

LABOUR CONFERENCE NUMBER.

THE VOTE,
JANUARY 19, 1917.
ONE PENNY.

Labour's Opportunity.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, JAN. 19, 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

AN OPEN LETTER

TO THE

LABOUR CONFERENCE, MANCHESTER.

(JANUARY 23—26, 1917.)

DEAR BROTHERS,

Remember, we trust you. We rely on you. You called upon us to stand by you in the hour of trial, and we did so. Most of us have stood together, man and woman, by the side of a grave—mourned together for the loss of one equally dear to both. This remember.

No army could have held the field, no navy could have sailed the seas, but for the women of England.

England's women fed these men, clothed these men, nursed these men.

Day and night did women make ammunition, boots, machinery; day after day, week after week, and year after year have women bravely toiled in factory, office, and workshop, keeping the country at home and supplying their men abroad. Do you not feel?

It is time to acknowledge that this nation is one of men and women?

Do you want to keep up the unnatural legal fiction that England is only a nation of men—and their *belongings*?

Remember, men took what they could and elbowed women out of the way in 1867; again, they took more and pushed us aside in 1884; laughed at our claims in 1906; threw out another Bill in 1907; wise and far-sighted men passed the second reading of a Bill for Woman Suffrage in 1908, and when it was blocked by a Parliamentary subterfuge, working-men let the women protest in vain. In 1910 yet another Bill passed its second reading, and again women were cheated of the Vote and their brothers stood by and cared not. Once more, 1911 saw a Bill granting women the Vote pass its second reading, and again set aside by some unworthy knavery that would never have been the fate of any Bill dealing with voters' demands. Still the voters were silent. So silent that those in Parliament deemed their constituents cared not, so that in 1912 yet another Bill was lost by the absurd margin of 14 votes, and in 1913, when it was apparent to all that an Amendment to the "People's Representation Bill" would inevitably admit woman to citizenship, the Speaker calmly ruled the Amendment "out of order" and dashed the women's hopes to the ground once more.

The Cause of Labour and the Cause of Women

are inextricably bound up. Together they rise—or fall. Which is it to be?

Working men, you have the power and you know it! Are your mothers and daughters inferior to the women of Australia, all of whom have the Vote; or to the women of the United States and Canada, where women already vote in many mighty cities and provinces on the same terms as men, and where

soon all women will vote? Are the daughters of a country that boasts of being "the Mother of Parliaments" to be

The only English-speaking women who remain chattels

in the eyes of the law?

Men! After all that has happened, we know you will not do this thing; you could not do this thing and remain men. The men who stood by France and Belgium will surely stand by their own countrywomen now. Think! When all our brothers return, the man without a leg or an arm can vote, and his vote will help to protect his interests. But what of the helpless woman who has lost her husband? Far rather would such a woman have lost arm or leg. Not only has she lost her breadwinner, she has also lost the very light of her life—and is she not even to have the poor protection of a Vote to guard her interests, not even the admission to citizenship as most inadequate thanks for giving her *all* to England?

Men! you CANNOT stand by and see this!

Only last month an article appeared in a high-class magazine seriously advocating legislation for Prostitution, and the granting of full powers to the military authorities in order to organise such prostitution in licensed towns. Many reactionary minds of a low type do undoubtedly desire to see such houses established in this country. I know not whether many working men would visit such houses, but I *do* know that it is not the women of the leisured class who would be found inhabiting them.

When such legislation is suggested, surely

You are in honour bound

to give us the only weapon by which such legislation may be fought? The Vote.

Labour and Women. Women and Labour. If the working man still leaves his sister unenfranchised, he leaves her

To sell herself or undersell him.

She is economically helpless. She can do no other. Let him free her and see to it that his sister is his equal, with equal, though different, work and responsibilities, and in so doing he will be raising the standard of thought and character—aye, and of achievement, for the whole nation.

Herein lies true Patriotism

and a genuine proof of England's love of Freedom and desire to do Justice to all.

RUTH C. BENTINCK.

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

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THE LABOUR CONFERENCE: MANCHESTER, JAN. 23-26.

Women's Freedom League Campaign.

Organiser: Miss Alix M. Clark, 122, Cecil-street, Whitworth Park.

