

THE VOTE.  
SEPTEMBER 21, 1917.  
ONE PENNY.

# An Urgently Needed Reform.

C. DESPARD.

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 21, 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.

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### OUR POINT OF VIEW.

#### Divorce Law Reform.

The private Bill to which Mrs. Despard's article draws attention, and which is said to have the sympathetic support of the Home Secretary, is referred to in the following paragraph:—

A private meeting was held in Committee Room No. 13 at the House of Commons, to discuss a Bill which has been framed for the purpose of reforming the marriage law, and to consider the best means of stimulating Parliamentary action and public interest in the subject. Sir A. Conan Doyle presided, and those present included Lord Burnham, Lord Glenconner, Sir J. Brunner, M.P., Sir George Greenwood, M.P., Commander Wedgwood, M.P., and Mr. A. Fell, M.P.

It was decided to promote the passage through Parliament of the following Bill:—

1. This Act may be cited as the Matrimonial Causes Act, 1917.

2. From and after the passing of this Act all decrees for a judicial separation and all orders for a separation by any Court of summary jurisdiction shall, after a period of three years from the date thereof, have the same effect and force as a decree absolute for dissolution of marriage, provided always that either the husband or wife so separated shall make application therefor to the Court which has made the decree or order in question, and satisfy the said Court that cohabitation has not been resumed during the said period of three years.

3. It shall also be lawful for any husband or wife to present a petition to the High Court of Justice praying that his or her marriage may be dissolved on the ground that they have been continuously separated for the said period of three years, whether by mutual agreement or for any other reason.

It is computed that the number of persons in the United Kingdom who are living apart under various forms of judicial and voluntary separation is upwards of one million. There is said to be a good chance of the Bill passing the Commons in the autumn session. What its fate will be at the hands of the Lords, with the united strength of the Episcopal bench against it, cannot be foreseen.

#### More Scores to Pay Off?

A week-end journal reports the case of a private soldier who applied for the custody of his children at the West London Police-Court, on the ground of his wife's infidelity. An inspector of the R.S.P.C.C., according to the newspaper account, "spoke of the woman's conduct, and said *he had had the case under consideration for some time.*" The italics are ours. We would very much like to know, seeing that there was no suggestion of cruelty or neglect of the children, what the Society's inspector was doing *dans cette galère?* Are we to understand that they, too, have joined the great army of official and unofficial spies on married women? Is this what they are paid for, and what the public subscribes for?

#### War Measures.

The allowances to wives and children of seamen and soldiers, the old age pensions, and even the allowances to those unhappy and evilly-used persons the British wives of alien enemies, have all been increased to meet the fancy prices induced by the war—to say nothing of the increased rates of wages received by all and sundry. We feel, therefore, that it is the right moment to ask for another raising of the scale—the scale at which fathers of illegitimate children are entitled to starve their offspring. At the present moment the utmost such a man can be made to contribute is five shillings a week; and in a recent case three deserted children, whose father is well-to-do, and described as holding a position of trust in a solicitor's office in Albemarle-street, were taken to a police-court and then cast upon the charitable funds, which surely are not intended for the children of the well-to-do! Fifteen shillings a week—paid with the utmost irregularity and delay—will not feed, lodge, and clothe three children; yet there is no law to punish or mulct this inhuman



creature. The community, failing the poor mother, now dead, has to bear the burden of his vileness. And with all that, special pains is taken to keep this wretch's name out of the Press, and to protect his reputation; although the woman who bore his children has her name published far and wide. How much longer is this scandalous "protection of crime" going to be tolerated by the British public that boasts of its love of fair play?

#### The New Discoverers.

Mr. Fisher, the New Educator, has made another discovery. Last time he discovered the waste of baby life that women have been worried about for a few scores of years. This time he has discovered the fact that "the remuneration of teachers bore no relation to the value of the functions they performed." At this rate, Mr. Fisher may end, himself, in getting educated—which would be no bad result of getting made President of the Board of Education! Seeing, however, that he is resolved to maintain the insolent disparity between the salaries of men teachers and the (better trained) women teachers, we fear he has only learned half the lesson yet. We feel sure that it must have been a male representative of the teachers who, we are told, rose at a teachers' breakfast at York and informed Mr. Fisher that his Bill was looked on as the Teachers' Emancipation Bill. They are not yet, it would appear, emancipated or being emancipated, from their strangling sex prejudice.

