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THE VOTE
Jan. 1, 1915
ONE PENNY

Our Belgian Party. Jan. 7.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, JAN. 1, 1915.

Edited by C. DESPARD.

OBJECTS: 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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1914—1915.

That the divisions of time are arbitrary and, to some extent, illusory must be evident to all. And yet, without these milestones recording the distances we have travelled, it would be difficult to throw order into our lives. So, year by year, as the number changes, individuals, societies and nations pause, as it were, for a moment to take stock. Where were we at the beginning of the year? Where are we now? What have the months given? What have they taken away? How have we, the children of the ages, lived, and what does the New Year open out before us?

These are the questions that are periodically asked and that, for all their importance, are seldom answered effectively. As individuals, though we do sometimes run up our accounts, though we do make excellent resolutions, the years, except on special occasions, when great catastrophes on the one hand or opportunities on the other, change the whole aspect of life for us, go on in much the same way. As societies, we grow or decay, so imperceptibly, that the happenings of particular years seem to mean little. As nations, unhappily, we drift, till some cataclysmic year, like that which is just closing, rouses us from our national self-complacency and forces us to review the past and to forecast the future.

1914.—It began peacefully, so far as our international relations were concerned. It is true that, in many nations, there was profound discontent; we, in the Woman's Movement in Great Britain, brought face to face as we had been with social and political injustices, with police-courts, prisons, false and bad labour conditions, were preparing ourselves for work on a still larger scale and for even more energetic campaigns in prosecution of our claim to take

our share in national service. In the political world, everything including, as some of us felt, justice and honour, was being forced to serve the ends of keeping political parties in power and keeping others out. And meanwhile all unsuspected by the democracies, passion, vice, hatred, ambition, and the spirit of domination were at work; and all in a moment, we found ourselves plunged into the present disastrous war.

We have nothing to say of it. The history of 1914 from August to December has yet to be written. We believe that, even as regards the declarations of war, no approach to the truth is yet known.

How long it is to last: under what circumstances and after what fashion peace is to be proclaimed, we cannot even dimly imagine. Our hope is that such a war may never again be permitted to ravage Europe.

We feel the gloom with which the year 1914 goes out upon the scroll of history.

The new year—1915—is opening. What is it to bring? That is a question which many will be pondering.

Sunday next, we hear, is to be a day of penitence and supplication.

It is well that at such a time all religious bodies should meet together; it is well that men and women everywhere should, if but for a brief hour, realise their common need, feel their oneness in an overwhelming common desire. Better it will be if they determine that in the coming year they will act together. For, were the ancient principles embodied in all the great religions of the world, understood and practised by all, there would be no need, no opportunity for strife.

Justice; Brotherhood; Compassion; Mercy. Were

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these our watchwords; were they largely, generally, adopted as principles of action, we could conquer the world for righteousness.

As regards our League. 1914 has been an anxious and chequered year for us. We have carried on our work, however, in spite of all temptations to despair. We have formed a special Society of help which, for its good, practical work, is already well-known. We have formed a body of women police, whose necessity is beginning to be felt. We have abated no whit of our courage, our hope, our determination; and we know that in the New Year we shall still hold together; still go forward with our mission; never pausing until, at the dawn of the New Era, we find ourselves standing side by side with our brothers in the formation of the Young World. C. DESPARD.

OUR POINT OF VIEW.

A False Assumption.

A "Citizen" writes to one of our great London dailies suggesting that every volunteer be given the Parliamentary vote irrespective of any other qualification, as a mark of appreciation of his willingness to lay down his life in his country's service. From "our point of view" there are much worse qualifications than this, *e.g.*, the present one, which contends that as all men might conceivably defend their country if it were attacked, they must therefore be the only sex enfranchised, whereas the vast majority never have defended it, and never will. There is an air of reality versus idle theory in "Citizen's" suggestion. We like it, too, better than the enfranchisement of naturalised Germans and Austrians of the Ahlers' type, a man condemned to death for treason, a British subject because he paid £3 into the Imperial Exchequer, and 2s. 6d. for a naturalisation paper. But we earnestly protest against "Citizen's" proposal, because at the back of it there lies the hateful false assumption that the man who is out to take life is a more valuable servant of the State than the woman who gives, tends, sustains life, an assumption, degrading to women and men alike, against which every intelligent woman capable of diagnosing the malady of civilisation is up in arms, and against which she will wage eternal war.