A glance at forthcoming events will show the excellent service Miss Alix M. Clark and Miss Anna Munro are rendering in the name of the Women's Freedom League to the cause of votes for women. We congratulate our energetic workers on their success, and urge all members and friends to support them by every means in their power. Mrs. Despard and Miss Eunice Murray will take part in the campaign. The Labour Conference should become historic in the women's struggle for enfranchisement. The cry of to-day is Votes for Women or a lower standard of life for ALL; by insisting on women becoming free citizens now, labour will avert a serious danger and render itself invincible. Suffragists, rally round your flag!

POLITICAL NOTES.

Electoral Reform Conference.

As we go to press, this Conference is holding its final sitting; various forecasts have appeared in the

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Press, and the *Manchester Guardian's* London Correspondent says that the Committee hopes to have ready for Parliament resolutions on the main conditions of a "new franchise." If this "new franchise" does not include women, we shall consider that the whole time of the Conference has been wasted.

The *Daily Chronicle* (January 17) states that Woman Suffrage is omitted from the recommendations as no agreement was reached on this important subject—the greatest of all the franchise anomalies. It says: "This grievous defeat will have to be remedied by a courageous Government." Now is Mr. Lloyd George's opportunity to "make good" his words.

Political Meeting.

In view of the success of the political meeting last Saturday, it has been decided to hold monthly Saturday afternoon meetings on political questions. The next will take place on February 17, particulars will be announced later.

Deputation on Venereal Disease.

Lord Rhondda, President of the Local Government Board, has promised to receive the joint deputation of sixteen suffrage societies, which was organised by the Women's Freedom League, and which was received a short time ago by the then Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Samuel. The deputation will discuss with Lord Rhondda the question of compulsory detention in poor-law institutions, and the necessity for women to have access to women doctors, if they so desire. ANNE E. CORNER.

OWING to this week's special articles, in view of the Labour Conference, Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson's article on "The Suppression of Vice" is unavoidably held over.

THEY SUPPORT US,

FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Caspersz (violin). Arranged by London Branches Council, W.F.L. Tickets, 2s. (numbered and reserved) and 1s. (unreserved), from W.F.L. Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

Monday, January 22.—CLAPHAM BRANCH MEETING, 15, Clapham Mansions, Nightingale-lane, S.W., 7.30 p.m. Conference Business.

Wednesday, January 24.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, 3 p.m. Speakers: Mr. George Lansbury and Mrs. Mustard, "Daughters of the Empire." Chair: Miss F. A. Underwood. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Hall at 4.30 (6d.).

LONDON BRANCHES COUNCIL, Special Meeting, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 6 p.m.

Friday, January 26.—RECITAL OF OLD SONGS AND SATIRES by Miss Holloway, and FAIRY TALES by Miss Raleigh. Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C., 3 p.m. Tea 4.45. Tickets, 1s. (reserved) and 6d. (unreserved), from W.F.L. Office. CROYDON, Public Meeting, 32A, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Corner, "The Lessons of History."

Saturday, January 27.—LONDON BRANCHES COUNCIL. DRAWING-ROOM MEETING at 22, Harley-road, Hampstead (by kind permission of Miss A. A. Smith). Speakers: Mrs. Mustard, on "Wanted: A State Department for Children," and Mrs. Corner, on "Our Duty to Our Country." Chair to be taken by Miss A. A. Smith. Meeting 3.15 p.m. Tea 4.30. Members and friends cordially invited.

Wednesday, January 31.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, 3 p.m. Speakers: Mr. H. G. Chancellor, M.P., "The Right of the Soldier," and Mrs. Despard. Chair: Mrs. Corner. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Hall at 4.30 (6d.).

PROVINCES.

Monday, January 22.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Public Meeting, Suffrage Club, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Mr. John Scurr. Subject: "The Discovery of Woman."

Monday, January 22.—SOUTHSEA. Members' Meeting, 17, Lombard-street, 7.30.

Wednesday, January 31.—SOUTHSEA. Afternoon Public Meeting, Suffrage Rooms, 3.15. Speaker: Mrs. Rothwell (Southampton).

MANCHESTER CAMPAIGN.