#### A Thought in the Right Direction.

Father Bernard Vaughan has been doing some thinking, too, as well as talking. From scolding and lecturing and admonishing on the subject of large families—he has come to bribing! "Parents" who produce more than four children, he says, should be rewarded. At last we are getting to the root of the matter; and it only remains for Father Vaughan to make up his mind which parents, and what rewards. We heard an indignant bus conductor, a day or two ago, declaiming against the degeneracy of the times, and declaring that he had "brought up a family of seventeen." He did not think it necessary to allude to the other parent, who had, at the very least, some small part in that stupendous undertaking! If Father Vaughan wants large families, he must find out the right parent to reward, and make the rewards worth her while to compete for.

#### Our Magistrates, bless them!

Mr. Bingley, of the Marylebone Police-court, has earned fame and blessings by telling a working man where to go to obtain free advice and assistance in ridding himself of an unfaithful wife. He made a further statement later to the effect that he seemed to have "rendered a public service in letting these poor men" know where to go. Suffragists will note that "poor women" were not encouraged by any mention of their wrongs and sufferings. This is only what we have learned to expect; but it is time Mr. Bingley learned better. He is paid out of public funds to serve the public—not the male public only. His advice should be based on that knowledge; and on the further indisputable fact that there are more unfaithful husbands than wives.

#### An Unsavoury Case.

The Malcolm case can only have one possible feeling in the minds of decent women—unconquerable disgust for the heroics, hysterics and prejudices so abominably engineered and worked upon, as usual, by the Press. We do not need to put forward the view that a woman who dishonours herself cannot be rehabilitated by any action of her husband's; nor can anyone's "virtue" be vindicated or "protected" by so unspeakable a display of dirty linen as was stage-managed by Mr. Malcolm and his admirers. All this is so obvious as to be stale. We would only point out that this orgy of nastiness and

folly should be a warning to those who hope to build—on the lovely new emotions and ideals that the war has engendered—a new heaven and a new earth.

No one loathes a spy more than we do; and we loathe still more the debauchees and traders who hunt down women. But, apparently, in spite of great activity, no one was able so to bring home either of these offences to the dead man's count as to induce the police to take action, or even to secure his ejection from the exclusive club whose privileges he shared with the swashbuckling Malcolm! If "honourable" gentlemen are content to keep such company they should not complain of the results. We have only to ask ourselves two things: What would have been the verdict had Malcolm's name been Baumberg—or had he been a conscientious objector—and the victim in khaki? And what would have been said by the entire Press had the case occurred in Germany, and the deceased had been, say, a Dane with an English-sounding name such as Hansen or Johnson? It will be a long time before the courts, and the name of the British for justice and fair dealing, recover from the loss of prestige they have suffered by this unsavoury verdict.

### WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

#### Efficiency.

Two years ago this office was filled with men. It is now occupied by ladies, and, in perfect truth, they complete 33½ per cent. more work in fewer hours than men.—*Mr. W. E. Lane.*

#### Our Proper Sphere.

Two women have been appointed sanitary inspectors in Camberwell.

#### An Important Gathering.

Under the auspices of the Association of Inspectors of Midwives, an important conference on Venereal Disease and Welfare Centres is being held in London this week. The conference opened Monday afternoon, when Miss Macrory, president, received the delegates at the Midwives' Institute, Buckingham-street, Strand. For the most part the conference will be private, the delegates visiting various London hospitals, when special lectures will be delivered on professional matters.

#### As it should be.

At the King's Weigh House Church, Duke-street, Oxford-street, on Monday, Mr. Claud Coltman, M.A., and Miss Constance Todd, B.D., were ordained as Congregational ministers. The ceremony was remarkable in that both a man and a woman were ordained at the same service, and additional interest was provided by the fact that they were married on Tuesday. Miss Todd and Mr. Coltman have been called to the assistant ministry of this Church, the history of which—but not the building—dates back to the Great Ejection of Nonconformists in 1662. They will, however, carry on their work at the East-End Mission (in Darby-street) connected with the Church.

#### A Sad Necessity.

A scheme, under the name of the White Cross, for the assistance of children whose balance, mental and physical, is threatened by the horrible conditions of war, is being organised by the famous educationist, Dr. Maria Montessori, whose method has a wonderfully calming influence on nervous children. The problem is to restore the injured minds of the little ones to normal activity and joy. The intention is to start a free course to prepare volunteers to undertake the intellectual care of children, and it will include first aid, knowledge of nervous diseases, dietetics, and a theoretical and practical course in the Montessori method as specially applied to children under war conditions; then to send out working groups to France, Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, Russia, and other European countries.