Two of a Trade.

It has long been the proud privilege of the London police court magistrate to dispense his favours with erratic humour, and to leave out, if he so choose, any suggestion of rational impulse in the doing, so long, indeed, that the much enduring public has ceased even to be amused at the vagaries of these—our licensed dealers in justice. It is nevertheless a trifle diverting to note the indignation expressed from the magisterial bench at finding its own particular ground encroached on by the Home Office. This amiable Department, anxious, and more than anxious just now, to stand between an incensed public and an over-masterful Army Council, is posing as the benefactor of women and putting up quite a smart pretence of sheltering them from Lord Kitchener's intrusions on their rights. The soldier's wife, if drunk, is to be considered "privileged," like the dog and its first bite, to offend once without consequences; and this being in the true spirit of police court traditions, one would have thought it would have been highly approved of by magistrates. Two of a trade, however, seldom agree; and the Bench is not only offended, but considers the Home Office ridiculous. Mr. D'Eyncourt, at Clerkenwell, "really does not know what we are coming to." It is "the most astonishing thing he has ever heard in his life." And he further supposes it is all due "to the outcry in the papers."

(Mr. D'Eyncourt is really brightening up—at last. The idea that injustice may not perpetually and with impunity be done to women may soon dawn upon his awakening intelligence.) Mr. Mead, at the Marylebone Court, also asked for an explanation, and the following conversation ensued:—

"Inspector Ward: I understand it is to prevent dissatisfaction among the soldiers.

Mr. Mead: The soldier certainly won't be satisfied if his wife is squandering his money on drink while he is away."

Note the double insolence. "His" money; not "her" money, earned as hardly as money may be earned in this world, at risk to life and health in child-bearing, and in toil no man would undertake! And it was to "prevent dissatisfaction among the soldiers"; never mind about the wives." We shall not forget that, any more than we shall forget Mr. Mead's and Mr. D'Eyncourt's petulance, or than we shall forget how a magistrate recently discharged a drunk and disorderly recruit whose defence was that he was kept four hours waiting for a train! After that feat of reasoning, the Home Office notions almost appear rational.

Out of the Deep.

From the confused depths of thought two prominent gentlemen have recently drawn some tangled threads which have been offered to the public as enlightenment. The gentlemen in question are the Archbishop of Canterbury and Sir Robert Baden Powell. The former has preached, in the historic cathedral from which he takes his title, a sermon on the Call to the Nation. The latter has discoursed on Girl Guides. Both have given something away.

Sir Robert was great on "character." That was what the Boy Scout Movement was for—to form character, "the basis of good citizenship." "But (we quote from the account in the *Morning Post*) the Movement was only a makeshift until women had been imbued with the quality of character so as to be able to transmit it to their sons, and then there would no longer be any need for Boy Scouts." This being so, and we are willing to take his word for it, it does not appear to have struck the worthy gentleman that he has begun at the wrong end, and instead of a "makeshift" he would have been more usefully employed in training girls, and so getting at the real thing. It is rather sad, however, for one of his proud sex to have to admit that only the mothers can transmit character to the sons and that the fathers are helpless. It is this knowledge of their real insignificance which, perhaps, is the reason why boys are never lectured on their duties to the race as prospective fathers; it appears as if men themselves realise that they do not count. At any rate, it looks like it, and we cannot be blamed for accepting it on such authority.

The Archbishop was more vainglorious. He dwelt on how the Call found the nation, and with what results. "Unrestricted outlay, enrolment of her sons by thousands, hush of political controversy, rallying of Empire." And then he deals with what the historian will say about the home life of England during the crisis. Many of our readers will be surprised to know that Dr. Davidson, in speaking of the home life, makes no mention of the earnest and devoted women everywhere bearing grief and suffering with dignity, and pressing every resource into the service of the country. No; the home life is reflected in the "great camps in our English villages and on the green hill-tops," the discipline and the brave facings of discomforts, and the "whole manhood of the English people." Since when, Dr. Davidson, did "manhood" mean home life, or the English people?"