Friday, January 19.—Drawing-room Meeting, 260, Worsley-road, Swinton (by kind permission of Miss Heyes). Speaker: Miss Anna Munro. Chair: Miss Janet Heyes.

Saturday, January 20.—Open-air Meeting, Sydney-street, Oxford-road, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Janet Heyes. Chair: Miss Alix M. Clark.

Sunday, January 21.—Union Chapel, Oxford-road, 2.45 p.m. Miss Anna Munro. Subject: White Slave Traffic. County Forum, Market-street, 7 p.m.

Monday, January 22.—W.F.L. Social, Clarion Café, 7.30 p.m. Members and friends to meet Mrs. Despard. Short speeches by Miss Janet Heyes, Miss Constance Andrews,

ON THE THRESHOLD OF VICTORY.

The New Year comes holding out victory in its hand. **It rests with us to take it.** We must win the vote this year. 1917 must be filled with redoubled enthusiasm and toil and sacrifice, for we are resolved that women shall be free citizens before its close. **Our determination will be unconquerable.** We must have money. We must complete the fifty thousand shilling fund; there are still 34,000 shillings to come. Please write for new collecting-cards for the Fund and **start work at once**, and send in contributions, large or small (but the larger the better), as often as possible.

Best wishes and grateful thanks to all our supporters in 1916. E. KNIGHT.

Miss Neal. Chair: Miss Anna Munro. Music and refreshment.

Wednesday, January 24.—Drawing-room Meeting, 29, Queen's-road, West Didsbury (by kind permission of Miss Baldwin). Speaker: Miss Anna Munro. Chair: Miss Alix M. Clark.

Thursday, January 25.—Public Meeting at The Association Hall, Peter-street, Manchester. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Anna Munro, Miss Eunice Murray, Mr. Cameron Grant and Miss Janet Heyes. Chair: George G. Armstrong, Esq. (*Daily News*). Doors open 7 p.m., to commence 7.30.

Friday, January 26.—Drawing-room Meeting, 7, Burnage-lane, Garden Village, Levenshulme (by kind permission of Mrs. Pearce), 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Chair: Miss Anna Munro.

Sunday, January 28.—Union Chapel, Oxford-street, 2.45 p.m. Mrs. Despard.

We call special attention to—

Wednesday, January 24, 3 p.m., public meeting, Caxton Hall. Speakers: Mr. Lansbury, and Mrs. Mustard on "Daughters of the Empire." Admission free.

Friday, January 26, 3 p.m. Recital of old songs, satires, and fairy tales by Winifred Holloway and Katherine Raleigh at the Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C. Tickets 1s. (reserved) and 6d. Tea (if desired) can be obtained in the hall at 4.45.

London Branches Council.

The Council has arranged a special meeting, to take place on Wednesday, January 24, at 6 p.m., at the W.F.L. Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C., to which representatives of all London branches, whether affiliated to the Council or not, are invited. The object of this meeting is to set on foot a strong suffrage campaign in the London branches, and it is hoped that all branches will do their best to send delegates to the meeting.

On Sunday, January 21, a Matinée Musicale Dramatique (arranged by Madame Anna Carola) will be held at the Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, at 3 p.m. Particulars of this will be found in "Forthcoming Events," and also of a drawing-room meeting at 22, Harley-road, Hampstead. It is hoped that both these meetings will be well attended.

Political Meeting.

The good attendance at last Saturday's meeting was welcome evidence of the interest taken in political questions, and as both day and time appear to be convenient the meetings will be continued each month. Mrs. Despard, from the chair, pointed out that great problems of national life had been dealt with in a haphazard way by men largely because women were unrepresented. Mrs. Corner appealed for ever-increasing suffrage activity, as the end of a great war always meant reaction. In Napoleon's time the workers allowed themselves to be swamped by the war, and are still suffering from their want of alertness. Women must be on their guard and fight for their sex. Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson considered that the industrial emancipation of women was practically won, but declared that married women were the greatest slaves in the community. The protection of the girl of 15 to 17 was a serious problem, but, broadly speaking, women workers had proved themselves as capable, strong, willing, and more conscientious than men. Mrs. Tanner drove home with wit and wisdom the importance of women being appointed to positions of responsibility in the service of the State. Some suggestions were made as to how the vote should be used when won and the steps to be taken to win it.