## Women's Freedom League.

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

#### LONDON AND SUBURBS

Sunday, September 23.—Lecture by Miss C. Nina Boyle, "A Modern View of Ancient Macedonia" (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 Women's Cause," and Miss Nina Boyle. Chair: Miss F. A. Underwood. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the café.

Friday, September 28.—Croydon Sewing Party, at 32a, The Arcade, High-street, 3 p.m. Branch meeting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, October 3.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. M. W. Nevinson, L.L.A., on "The Prospects of Success," and Mrs. Mustard. Chair: Mrs. Nourse. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the café.

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, prices 2s. 6d. and 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 on "Women in the Government of London," and Miss Nina Boyle.

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

Wednesday, October 17.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: The Rev. W. C. Roberts and Miss Nina Boyle.

Friday, October 19.—Women's Freedom League Rally, Caxton Hall, 7.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Boyle, and others.

Wednesday, October 24.—Public meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Miss Evelyn Sharp and Mrs. Despard.

Friday, November 9.—Croydon public meeting, 32a, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m.

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, prices 2s. 6d. and 1s., from W.F.L., 144, High Holborn, W.C.

#### PROVINCES.

Wednesday, September 26.—Portsmouth, whist drive, Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, 3 p.m. Tickets, 1s. each.

Tuesday, October 2.—Portsmouth, annual members' meeting, 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 10.—Portsmouth, Work Party, 17, Lombard-street, 3-7 p.m.

#### SCOTLAND.

Thursday, October 4.—Glasgow, Public Meeting, Central Hall, Bath-street, 7.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Eunice Murray, and others. Tickets, 6d. and 1s., plus tax, on sale at 212, Bath-street.

Saturday, October 13.—Edinburgh, "At Home," 90, Lothian-road. Speaker: Mrs. Despard.

### We draw special attention to

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

Sunday, October 7. Discussion Meeting, Minerva Café, 5 p.m. Mr. W. L. George, on "Will the Position of Married Women be Enhanced or Diminished by the War?"

### "A Modern View of Ancient Macedonia."

All who wish to hear Miss Boyle's impressions of her stay in Macedonia—given most kindly in aid of the Despard Arms—will do well to arrive early NEXT SUNDAY afternoon (September 23), at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. The lecture will begin at 3.30 p.m.; tickets, 1s. each, to be obtained at the W.F.L. Offices, 144, High Holborn, also at the Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1.; or at the Café on Sunday afternoon (if there is room). Tea will be served after the lecture, 8d. each. Everyone who comes may be sure of a very interesting and entertaining afternoon, and at the same time they will lend a helping hand to the Despard Arms.

### BRANCH NOTES.

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

Will members please note that the Sewing Party re-starts on Friday, September 28, at 3 p.m., at the office. The greater the number who can spare an hour, or make useful articles at home, the better the result will be to aid the Annual Green, Gold and White Fair in November.

Members and friends will have an opportunity of meeting Miss Nina Boyle, after her long absence, as she has kindly promised to speak on "What is Reconstruction?" at our first public meeting of the Autumn Session, on Friday, October 12, at 3.30 p.m.

It would be very helpful if those members who cannot attend the sewing meetings would contribute material or subscriptions towards buying material.

The Treasurer would be glad to receive the annual subscriptions from members who have not yet paid.

#### Portsmouth.

Our activities will recommence with an afternoon Whist Drive on Wednesday, September 26, at the Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, at 3 p.m. Tickets 1s. each. Proceeds to go to the 50,000 Shilling Fund.

The annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 2, at 7.30 p.m. Members will be notified of the place of meeting.

On Wednesday, October 10, the work-party will be held at 17, Lombard-street, from 3 to 7 p.m.

#### SCOTLAND.

#### Glasgow, 212, Bath-street. Sec.: Miss Kate Evans.

A public meeting will be held on Thursday, October 4, at 7.30 p.m. in the Central Hall, 25, Bath-street, when Mrs. Despard, Miss Eunice Murray, and others will speak. Tickets, 7d. and 1s. 2d. on sale here. Miss Murray spoke at Govan on Saturday, 15th inst., to a large audience at a literary meeting, and a great many pamphlets and VOTES were sold. A splendid collection was also taken in order to send suffrage literature to Navy men. Will members kindly note that a Jumble Sale in aid of the funds will take place on Saturday, November 3, at 91, Shamrock-street, and we trust that everyone is reserving cast-off clothing and old furniture and furnishings of any description for it. Parcels will be gratefully received at the office, which is open on week-days from 2 p.m. till 5.30 p.m., and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. till 1.30 p.m.

