 5, at which the Minister for Education, Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, and Lady Rhondda will be the principal speakers; women and men of all classes, parties, and creeds will support the demonstration.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

*** Letters intended for publication must be written on one side of the paper only, and authenticated by the name and address of the writer. It must be clearly understood that we do not necessarily identify ourselves with the opinions expressed.

THE NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

Pont de Ruan, Par Artannes,
Indre et Loire, France.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

MADAM,—I see in the *Daily Mail* that in reply to the deputation of women urging that British women who marry aliens be allowed to retain their own nationality the Home Secretary said: (1) That the change might lead to divided allegiance in a family; (2) That it would create double nationality, for many of the married women, by the laws of other countries, would have the nationality of those countries as well as their own; (3) That he had known some English wives of Germans take the strong German view.

In reply to these objections I would like to say: (1) It seems to me that whatever the law calls a woman, unless she accepts her husband's nationality from her heart, the divided allegiance is there all the same.

The law may tell a woman that she is no longer British on account of her marriage with an alien, but if she chooses to love England better than her husband's country, if her spirit will remain loyal to the land of her birth and parentage, no power on earth can prevent it.

(2) There would be double nationality at first, no doubt; but little by little other countries would, probably, follow the example of justice set by England. Is it not fitting that the country renowned for its love of fair play should lead the way in such a reform?

(3) Possibly there are a few British wives of Germans who take the German view; but there are also some German wives of British men who take the strong German view, yet it is considered right by the authorities to admit them to British citizenship. It is not a question of whether you love your husband or your country best. Everyone recognises that a British man can love his alien wife, and yet love and serve his country loyally. Cannot a British woman do the same?—Yours very truly,
MARY E. F. LEE.

The University of Edinburgh and Women Medical Students,

46, Cranley Gardens, London, S.W. 7.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

MADAM,—In your sketch of the life of the great pioneer, Sophia Jex Blake, you state that the University of Edinburgh opened its gates to the women for all faculties in 1894. It opened its teaching and degrees in arts and science in 1892, and began to examine and confer degrees in medicine about 1894, but it did not open its gates to teach women medicine till 1916, when under a new Principal, the University was at last able to shake off its traditional practice of refusing to women the medical teaching which the other Scottish Universities had long provided.—I am, etc.,
CHRISTAL MACMILLEN.

M.A., B.Sc., of Edinburgh University.

Shakespeare and Operas at the "Old Vic."

It is welcome news that the "Old Vic." season reopens on Saturday, September 28, at 7.15 with a performance of *The Merchant of Venice*. For the benefit of those who are yet unfamiliar with the joys available every night in the week and three afternoons, we may say that the Royal Victoria Hall—its dignified designation is always camouflaged under the affectionate name "Old Vic."—is in the Waterloo-road, nearly opposite the entrance to Waterloo Station and close to the Union Jack Club. It is a People's Playhouse in the best sense; it is also a great tribute to the work of two women: Miss Emma Cons, who in 1880 recognised that decent amusement was a necessity of life; and Miss Lilian Baylis, who has carried out and developed still further her aunt's excellent and far-sighted service to the community. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evening, and Wednesday and Thursday afternoons Shakespeare plays are given, a different one each week; every Thursday and Saturday evenings and fortnightly Saturday matinee operas are given. Admission ranges from 3d. to 2s. 6d., plus tax; a book of 25 stall tickets costs £1 1s. (tax 6s. 3d.). Programmes for the season are available on application to the "Old Vic." Send stamped addressed envelope.

To see the "Old Vic." crowded with L.C.C. school children every Thursday afternoon is to realise something of the power of Shakespeare; to know that the L.C.C. counts a visit to the "Old Vic." as attendance at school is to credit them with wisdom which is surprising. On Tuesday evenings illustrated lectures are given by scientists, travellers, and others. To fill the "Old Vic." at every performance is the best tribute the public can pay to the splendid service to young and old of a daring and dauntless woman.

GREEN, WHITE, AND GOLD FAIR.

CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER,

Friday and Saturday, November 22 and 23, 1918.

Once again our Green, White, and Gold Fair is drawing near, and, being the Fair of the Great Year of Victory, we should all be inspired to make it the greatest success we have ever attained.

Organise at Once!

All Branches of the Women's Freedom League which have not already formed their work parties should organise at once. If I can help in any way I shall be glad to do so. I am ready to be inundated with letters from secretaries!

Everyone Must Help!

There are many readers of THE VOTE who are not yet members of the Women's Freedom League, but they are interested in its work. I appeal to them to translate their interest into contributions in kind or in cash. Every gift helps to bring the success we all desire; in our work there is no great nor small. I am ready to be inundated with gifts!

Send Your Suggestions!

Let us make our Victory Fair both novel and attractive. Send your suggestions for success. Women are showing their originality and capacity in many unexpected ways. Our Fair should focus attention on what they mean to do with their new power, the VOTE. I am ready to be inundated with ideas!

Write to me without delay at the Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

ALIX M. CLARK,

Secretary, Green, White, and Gold Fair.

Railway Men's Support at Ashford.

There was a fine rally of railwaymen and their wives to welcome Mrs. Despard, at Ashford, last week, and the suffrage stalwarts were full of eagerness to get to work in various ways which the granting of the vote to women has made possible. They declared that real suffrage work is not over; it is now going forward with the power of the vote behind it. Mr. J. Marsh, who presided, laid stress on the fact that THE VOTE would be sold at the railway works at Ashford every Friday, and urged the men to buy it week by week. Mrs. Despard's address on "Hope in Failure" was heard with closest attention and appreciation. New members joined the League, and it was evident that the railway people at Ashford are solid for all progressive movements. In the afternoon Mrs. Despard spoke at the P.S.A. to a large and most interested audience; the chair was taken by the President of the P.S.A., Mr. Herbert Lee, J.P.