READ

ECCE MATER

BY

M. A. R. TUKER.

The Problem of Civilisation.

Shows why the most murderous war in all history is being waged 1900 years after the Birth of the PRINCE OF PEACE.

Order of the INTERNATIONAL SUFFRAGE SHOP.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 88.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, January 19th, 1917.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—
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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.

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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.

LABOUR'S OPPORTUNITY.

It is significant and, we believe, hopeful that while the war—how to prosecute it, how to pay for it, how to end it—occupies so large a space in the minds and imaginations of the people, the question of after-the-war happenings is, with ever more persistence, pushing itself to the front. Sometimes, as we look out upon the future, we seem like travellers who have been passing through familiar country, and are brought suddenly face to face with new and unexplored regions.

Problems there have been in abundance. As there seemed to be no particular urgency, they have been treated piecemeal and in a half-hearted fashion with a little tinkering here, and a little mending there, just enough to make it felt that something was being done. Now, neglected and unsolved, not in twos and threes, but in a multitude, these problems are leaping up and demanding attention. "Neglect us at your peril," they seem to cry.

It would be easy to show that by far the greater number, and certainly the most thorny of these, hinge upon Labour. Hence the peculiar importance to women, as well as to men, of this year's Labour Party Conference. Even a cursory glance at the long and exhaustive agenda will prove this; and we sincerely hope that the great unions and societies which have sent delegates to Manchester have given careful thought to the situation, so that wise and strong decisions may be reached. For though it may not be possible yet for Labour to make its demands fully effective, late events have shown us clearly that in the political franchise it possesses a powerful weapon towards that end.

We note that Adult Suffrage—voting-power for every man and woman to be given before the present Parliament dissolves—is a leading resolution. This has been passed before. But will the Trade Union members be true to the women? Will they see the justice of equality of rights with themselves, for their mothers and wives and fellow-workers? If we are to help them to build up the better order, they must speak now with no uncertain voice.

We would remind our brothers that the reforms

they are demanding affect women as much as, in some cases more, than they affect men.

Peace or war—whether to enter into negotiations now or to wait until the nations are still further ruined and exhausted. The nature and quality of the peace—if "democratic aims and ideals" or a "programme of annexation and redistribution of territory" are to determine the future of Europe. Demobilisation—such rapid and skilfully executed readjustment of labour as will prevent any recurrence of the horrors that have followed other great wars. Increased production—use of the resources which, in our national folly, we have allowed to run to waste. Revival of the ancient art of agriculture, so that Great Britain may once more be able to feed her sons and daughters. Some well-thought-out national scheme to provide sanitary and weather-proof houses for the whole of the population. State guarantees to working-mothers of material assistance, and skilled advice in child-birth and after it, so that they may bring healthier children into the world, and be able to give to these little ones the best chance of healthy survival. Education of all the children without distinction, according to their capacity, with provision for suitable food; skilled nursing and medical care when these are necessary. Such revisal of insurance and pension systems as will ensure to those who have fought and laboured, or in any way served the State in their day and generation, freedom from care and immunity from hardship when they are aged or crippled. That conscription, either military or industrial, and present restrictions on speech and civil liberty, shall cease with the war.

These are some of the questions which are being discussed in the Manchester Conference. Some of us might wish to see a bolder policy foreshadowed. What, however, concerns us here is that every one of the problems to be faced—every one of the recommendations to be made to the men who represent Labour in the House of Commons—is of vital importance to us. We would go further. We would say that until woman is allowed to have a voice in the matters that touch her and her children so nearly, mistakes will continue to be made. That which is comparatively unimportant will be pushed to the front, and questions of life and death, health and disease, moral cleanliness and the impurity that makes for degeneracy, will be allowed to wait for politicians' convenient seasons.

That this is beginning to be felt by men everywhere constitutes our hope for the immediate future. We pray that this Conference of men and women workers, held at so critical a moment in our history, realising the need for comradeship between all who work honestly for the country, will, by its strongly-expressed determination, bring nearer the object we have at heart—the entry of woman in the State as in the city, the village, and the family into true and living co-partnership with men.