#### Paisley.

During the eight days, 8th to the 15th inst. inclusive, a campaign was conducted by Miss McLelland. Thanks to Mrs. Cheyne and her enthusiastic little son and daughter, and to Mrs. Gibson, Miss Steven, Miss Bulten, and Miss Evans, and especially to Miss Shennan for a splendid address on Saturday evening, the campaign was very successful. THE VOTE and pamphlets sold splendidly. A generous new member contributed 10s. towards expenses. Branch members are asked to turn out in full strength to all meetings during the winter.

#### Women's Freedom League Settlement, 93, Nine Elms-Lane, S.W. Hon. Sec. and Organiser: Miss Kathleen Holmes.

Last Saturday we took forty-four of our regular customers at the Restaurant to the Zoo, on tickets given by Captain Gregory per Miss Betty Scott. We have to thank them for giving our children a splendid afternoon. The animals, the squirrels in the Park, and the moving staircase on the Tube, were so many new and vivid experiences, and the party came back to tea at the Settlement in the highest of spirits. By the kindness of the High Commissioner of New Zealand, we have received a very valuable gift of clothing sent for the relief of the British poor by the Southland Patriotic Committee of Invercargill, N.Z., whose generosity will help many a poor home in the coming winter. Other gifts gratefully acknowledged are herbs from Miss A. E. Tollemache, apple chutney and 1s. 6d. towards Zoo trip from Mrs. Thomas, shoes and a doll from Angel Clark. Mrs. Tippet's jumble sale realised the handsome sum of £11 7s. 3d., a very encouraging amount on which to start the new session.



## THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd.  
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FRIDAY, September 21st, 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.

### AN URGENTLY NEEDED REFORM.

When, after its recess, the House of Commons reassembles next month it will find questions of extraordinary importance for the country awaiting its decision. We set aside for the moment measures that deal peculiarly with the war and the abnormal conditions it has called into existence. The nations are crying out for the war to come to an end. Women and men, we are heartsick and weary of the spendthrift extravagance, the appalling waste, the piteous incompetence of those above, and the ceaseless sacrifice of the willing hosts who, in all the belligerent countries, have obeyed their call. Like children in a shut-up room our necks are craned out of the windows for the first glimmer of hope. It is release we seek—that first, that above all—for our beloved, our country, ourselves!

In the meantime, are we not sometimes in danger of forgetting that the future of the nation, the permanence of the Peace, the fate, whether happiness or misery, of this generation and of that which is to come depend very largely on the wisdom or folly with which the workers of the country and those who profess to represent them deal with the extraordinarily critical home situation at the present time?

During the coming Session the People's Representation Bill will, we hope and believe, pass through committee and be read for the third time in the House of Commons. That will mean much for the future. So far as women are concerned we believe that their entry into political life will hasten forward reforms that are urgently necessary for the health, indeed for the safety, of the nation.

In the meantime there are certain abuses which, in view of the sufferings they inflict upon myriads of innocent and helpless people, ought not any longer to be tolerated. One of the first that should in justice be removed is that bound up in the foolish, one-sided and outworn Divorce and Separation laws that disgrace our legal code.

The whole subject, as we are all aware, bristles with difficulties, and we do not think any far-reaching, salutary reform will be possible until women and men—soldiers, sailors and workers, burgesses and property-owners—stand together on a common ground. In the meantime, so deep and widespread are the sufferings entailed upon many by the law of separation as it stands, that a serious effort will be made next Session to bring forward and pass a short

Act, the effect of which would be to bring immediate relief to thousands of sufferers.

It is not generally known that thousands of women—many of them mothers of children—deserted by their husbands for a term of time that may run into many years, are leading solitary and denuded lives, when, were justice done, they would be able to form new and satisfactory ties. Poor women cannot afford the legal assistance that is necessary for entering into divorce proceedings. They take the shorter course of going before a magistrate and stating their grievance. He, often reluctantly, will grant legal separation, making an order upon the husband for part maintenance of the children. In many cases this is evaded. The man goes abroad or pleads inability to pay, though he may be, and often is, supporting another family. The wife will prosecute, and the man, still pleading poverty, will be given a term of imprisonment, coming out of prison free of the debt for maintenance. Occasionally this will happen several times. At last, driven to despair, the woman will take her children to the workhouse, leave them there, and make another life for herself. On the other hand, as is often the case, the passion of motherhood and the power of early teaching will be too strong to resist; she will drag out a life of toil, sometimes of failure, for she will not be able to bring up her children as she would if she had the opportunity, and, in all probability she, the potential mother of sons and daughters never to be born, the administrator of a happy, well-appointed home, will die, worn out long before old age.