Women's Freedom League.

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Head of Political and Militant Department—Miss C. NINA BOYLE.
Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

OUR BELGIAN PARTY

Between three and four hundred Belgian refugees have accepted the invitation of the Women's Freedom League to a party at Caxton Hall, Thursday, January 7. Many of our friends have sent us delightful presents for our Christmas tree, but Mrs. Fisher makes a special appeal to all readers who can help in this way to send us suitable presents for the children of our Belgian guests. She further asks for contributions to the buffet, and for gifts for our White Elephant stall. We are arranging a very special programme for the evening entertainment, in which British and Belgian artistes will take part, and readers are reminded that if they wish to be present at this party they must secure tickets beforehand. Applications for them should be made at once to the W.F.L. Office, 1, Robert-st., Adelphi, W.C., the price being 6d. each.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEMONSTRATION.

A demonstration of protest against the unwarrantable and disproved slanders on women, and the restrictions placed on their freedom, will be held in Trafalgar Square on Saturday, January 23. The Women's Freedom League has approached the United Suffragists, the East London Federation, and the Northern Men's Federation, to ask for their co-operation in the protest. A sub-committee, representing all the societies, will be called to decide on the details of the programme. All Freedom Leaguers are invited to co-operate and to assist in giving publicity to the arrangements. Next week the list of speakers and the resolutions will be published. It is probable that a simultaneous meeting will be held in Edinburgh.

NORTHERN MEN'S FEDERATION.

The Trafalgar Square demonstration on Jan. 23 will probably end in a deputation (peaceful) to the War Office, and it is hoped that Mrs. Arnelife Sennett will be able to represent the Northern Men's Federation on that occasion. This Federation has always given the warmest support to the Women's Freedom League, both in England and Scotland, and will probably take part in the Edinburgh demonstration on the same day. A matter for regret will be the absence of Councillor Crawford, one of its leading members, who has recently left for service at the Front. All Suffragists will wish him success and glory and a safe return.

PRACTICAL HELP FOR EDUCATED WOMEN.

The Countess of Selborne, President of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, writes as follows concerning the excellent practical help carried out by the Association for educated women in need owing to the war:—

"In view of the distress caused by the war, to the educated woman worker, the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association has now opened a hostel at 9, Roland Gardens, South Kensington, for the reception of ladies who are either being trained or are seeking employment. Guests will be maintained free of charge for a period of one month, at the end of which time, if no employment has been found, their case will be reconsidered. All applicants must be of British birth, and must provide two personal references.

Sufficient funds have been subscribed by the members of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association and their friends to enable the committee to keep the hostel open for six months. The greater part of the furniture has also been given or lent by members and their friends. The National Food Fund is contributing a portion of the food supply. All applications must be made in the first place in writing to the Secretary of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, 43, Dover-street, Piccadilly, W., who will forward a form of application to be filled in."

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NOTICE.—Letters relating to editorial and business matters should be addressed to THE EDITOR and SECRETARY respectively. Applications for advertising spaces to be made to the ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER.

Offices: 2, ROBERT STREET, ADELPHI, W.C.

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.

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"PICKING AND STEALING."

To keep one's hands from picking and stealing and one's tongue from evil speaking, lying and slandering, is inculcated in the Church Catechism as part of one's duty to one's neighbour. Women being neither people, persons, adults, citizens, nor anything else that gives them a claim to consideration, it is reasonable to conclude that in the eyes of certain exponents and supporters of masculism they are not "neighbours" either. Only on this supposition can the events of the last few weeks be explained, for it must not be forgotten that this is a Christian country. One's duty to one's neighbour is not lightly to be flouted by a Christian nation; women, therefore, cannot be neighbours. The orgy of picking and stealing, of evil speaking, lying and slandering, of which women have lately been the victims, has been engineered by persons of light and leading, supported by important members of a Government responsible to men only, and helped along on its slimy course by the Church which is under the special patronage of that Government—the Church which has so sturdily outlined our Duty towards our Neighbour, when that neighbour does not happen to be Woman.