BRANCH NOTES.

Darlington.

An open-air meeting was held in the Market Place on Sunday, September 15, at which Miss Dorothy Evans spoke, and received general support for her vehement condemnation of Regulation 40D and all relative schemes which embody the principle of State regulation of vice. Members who have not already promised gifts for the Northern stall are asked to write at once to Miss Evans, at 37, Warrender Park-road, Edinburgh.

Edinburgh: 15, S. Charlotte Street.

Miss Dorothy Evans appealed to the I.L.P. Branch to support our opposition to legislation on sexual matters, and after her speech last Friday evening a strong resolution was passed. Meetings are being held in the various divisions of Edinburgh for the formation of women's electoral committees to question candidates before election, and watch their actions afterwards. Members of the W.F.L. residing in the West Division met in the house of Dr. Aimée Gibb, 10, Manor-place, last Tuesday. An important Branch meeting will be held in the W.F.L. Rooms, 13, S. Charlotte-street, on Wednesday, October 2, at 8 p.m., to consider our programme and the future work of the Branch. Chair: Miss S. Munro. Speakers: Miss Jack, Miss MacLaren, Miss Dorothy Evans.

FRIDAY,
SEPT. 27,
1918.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

A meeting was held in the Y.M.C.A. Committee Rooms, on September 17, presided over by Miss Tooke, of Gateshead, at which Miss Dorothy Evans spoke on "Equal Pay and Repopulation." An animated discussion followed, and Miss Tooke expressed the thanks of the meeting to Miss Evans for her address. Cordial thanks were given to Mrs. Anderton for the valuable work she has done as hon. secretary of the Branch, and great regret was expressed that, owing to leaving Newcastle, she cannot continue her important service. It is hoped, however, that she will sometimes return and take part in the activities of the Branch. Mrs. Hart received a warm welcome on being elected to the position of hon. secretary; Mrs. Lambert was elected to the committee. Members promised to collect gifts for the Northern Stall at the Women's Freedom League Green, White and Gold Fair in London in November, and to send them to Miss Evans. Gifts for the Fair from any reader of THE VOTE will be very welcome to help to swell the funds of the League.

A strong resolution of protest against 40D was passed by the Wallsend Tipperary Club, on September 16.

Portsmouth.

Activities were resumed on September 18, when a work-party was held at 89, Festing-grove, Southsea, by kind invitation of Mrs. Whetton. Work parties will be held fortnightly (for time and place see forthcoming events), and the articles made will be sent to the Green, White and Gold Fair. The annual members' meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 15, at 6.30 p.m. at the Girl Guides' Room, Kent-road. Monthly public meetings are being arranged for the first Wednesday afternoon in each month, commencing Nov. 6. Subject and speaker will be announced later. Members are reminded that annual subscriptions are now due.

Women's Freedom League Settlement,

93, Nine Elms Lane, London, S.W. 8.

The filling up of the Guest House makes the need of helpers very urgent. Even an hour's help to take the babies out in the park morning or afternoon would be greatly appreciated; there is always needlework to be done for them, and workers who would bath the children and put them to bed between six and seven once a week or so are also wanted. There are still vacancies for servers for the dinner hour from 12 to 1 daily, so that there is hardly an hour of the day when there is not plenty of employment to be found at the Settlement. Apples, flowers, and cod liver oil for a guest-baby are acknowledged from Mrs. Miller; 4s. from Mrs. Hasker, children's clothing and jumble goods from Mrs. Harold Slocock.

The Despard Arms.

123, Hampstead Road, N.W. 1.

We are ready to receive any number of "Jumbles" for our sale on Saturday, October 19, at 6 p.m. "The sooner the quicker!" We can accommodate still more visitors or residents in our bright, newly-decorated bed-sitting, and bedrooms. Apply to the manageress. Sincerest thanks to Dr. Knight for the gift of two tables.

Miss Maude Royden preaches in the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, E.C., next Sunday, at the 11 a.m. service.

64-PAGE BOOK ABOUT HERBS AND HOW TO USE THEM, post free 2d.—TRIMNELL, The Herbalist, 144, Richmond-road, Cardiff. Established 1879.

TO LET, FURNISHED APARTMENTS (two bed and sitting-room); £2 2s. per week, with attendance; board extra.—ARCHARD, Hill House, Pitchcombe, near Stroud.

A MEMBER of the Women's Freedom League would be glad to hear of a clever **DRESS RENOVATOR**, for evening dresses; must be resident in North London.—Reply J. B., 202, Brecknock-road, N. 19.

WILLESDEN, HARLESDEN and NEASDEN.—Health Food Stores, 445, High-road, Willesden (halfway between Pound-lane and "White Hart"). Price-list on application. Parcels sent to all parts. Car-

riage paid on orders over £1. Proprietress: Lilian Wolfe.

FOR SALE, TIN BOX of OIL PAINTS.—Can be seen at 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

WOULD any **LADY** Share **HOUSE** (rates and taxes and rent amounting to about £83) with another already occupying upper part? Opposite Maida Vale Tube. Five rooms available for new tenant. Garden.—Write "A. G.," 173, Portersdown-road.

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