It is to release these and such as these—men, as well as women, for they also suffer, though not to so large an extent—that the Bill to which we allude has been drafted. Its effect will be to give power to a magistrate to grant divorce when it can be proved that there has been separation for a certain term of years. The procedure, so far as we understand, will be quite simple. One of the kindest and best of our London magistrates, Mr. Cecil Chapman, whose great experience entitles him to confidence, is a sponsor of the Bill.

In Scotland, where, we venture to observe, the people are at least as moral as in England, the laws regulating marriage are much simpler and more equitable than with us, and this is actually done. We earnestly hope that, important as is the business of the Autumn Parliamentary Session, room may be found for the introduction of this measure, peculiarly necessary now when homes are being broken up and the restraints of morality slackened.

Finally, we address our own members. If they could see the multitude of letters that have been sent to those who have this matter in hand; if they could hear the despairing cry of women on the verge of what to them, educated as they have been, is a dangerous abyss; if they could realise the joy of freedom and release that would come to thousands were this reform carried through, they would give it their unstinted support.

Our object, let us always remember, beginning with suffrage for women, is to create such a mental and moral atmosphere as will lift the life of the whole of the people to a higher standard of conduct—a finer quality of efficiency.

To effect this the home where lie the springs of life must be purified, and one of the first steps in that direction may well be this initial act of justice. Let the deserted man or woman be free; let the children be cared for by mutual agreement; let those who would form other ties, bear other children, administer other homes—the first through no fault of their own having been a failure—be given the opportunity they desire. Shall we shut the iron door of an out-worn law upon those who might, in love and honour, bear children for our land?

C. DESPARD.

## MEETING ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

On Saturday, the 15th inst., at the Minerva Café, a political meeting was held, at which Miss Nina Boyle was the principal speaker. Miss Neal took the chair in the unavoidable absence of Mrs. Holmes, and apologised for the non-appearance of Miss Dorothy Evans, who was suddenly taken ill. A vote of sympathy with Miss Evans, and her mother with whom she is staying, was carried unanimously, with hopes for her speedy recovery.

Miss Neal opened the meeting with an amusing description of the "fancy franchises" devised for women in the Electoral Reform Bill now receiving attention. These fancy qualifications admitted of women becoming plural voters under circumstances which did not confer a plural vote on men. She called on the League to stand to its organisation and to work when enfranchised for the goal all suffragists aimed at, complete equality with men in all matters of state.

A forceful and eloquent address ended amid much applause.

Miss Boyle made an appeal to the members of the League to think for themselves and not to be led away by cant phrases, specious catch-words, and party cries. She urged that women should be careful to "think round" every phrase and see what it meant. It would often end in their finding out that it meant nothing at all—the purest nonsense. There were phrases, such as "the Economic Independence of Women," which were utterly unmeaning in a world where no one was economically independent at all. There were people who did not want anyone to do anything at all, because it was necessary to "Get on with the war." The things that women were pressing forward had for their object to get on with the war more efficiently and with less suffering and waste; but that did not occur to the people who shouted these unmeaning phrases.

The suggestion that silence would be the greatest force when women were enfranchised was put forward by Miss Boyle, who thought that, even if women could not in large numbers agree upon a separate women's programme, they might greatly increase their strength and prestige by refusing to give any forecast of how they would vote. Not for the men who made promises, but for those who kept their promises, suffragists ought to vote. It would be possible to obtain, in the constituencies, sufficient numbers of women who would keep silence, to sway the majority in a large number of cases.

The meeting was well-attended and enthusiastic, and it is probable that these meetings will be frequently held during the autumn.

## POLITICAL NOTES.

### The People's Bill.

Feeling in regard to the prospects of the Bill fluctuates. In Liberal circles it is considered safe to predict that the Bill will become law this year, and that a register will be prepared at once for an early dissolution and an appeal to the people before next summer.

### "Majority Representation."

"It has been throughout intended," we are seriously informed, "that the Labour Party should be represented (the italics are ours) on the Committee to reform the House of Lords." So one Labour Member has been included in the fifteen commoners. A very liberal allowance! The Representative One is Mr. Walter Hudson, M.P.

### Quite Satisfied?

At a dinner given to the Press by Mr. John Hodge, the Pensions Minister, Lord Burnham said he looked forward to the time when true leaders of Labour would be elevated to the Second Chamber. Any reform of the House of Lords would be absurd, he added, were Labour not represented there.