Picking and stealing, when applied to details of property, is an offence punishable by law. Strict account is demanded of one's dealings with one's neighbour's goods. Drastic penalties attend the most paltry theft; dire is the doom that descends on the head of the pick-pocket and the receiver, the forger and the thimble-rigger. Personal property is rigidly protected by law; not so those personal rights which should in any well-conducted State be the first security every citizen may claim. The filching of personal rights and liberties is, ethically, just as wicked and unjustifiable as the stealing of a purse or a pocket-handkerchief; and when those rights and liberties are filched from the more helpless half of the community—those deprived by Nature of the power of armed resistance and by Law of constitutional action—the baseness and dishonesty is the more disgraceful. The picking and stealing of women's hard-won rights (at a time when their patriotic impulse is to refrain from making trouble) under cover of a storm of malicious abuse and slander, is a national crime which in due course will bring the inevitable national reckoning.

That this storm of abuse has a political origin and aim is unquestionable. The great services now being rendered by women in supplementing the shameful deficiencies of the War Office and the Local Government Board by supplying clothing, hospital equipment and nursing to the soldiers of the British, French and Belgian forces, and in providing food, clothing and employment for the unfortunate women whom the war has reduced to

penury—not to mention the intervention on behalf of sailors' and soldiers' families, when by Government callousness kept waiting for their allowances—may be reckoned on as furnishing an almost irresistible claim to enfranchisement at the close of the war. To put a spoke in their wheel, therefore, was the obvious course for the anti-Suffragists. Hence the outcry about women drinking their Government allowances, swarming round the camps for immoral purposes and generally conducting themselves like "irrational creatures who cannot behave unless constrained by man."

This pernicious twaddle was seized on by Mr. McKenna, some bishops, a Church Council or two, several newspapers and a good many people who ought to have known better. That lust for coercing people into virtue, which descends with overwhelming virulence at intervals on otherwise perfectly well-conducted and kindly persons, urged many friends of humanity to shake their heads and search their hearts over Woman and her Weakness. Bereft of the steady influence and guiding hand of the husband (on whose account public-houses have had to have their hours of business curtailed all over the country) these poor things, in the excitement of so much unusual wealth and the bewilderment of so much unusual liberty, wanted looking after. What was to be done? And Lord Kitchener and Mr. McKenna decided to ask the police and the publicans to see to their regeneration.

Ugly Facts.

This is the tale of the picking and stealing that has been done at the expense of women in five short months:—Married women "on the strength" have been turned out of the quarters guaranteed them by the Government; they and all other women of the working classes whose husbands have been called to risk life and limb in the country's service have been placed on a police register as suspects (it matters not that some police authorities have refused to act in the spirit of the War Office *ukase*; the order is there, and the list of names, just the same); the War Office, further, has decreed that the "unworthy" are to lose payments and allowances if the police think fit—said payments and allowances being just as much the women's legal rights as Lord Kitchener's ample salary is his; and the C.D. Acts have been re-established—in spite of, or rather as the sequel of Mr. Asquith's prattle about "the letter and the spirit" which should have warned us that some treachery was afoot—and are in full swing in all camp and garrison centres.

The War Office decree about "withdrawal of payments to the unworthy" only applies to women. Payments and allowances are never withdrawn by Government except on a conviction without the option of a fine. A new restriction, therefore, for "unworthiness" has been invented by Lord Kitchener for women. One would have thought he had enough to do in attending, for instance, to the unworthiness of certain army contractors; but that never has been the War Office's business. Never mind how much unworthy profit men make; there are women who are actually better off because of the war, and that is a dreadful thought not to be contemplated with any tolerance. Something must be done to mark the nation's disapproval.

Women in some towns may not be served with drink, even at dinner in a hotel or restaurant, after six o'clock. The husbands dining with them may order drink; the wives may not partake of it. In London women may not be served before 11.30 a.m. Everywhere there is some new restriction or regulation concerning women. And yet woman is the law-abiding citizen *par excellence*. London has lost none of its women; yet month after month Mr. Wallace congratulates the grand jury at the London

Sessions on the strange and unusual absence of crime since the war. In every case where real enquiry has been instituted, the tales of women drinking have been proved to be fabulous; no crimes are being committed by them; the police records show no alteration in regard to their sex; yet it is on them and on them alone that the new coercive measures are imposed, their reputation on which the lime-light is so remorselessly played.