Let them remember the whole truth, now so fully tested, "Together we rise or together we fall."

C. DESPARD.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE LABOUR CONFERENCE,	Ruth Cavendish Bentinck.
LABOUR'S OPPORTUNITY	C. Despard
IN WOMAN'S STRENGTH LABOUR CAN CONQUER.	John Scurr.
VOTES FOR WOMEN OR A LOWER STANDARD FOR ALL.	John Cameron Grant.
OUR POINT OF VIEW. POLITICAL MEETING.	
WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE CAMPAIGN IN MANCHESTER.	
ON THE THRESHOLD OF VICTORY. DESPARD ARMS.	

IN WOMAN'S STRENGTH LABOUR CAN CONQUER.

By John Scurr.

When the Trade Union delegates meet at Manchester for the annual conference of the Labour Party, they will be faced with new problems arising out of the employment of women. They will no doubt come to certain decisions which may be good, bad, or indifferent; but their decisions will not be of much avail, because women, as such, will not be really represented.

Of course, someone will say that Miss Mary Macarthur and her devoted band of workers, representing the Women's Trade Union, will be there, and I feel quite sure that she will put up a good case for any point of view that women may wish pressed.

Yet, brave and as sincere as she is, she is seriously handicapped. As a secretary of a union with some thousands of members she will not be as effective in the influence of affairs as a secretary of a union with 500 male members. She will have voting power at the Congress, as the Labour Party is based on democracy, but outside the Congress her thousands do not count. When the secretary of a union with 500 male members speaks, the powers that be know that the bulk of his members can vote, and that therefore they can determine the fate of members of Parliament. Mary Macarthur's thousands are powerless, because they are unarmed. The men can use the political weapon; the women cannot.

Yet women are in industry in considerable numbers, and were so before the war. According to the census returns of 1911, no less than 5,851,849 females over ten years of age were "gainfully" occupied. Since the war it is calculated that 500,000 more women are employed. It may be taken for granted that when the war is over at least 6,000,000 women will be engaged in industry.

They will, however, be in a large number of cases in industry under totally differing conditions from those prevailing before the war. In the metal and engineering trades by the introduction of automatic machinery workshop practice has been revolutionised. Operations of a semi-skilled character, formerly performed by skilled men, are now done by women machine manipulators.

I do not wish to enter into the futile controversy as to the comparative efficiency of men's work and women's work, but the fact remains that women are paid less than men.

I find in Glasgow, for example, that in one firm, of the 314 men employed—

13.4 per cent.	earned not more than 20s.
14.6 "	" " over 20s. but not more than 30s.
39.8 "	" " " 30s. " " " 50s.
32.2 "	" " " 50s.

but of the 103 women employed—

35.9 per cent.	earned not more than 20s.
64.1 "	" " over 20s. but not more than 30s.

and none earned over 30s.

The men kept, on the whole, worse time than the women.

Yet, despite this discrepancy in pay the women's wages were better than they had received in other industries before the war, as investigation in Glasgow shows that not 10 per cent. then earned over 20s.

These figures give much food for thought. If women are to be asked to leave the engineering and metal industries and to go back to their pre-war occupations they will want the new wages. If they cannot get them, they will always hanker after the better-paid engineering business, and having had a workshop training they will be in the position of an army of trained semi-skilled labour which may be used to the disadvantage of the skilled men.

Organisation alone can get justice for the working woman in those trades which custom may regard as exclusively her province, and prevent her being a blackleg. But trade-union organisation for men has advanced only with the granting of the vote to men. 1867 enfranchised the artisan; 1873 saw the Trade Union Acts passed, and the artisans' unions went ahead by leaps and bounds; 1884 enfranchised the labourer, and from that time the unskilled workers' unions have made great progress.

The moral for labour is obvious. Women will be a danger in industry so long as they are unorganised. They will remain unorganised, even as the men did, until they are recognised politically. Given the vote, they become politically important, and are able to understand the benefit of organisation.