### A Tribute.

The suggestion, made by Miss Boyle, of a campaign of silence, in which the watchword of enfranchised women within the League would be "Never tell the party agents how you are going to vote," has aroused considerable interest, and is commented on by a number of Press organs. *The Globe* describes the anticipated result—that party programmes will be loaded up to appeal to the silent vote—as "cynical." We fear *The Globe* is still in an infantile state of innocence in regard to the moral and intellectual development of politicians.

## ON OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

### More About Woman.

Messrs. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., of 40, Museum-street, W.C., are shortly going to place before the public a volume entitled "The Making of Women," edited by Victor Gollancz. It will contain suggestions, from such varied pens as those of Maude Royden, Eleanor Rathbone, and Ralph Rooper, towards a united feminine policy, ranging from the physical to the industrial plane. While we object very strongly to the implication contained in the title, we welcome works of this kind on the subject of greatest importance at present on the social horizon. The work will be priced at 4s. 6d., and will be obtainable towards the last week of the month.

### Our Own Pamphlets.

Under the energetic management of Miss Margaret Hodge, our literature department is in an extremely healthy condition. A large quantity of the old-time pamphlets have been cleared out of Headquarters Office, and only such works as are helpful under present conditions, useful as references, or likely to survive in spite of the passage of time, have been retained for sale. Among these are the ever-popular "Cameo" series by Mrs. Marion Holmes—life sketches of the women who led—"Elizabeth Fry," "Frances Mary Buss," "Florence Nightingale," "Josephine Butler," "Lydia Becker," from whom we can still derive inspiration and help. Miss Eunice Murray's "Woman—The New Discovery," "Women's Value in Wartime," "Prejudices, Old and New," always find a ready sale. "Women Preachers," a reprint from *The Nineteenth Century and After*, is a thoughtful study based on historical fact of extreme interest to Church women, by M. A. R. Tucker. A manifesto from the Northern Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage, "Women's Suffrage and Parliamentary Morals," written by Mrs. Arnelife Sennett and signed by the General Committee of the Federation and sixteen magistrates of the City of Glasgow, is an extraordinarily telling contribution to the question of the check and prevention of the social evil. The Cameos are 3d., the other pamphlets 1d.

The Literature Department never fails to call attention to the cigarettes—Russian, Egyptian and Virginian—that are always in stock at Headquarters Office.

### The Women's Army in France.

Miss Durham, Chief Woman Inspector of the Employment Department, has set forth in the columns of *The Globe* a detailed account of the women required for service with the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps at home and abroad, and the arrangements made for recruiting them. We note that authority clings with pathetic fidelity to the redundant and overlapping method of insisting on applicants referring first to the Employment Exchanges.

It is stated that 10,000 women are wanted before the end of October; after that, at the rate of 10,000 a month. About 5,000 cooks, pantrymaids, waitresses and domestic workers are needed; clerks of all kinds, about 3,000; driver-mechanics able to take repairs; and all persons are required to undergo medical examination, inoculation and vaccination, and must be not under 18 years of age for home service and 20 for oversea. Elaborate arrangements are being made for examining, classifying, and housing recruits at home; we should be glad to hear more of the arrangements for housing, hospital accommodation, and other details, abroad.



### Death of Dr. Marian E. Wilson, of the Scottish Women's Hospital.

During the prevailing orgy of slaughter and suffering, few events are sadder than the death of an overworked doctor either at the Front, the base hospitals, or any of the great institutions working in connection with these. Freedom Leaguers all condole with the Scottish Women's Hospital on the death of a devoted member of the staff, Dr. Marian Wilson, of Royaumont, at the early age of 38. Dr. Wilson stood greatly in need of rest, for whilst on duty she never spared herself, but lavished every care and attention on her patients. She was persuaded last July to take a few weeks' rest with her family on the mountains behind Nice, where they were passing the summer. Illness seized her there, and such was her overworked condition that she passed away on the fourth day. She was the only daughter of the late Rev. J. Wilson, D.D., of Abernyte, and of Mrs. Wilson, of Lausanne. She graduated in Edinburgh in 1906, and had medical experience at Barrow-in-Furness, and at the British Mission at Hebron, closed when war broke out. In November, 1915, she joined the staff at Royaumont, where her skilful and devoted service made her a most valuable and valued member of the staff. She was an excellent linguist, with a good training in Latin and Greek, a thorough mastery of French, and a good working knowledge of Arabic and Italian. Dr. Wilson was indeed one of a noble band of our country-women now working on the Continent who bear high their country's standard, and whose memory is a call to us to "carry on." Perhaps one or two of the numerous letters she received from patients will show what a fine type of womanhood is able to achieve on the blood-stained fields of France during these days of misery:—