The life-work of Josephine Butler has been swept away, apparently, by one stroke of Lord Kitchener's pen. A braver woman than he a man, she fought an uphill campaign against vice, obloquy and sex privilege, handicapped at every turn by her sex. Lord Kitchener has never fought but with the whole moral and material force of the nation at his beck and call; but he has so little respect for another valiant warrior that he can take advantage of our present distress to sweep away the foundations of liberty and equality that she so bravely and toilsomely laid. The public does not yet quite realise the situation. An order is being promulgated in military centres that women may, if their conduct be not all that military experts demand in women, be confined to their homes between the hours of 7 p.m. and 8 a.m. It is popularly supposed that this order only applies to "women of a certain class"; but that is one of those errors that only time and some unpleasant accident will rectify. "Men of a certain class," so long a terrible danger to young girls and children, are free now as ever to prowl round on their evil pursuit of indulgence.

Our Indictment.

We challenge the military authorities to deny that this order has been promulgated (a) to enforce medical examination of suspected women; and (b) to meet the fact that as the law is at present no woman can be prosecuted for *immorality*, but only for importuning or for disorderly or indecent conduct. Some pretext had to be found for arrest, and some way had to be found to dodge the Prime Minister's assurance that C.D. enactments would not be reinstated "in the letter or in the spirit." We do not need to balance the relative degree of honesty or dishonesty on the respective parts of Lord Kitchener and the Prime Minister. We only need to recognise that, having neither power nor ability to deal with the disorderliness of their own sex, these two Honourable and Right Honourable gentlemen have arranged to sacrifice to expediency the honour and dignity of women and to hold them responsible under penalties no body of men (not even soldiers!) would submit to, for the vicious propensities of the "stronger" sex.

The picking and stealing of women's rights, and the evil speaking, lying and slandering under cover of which it is being done, are as foul a blot on our national record as any of the breaches of international law about which the Press waxes hysterical. The difference in the degree of enormity appears to lie in whether or not the injured party can hit back. It is safe and easy, and therefore not wrong, to hit, kick, slander or steal from women; it is only the powerful foe whose injuries provoke indignation. This Christian and chivalrous nation's duty to its neighbour does not refer to women; and the Bishop of London has given his sanction to that principle by the irredeemable insult of his decision about the Intercessory Service at St. Paul's. It is useless for him, or the *Times*, or the Dean and Chapter, or their apologists, to pretend that they feared the encroachments of women of bad character, or desired to avoid the imputation that they were encouraging young girls to roam about at night. (The last might easily have been averted by an "adult" limitation for both sexes.) But the information—

supplied by the *Globe*—that the issue of tickets for after 5 p.m. was practically restricted to men, has brought the Church of England back to its old position of the persecutor of women, and places it hand in hand with the State in the brutal sex insult which excludes women from the category of people, persons, citizens, adults and neighbours.

"To hurt nobody by word or deed" is another injunction of the Duty to my Neighbour. The assault on women's rights and women's claims to honour and respect are dastardly deeds, in very truth; and our male Government and its admirers need a lesson in the importance of keeping one's hands from picking and stealing and one's tongue from evil speaking, lying and slandering—that is to say, if the fiction of being a Christian country is to be still propped up and presented to an unconvinced world.

C. NINA BOYLE.

THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE NATIONAL AID CORPS.

An urgent appeal was made to the members of the Women's Suffrage National Aid Corps before Christmas for funds with which to continue the work of the Corps. The following response has been made. Mrs. Despard £5; Mrs. A. W. Thomson £5; Miss Florence Karpeles £5; Mrs. Linsell £2 2s.; Miss Wall £1; Mrs. Mackenzie Kennedy 5s. and 15 books for sale; Miss Wilsden 1s. From another good friend a challenge has been received in the form of a promise of £5 or £10 if nine other people will each give the same amount. We thank our friends very warmly for their help, and earnestly hope that the challenge will be taken up and our treasury enriched by the full amount.

Good Work at Brighton.

The Corps at Brighton is doing practical work in a practical way. One of the members of the committee, Miss A. H. Bennett, has written a most useful little pamphlet answering briefly and clearly the questions which are always asked by those who hear of the Corps for the first time: "What are Suffragists doing now, and how are they helping the national need?" Everyone interested in the Corps should keep a supply of this pamphlet—"Volunteer for the War Only" W.S.N.A.C., 8, North-street, Quadrant, Brighton, 3d.—and distribute it to inquirers.

Nine Elms Vegetarian Restaurant.

Our grateful thanks for plum puddings and mince pies are given to Miss Alix M. Clark, Mrs. E. M. N. Clark, Mrs. Meeson Coates, Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Harvey, Mrs. Huntsman, Private Hugh Kemp, Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Cobden Sanderson, Mrs. Snow, Mrs. Tanner, Mrs. Thorne, H. W. Tippet, Esq., Mrs. Robert Tornow, Miss Underwood, Miss Watterson (who also sent apples and biscuits), and Mrs. Baillie Weaver.

ISABEL TIPPETT.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

International Suffrage Alliance Invited to Holland.

Since the war has made impossible the Congress of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, which was to meet in Berlin during the summer of 1915, women of the Netherlands have extended to the International Alliance a cordial invitation to meet at The Hague. It is significant to note that while the men of European nations are engaged in a terrible death struggle, Suffragists of all nationalities, united by common sorrows, are drawing closer together.

Married—and Penalised.

The women of Niagara Falls, Ontario, may vote on municipal matters if they are not married—so injurious to a woman's intelligence is matrimony considered. On January 4, 1915, the voters of Niagara Falls are to be consulted on the proposition that marriage shall no longer disqualify from voting a woman otherwise qualified.

BRANCH NOTES.

Croydon—Offices, 32a, The Arcade, High Street.

On December 15 a small sale of goods—principally children's garments—was held at the office. On Dec. 16 the usual Women's Social was held; there was a very good attendance. Mrs. O'Brien's recitations and Miss Walker's songs were greatly appreciated.

Edinburgh.

The last meeting of the Branch for 1914 was addressed by Miss Mary Williamson, M.A., member of the Historical Association of Scotland, who gave an exceedingly interesting account of the history of Belgium, with special reference to the points at which its history touched on that of our own country. The story of the historical development of the British policy of guaranteeing the independence of Belgium was specially interesting at the present moment, and Miss Williamson's paper was greatly appreciated. Miss Tennant was in the chair. A "Shilling Fund" in aid of the rent has been opened, and Miss Wood will be glad to acknowledge any subscriptions. Our workroom scheme and our work for the Belgians alike depend on our having a shop—hence, despite all other calls upon us at this time, we must appeal specially for this fund.

Glasgow Suffrage Shop: 70, St George's Road.

Two excellent parlour meetings were held just before Christmas. By the kind permission of Mrs. George Wilson, the first was held at her house in Springburn; Miss Broughton explained the legal position of women; an interesting discussion followed in which several women took part. One new member was made. Mrs. Brown kindly arranged the second meeting at her house, Rosslyn Avenue, Rutherglen. Miss Bunten gave an interesting address which was much appreciated. THE VOTE and other literature was sold at both meetings.

Middlesbrough. 231a, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

The "At Home," held on December 21, to celebrate the opening of the Suffrage Centre was very successful. Mr. Dowson, our good friend the florist at the corner shop, decorated the room with plants and flowers. A very enjoyable musical programme arranged by Madame Richardson was given, in which Madame Richardson, Miss Frances Richardson and Misses Edith and Annie Davies took part. Mrs. Schofield Coates, in a short speech, gave an outline of the work that we hope to do in connection with the Suffrage Centre. Miss W. M. Jones spoke on the gratifying reports that had been given at the annual meeting of the previous week. Miss L. Mahony spoke very highly of the splendid assistance given by our men associates, and moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Cole, who had put in the shop fittings, shelves, etc.; Mr. Morrish who had helped with the electric fittings; Mr. Wetterstrand for his valuable assistance on the shop committee; Mr. Holmes who had painted the woodwork; and Mr. Barrett for various posters he had done; to which there was a very hearty response. The Christmas goose was won by Mrs. Hill, of Kildare-street. A brisk business was carried on in the shop during the evening. Refreshments were provided by Mrs. Thirkell, Miss Allmayer, Miss Doughty, Miss Shields, Mrs. Houghton and Mrs. Mahony.