(1) *Madame la Doctoresse, — Je ne veux pas laisser partir la lettre de ma mère sans y joindre un mot de reconnaissance. Il me semble que je ne vous ai pas assez remercié de vivre voir des bienfaits dont j'ai été l'objet auprès de vous. Si parfois le souvenir de la journée à laquelle j'ai échappé me hante, ma pensée aime à se reporter vers ce séjour heureux où au milieu de la souffrance, j'ai retrouvé le reconfort physique et moral.*

*Veuillez agréer, Madame la Doctoresse, l'hommage de mon respect et de mon dévouement.*

R. de S.

(2) *Paris — Madame, — Me voici arrivé à mon nouvel hôpital. Oh, Madame, quel changement avec Royaumont, un changement comme la nuit et le jour. Quelle différence ici! Moi qui avais l'habitude d'être si bien soigné, vraiment j'ai été trop gâté à Royaumont.*

*Je n'ai pu dormir toute la nuit. Je me suis dit si j'étais à Royaumont on me donnerait un peu de lait ou quelque chose pour me faire dormir. . . Enfin, j'ai beau penser et rêver; je ne suis plus à Royaumont. Je l'ai quitté avec beaucoup de regrets mais en emportant un grand souvenir de vous toutes, un souvenir inoubliable de la Grande Bretagne. A. J.*

All who are behind the scenes know that English soldiers are far better treated in hospital than the French. It is good to think that the skill and devotion of our medical women and nurses may do more to ratify and strengthen *l'Entente Cordiale* than the signatures of diplomats and the operations of high finance.

C. S. BREMNER.

### 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.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

### Grammatical Notes in Idleness.

It is said that it is helpful in remembering genders in the French language to note that all virtues are feminine and vices masculine, and of other nouns almost all good things are of feminine gender. In English virtues and vices are, grammatically speaking, neuter; in colloquial application, however, they have a gender. The origin of this may have been that Man, in his estimate of Woman,

put her on the shelf,  
With some nice assorted virtues  
That he didn't want himself.

And these virtues became feminine—all others masculine.

Take "responsibility," for instance. In our laws, Orders in Council and Regulations (whether Defence of Realm or police) we find that this virtue is masculine in application. "Responsible person" without exception will be taken to mean a man.

In the case of a person requiring someone to go surety for them, "a responsible person, Burgess of the town, city, borough, etc.," must be found. Now, although the term "burgess" includes a woman, the qualification "responsible person" will cause her to be rejected as ineligible times out of number.

Let me quote the "Ministry of Food—Application for sugar registration card." The instructions state that "this Form must be filled up and signed by a responsible member of a household on behalf of himself and of all persons ordinarily resident in his household."

Carefully note that although 75 per cent. of these forms will be filled in by women, and where not so filled in, in spite of the fact that the sugar will invariably be bought and distributed by the woman, yet as the words "responsible person" had been used in the sentence the following pronouns must have the masculine gender.

If the ferocious threat of £100 or six months for false statements is carried out at all, the victims will assuredly be women.

I wonder if any woman in such an unfortunate position will plead that she cannot be held responsible, being feminine. It would be illegal and ungrammatical.

The sugar allowance cannot be adequate for any of us, but the comfortably-off mother of a family will be able to make shift with additions of honey, syrup, maple sugar, and saccharine, and her children need not lack. On the other hand, the impoverished mother cannot secure those things, the prices of which are bound to run up directly the high bidders for sugar are prevented from getting more than their share. A feminine Ministry of Food, knowing this, would have allotted the sugar accordingly. But how can men know these things? DOROTHY EVANS.

### WHERE WOMEN WORK.

Our friend "A. A.," who is having the remainder of her interrupted holiday, sends us the following delightful fragment:—"I am absolutely lazing in this delectable spot, in delightful company. Henfield quite lives up to its name in showing what the female sex can do, for here are the Violet Nurseries, of twelve or more years' standing, run by Miss Allen-Brown (she now uses both names, originally it was Miss Allen and Miss Brown, both enthusiastic W.S.P.U.-ers), where are not only violets but lavender, together with after products in the shape of most appealing scents, powders, soap, sachets, bath salts, dress-hangers, everything violet or lavender in colour, including paper, string and packing shavings. Also there is a goat farm run by women, which I am to visit to-morrow; an apiary run by a woman, which we are to visit this afternoon; women running a small holding and living out

THEY SUPPORT US!

Edward Carpenter's gospel—incidentally supplying good milk and butter to the country folk, who can only get Nestlé's and margarine, as other farmers send all their produce to London or Brighton; there are also women milkers, who tell in the simplest possible way how the farmer, observing but unobserved, says: 'I notice how well you manage the cows.' ('We do not find it needful,' say the women, 'to have a dog to round them up and bite them at the same time, nor to kick, or beat, or swear at them, as the stockmen and men milkers do!') Incidentally, they consider that cows have a very hard life, and are bullied into extreme nervousness and bad habits.) Also there is, I hear, a live shepherdess. I hope I may track her, but shall not look out for a Dresden-china figure with beribboned crook, or even Mr. Prothero's 'lilac sun-bonnet'!

### IRISH AFFAIRS.

#### Food Control Committees, Ireland.

The following letter has been sent by the Joint Committee of Irish Suffrage Societies to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and is forwarded to us for publication by Miss Dora Mellone:—

DEAR SIR,—I am directed by the Joint Committee of Irish Suffrage Societies, representing the Belfast Suffrage Society, the Church League for Woman Suffrage, the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, the Irish Catholic Women's Suffrage Association, the Irishwomen's Reform League, and the Irishwomen's Suffrage Federation, to ask you to receive a deputation with regard to the Food Committees. You will remember that in England it is enacted that at least one member of every Food Committee shall be a woman. We wish to urge the importance of applying the same rule in this country, and we ask that a woman be co-opted on the Central Committee, which consists at present only of men. The experience of women in the matter of buying and preparing food is of great value in dealing with questions of food control, and it is most undesirable that the community should be prevented from utilising their service.—Yours faithfully,

M. GWYNN.

Hon. Sec. Joint Committee of Irish Suffrage Societies.

#### Women and the Convention.

The Joint Committee has been informed that co-option is not within the power of the Irish Convention, the Government having the sole right to appoint the members. As the Government was approached at a much earlier stage, it appears useless to make any further effort to secure inclusion of Irishwomen in the Convention. The question how the country shall be governed will be considered without reference to the women of the country.

### WELL-KNOWN WOMEN.

For the first time since Dr. Fort Newton's absence in America the City Temple was crowded to overflowing last Sunday evening, when Miss Maude Royden preached. She will preach again on September 23 and 30, at the 7 p.m. service. Next Sunday evening she will conduct a christening service.

Mrs. Annie Besant and Messrs. George S. Arundale and B. B. Wadia have been released from internment in India. The European Association has telegraphed to Mr. Montagu that the Government's action is a dangerous measure, and renders the position of the Madras Government impossible.

### GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD FAIR.

Now that the holidays are over we hope that all members are working for the annual Fair, which is arranged for November 30 and December 1. The fate of our Bill still hangs in the balance, and we must therefore make every possible effort to keep the treasury filled. We look to the Fair to furnish a good sum with which to carry on, but this can only be provided if all members help. There was a ready sale for useful articles last year, and we hope to receive a larger number this year. The following stalls have been arranged for up to date:—General, Handkerchief, Home-made Provisions, Toy, White, Literature, THE VOTE (in memory of Mrs. Snow). The "Violet Clark" Quartette, which was so much appreciated last November, has again been engaged. Please look in THE VOTE for further details from time to time.

Rose Hungerford's little book, "The Spirit of the New Age," is a posthumous work, placed before the public by comrades of the deceased author, whose strong conviction that systems and conditions must change if our civilisation is to survive, inspired her pen. Messrs. Hedley Bros., Kingsway House, Kingsway, are the publishers. The price is 1s. net.

TO GIRLS TRAVELLING.—A most useful and necessary possession to any girl or woman travelling alone is the "Directory of the World's Young Women's Christian Association," in which addresses of Association Homes and referees all over the world are given. A new edition, price 4d. post free, has been issued this year. Separate addresses are given free by letter on receipt of a postcard to the Office Secretary, World's Y.W.C.A., 26, George-street, Hanover-square, London, W., from whom copies of the Directory can also be obtained.

### OBITUARY.

It is with deep regret that we have to chronicle the sudden death of Mrs. Scott, of Pennant Hall, a valued member of the Montgomery Boroughs Branch. The deceased lady passed away at the Queen's Hotel, Aberystwyth, on Friday, September 14, where she was staying for a short time. It will be remembered that Mrs. Scott's daughter, Lady Barry, died last year under very sad circumstances; and we once more offer our deep and heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family. The Women's Freedom League has lost a staunch and generous supporter, and the Branch a valued colleague; and we also offer our sympathy to Miss Alix M. Clark, who will feel the personal loss of a dear friend most keenly.

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 368.



FRIDAY,  
SEPT. 21,  
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# THE VOTE

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