Southampton.

At a Branch meeting on December 23 a resolution was passed protesting indignantly against the differential treatment of the sexes (1) In the prohibition of women from hotels and public houses within certain hours; (2) The insult to soldiers' wives in placing them under police supervision; (3) The revival of the C.D. Acts at Cardiff.

Swansea.

Besides the meetings already reported in THE VOTE of Miss Boyle's campaign, Mrs. Wheatley arranged a meeting in her house for the Saturday evening after the open-air meeting at Clydach. Miss Boyle spoke, also Miss Phipps, who urged the importance of joining some Suffrage Society in order to do one's part in the Woman's Movement. Questions showed the interest aroused by the speeches. The Branch wishes to express its very warm gratitude to Mrs. Wheatley for her part in making Miss Boyle's visit so great a success, for her offer of hospitality, and her efforts to make the meetings well known and specially interesting. On December 14 Miss Boyle addressed an open-air meeting outside the Docks, and afterwards drove round the town with some members of the Branch, including Mrs. Ross's baby daughter. In the evening she addressed a large and attentive crowd at an open-air meeting in Portland-street. Miss Barrs presided, and several Branch members were present.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

1915. **Monday, January 4.**—CLAPHAM BRANCH MEETING, 1, Imperial Mansions, Bromell's-road, 8 p.m.
Wednesday, January 6.—MID-LONDON BRANCH MEETING, at W.F.L. Office, 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, W.C., 7 p.m.
Thursday, January 7.—CAXTON HALL. W.F.L. Party to Belgian Refugees, 3.30-10 p.m. Christmas Tree, Buffet, Musical and Dramatic Entertainments; many other attractions. Admission 6d. Get your ticket from W.F.L. Office.
Wednesday, January 13.—PUBLIC MEETING, 3, York-street, Jermy-street, Piccadilly, 3.30. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Miss Boyle. Chair: Mrs. Tanner.

DARE TO BE FREE.

Sunday, January 17.—DRAWING-ROOM MEETING at 205, Maida Vale, W. Speaker: Miss Boyle. Hostess: Mrs. Aaron. 3.30.
Wednesday, January 20.—DRAWING ROOM MEETING, 3.30. 13, Temple Fortune Court, Hampstead Garden Suburb. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Miss Underwood. Hostess: Miss Newcomb.

PROVINCES.

1915. **Friday, January 15.**—BOURNEMOUTH, Freedom Hall, 8 p.m. Public meeting. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Chair: Mrs. Hume.
Saturday, January 16.—SOUTHAMPTON. Social afternoon. Speaker: Mrs. Despard.
Tuesday, January 26.—LIVERPOOL. Waterloo. Miss Nina Boyle.
Thursday, January 28.—CHESTER. Miss Nina Boyle on "Women and War."

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Tuesday, January 12.—ST. PETER'S LITERARY AND DEBATING SOCIETY, St. Peter's Institute, Vincent-terrace, Colebrooke-row, N., 8 p.m. Miss Nina Boyle (W.F.L.), "Democratic Government—its Advantages and Disadvantages."

Sunday, February 7.—KINGSTON HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY, Fife Hall, Kingston, 7 p.m. Speaker: Miss Murray.

THE MINERVA PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the Shareholders of the above Company will be held at 2, Robert-st., Adelphi, W.C., on Jan. 8, 1915, at 6.30 p.m., when it is hoped that all will find it convenient to attend.

H. HOLMAN, Secretary.

The Younger Generation's Excellent Example.

Our readers will be interested in the following letter from one of the younger generation of Middlesbrough Freedom Leaguers, giving an account of how she and a friend determined to help the Suffrage Cause, and give pleasure at the same time to fifty children to whom a Christmas tree party was a great joy. All honour to Myra Hayton and Nora Mahony, and may their example be followed in other Branches:—

Falconhurst, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough.

DEAR EDITOR,—On December 23 Nora Mahony and Myra Hayton held their Christmas tree party in the new Suffrage rooms. There was a lovely feeling of jollity and happiness amongst our fifty guests. The room looked very bright and joyous with its wealth of dark evergreens, which Miss Hayton and Miss Nelson, coming to the rescue, so beautifully and artistically arranged for us. It made us feel we wanted to dance immediately. There was a full programme of dances, games, singing and pianoforte solos, refreshments and bonbons. Our guests were so sorry to leave that before we sang "Auld Lang Syne" we arranged to have another party on January 6. We wish to thank Mrs. Mahony and Mrs. Rees for so kindly giving us their help; Miss Doris Marshall for so kindly officiating all the evening at the piano; the Misses Mahony and Miss Hotham for helping us with the games. The proceeds were £1 3s., which we handed to our treasurer towards paying the expenses of the new Suffrage shop.—Yours sincerely,

MYRA HAYTON.

News From The United States.

"They would soon clean it up."

Speaking recently at the Fifth Avenue Suffrage Shop, New York, William J. Burns, detective, stated:—"In my twenty-five years' work in the cities of this country, work which has taken me into the thick of affairs, I have seen that the Suffragists, while working for the ballot, are also promoting good citizenship. My experience in detecting criminals has convinced me that universal Suffrage is necessary to bring about many needed reforms. When Suffrage comes, you will select from among your number the women best qualified for public work, and they will make the cities fit places for the children to grow up in. I wish I could put the 'white slave' problem into the hands of a selected group of women in this city, whom I could name, and give them the power that men have. They would soon clean it up."

Let the N.U.T. Note.

The public school teachers of Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., have formed a "Votes for Women" auxiliary. A teacher promoting the scheme stated that "political inferiority is apt to suggest professional inferiority. The lack of the ballot is a serious handicap to the profession, three-fourths of the members being disfranchised by sex discrimination." The National Education Association endorsed Woman Suffrage at the convention of 1914.

"No Power can Prevent it."

"Women are entitled to the Ballot," says the Philadelphia Evening Telegram. "Why prate that their place is in the home when more than 8,000,000 of them in this country alone have been driven by the onrush of industry and civilisation into store, factory and field? Great women breed great men. They are the forerunners of achievement."

"Not competent to vote! Men have had their colleges for centuries, women scarcely for decades, yet the scores of institutions now devoted to them solely are a tribute at once to their determination and their ability. They are more. They are the pledge of a new, aggressive and intelligent element in the battle for moral and political progress. Will women get the ballot? There is no power that can prevent it. Wonderfully Providence works to invigorate civilisation."

Politicians and Common Sense.

"The achievements of women in every field where they have competed with men have convinced the people of their fitness for the ballot, and the people are steadily convincing the politicians, who are always ultra conservative when any one undertakes to introduce common-sense into the affairs of the country."—New York Evening Journal, December, 1914.

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 (President F.C.L.W.S.)

ON
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH,
 AT 7 P.M.

Subject—"WOMEN AND WAR."
 SPECIAL PRAYERS AND HYMNS.

ONE
PENNY

THE VOTE

CWEEKLY

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

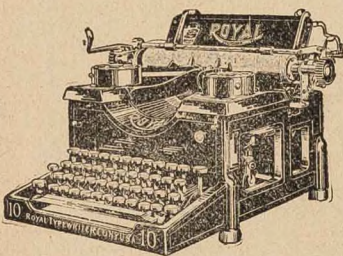
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SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES' MEETINGS.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE hold PUBLIC MEETINGS at THE SUFFRAGE CLUB, 3, York Street, Jermyn Street, Piccadilly, every Wednesday afternoon. Speaker: Jan. 13, Mrs. Despard and Miss Nina Boyle. Admission free. Collection. Buy THE VOTE, 1d. weekly.

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