So let the Labour Party Conference determine on one thing, viz., that this Parliament shall not dissolve until women have been enfranchised. Now is the time. Make Mary Macarthur's thousands into citizens like yourselves; make every working woman count even as every working man counts. Labour will never come into its own whilst the women stand and wait. Make the women your comrades, otherwise under the capitalist system in which we live, they will be used as a weapon to destroy your standard of life. In their weak position they can be easy victims. A word from you now will make them strong. And in their strength you will conquer!

VOTES FOR WOMEN; OR, A LOWER STANDARD FOR ALL.

By John Cameron Grant.

(A Former Large Employer of Labour—Men and Women.)

The Lord's Prayer bids us pray: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," and the phrase holds in it one of the deep sayings of the greatest Master of all human questions; and, more than any of us think, perhaps, it has in it an economic bearing upon some of the most far-reaching and vital questions that we people of the British Isles have in the near future to settle for ourselves.

Next to the great question of the existence of democracy, which is wrapped up in our present struggle against militarism, there awaits us the great question of what use we are going to make of our victory. Are we still going to leave temptation lying in the way of organised capital, in the way of the captains and kings of industry, and all those

of their kingdom; or are we going to deliver them from evil by removing that temptation? This is the problem that is before all workers, the problem before every one who has to work by the sweat of his brow or body, by the labour of his head or hands. In plain English: Are we going to give women the vote to ensure true collective bargaining; are we going to see to it that we do not have one-half of the body of labour unwillingly, but yet inevitably, exploited by the other half, who will be helpless to bring about any real combination or any real protection of their wage value owing to the lack of the protecting power of the parliamentary franchise?

We have long passed the time when it was a debatable question whether the vote gave to voters

any power of protecting themselves in matters industrial. All that Labour has won, it has won by the power of the vote; all that Labour has lost, or has not gained, has been owing to the fact of its not insisting in the past that that protection should be extended equally to the sexes. I write with some knowledge in this matter. Every worldly-wise executive engineer, every able and far-seeing inventor or producer, has to-day to face the facts of this problem and as things go at present has, by taking advantage of circumstances, to exploit the fact.

It is not a question of what one would like to do, or what one thinks ought to be done, but what the manufacturer in the iron grip of economic necessity is compelled to do, or to retire from civilisation and its struggles altogether and become an anchorite in the desert. So long as there are questions of industrial production to be solved and mastered, just so long will the problem of industrial conditions assume the form it has to-day, if the basic conditions are not allowed, and there is in the State a huge body of unprotected slave labour to draw upon as against the smaller body of labour nominally called free and protected.

In plain language, automatic and semi-automatic machinery worked by unskilled or semi-skilled female labour, paid at a lower wage than that paid to the male worker, will be the end aimed at and the end achieved by reviving industrialism feverishly endeavouring to recoup itself and satisfy the demands of a greedy commerce, hungry after its lean years of fasting and fighting. Whatever went on in the years before the gap torn in the century by the bloody trail of war will be ten times intensified in those that follow it, unless the only rational means of preventing the wrong be taken at once.

A Fearful Temptation.

We are now educating and training, not thousands or even tens of thousands, but perhaps millions of women to step into works and factories, and in many instances to replace men altogether in these establishments. Oh! it is a fearful temptation you workers are putting before the employers, and if the evil come back and break upon you, who but yourselves will be to blame?

The solution is such a simple one, it is all wrapped up in the wage value and the political power to protect it. Unless this power is in the hands of all workers—men and women alike—I can see but the blackest of futures in the industrial world, and, indeed, in every other world of work as well. It is not going to be a very easy time, the time that follows the war, not easy for anybody, and doubly hard will it be made if in all the seething turmoil of wrong and unrest men and women are going to be brought into strife and competition when they should be fast bound together in a common necessity and by a common effort.

The sheet-anchor of safety in modern industry is the power of collective bargaining on the part of the workers. It is less than decent, and more than insane, to talk about collective bargaining, when possibly in some cases more than half of the would-be makers of the bargain are left outside the four corners of the indenture.

What have I to gain from Woman Suffrage? Why should I waste so much as a day in a busy life on the matter? Well, there is only one reason, and that is quite good enough for me—I love my country and I love my fellows, whom I have sometimes served and whom I have sometimes had to direct, and I feel that this is a root question, not one of mere pecuniary gain or advantage, but a question vital to the health and happiness of every one of us, directly or indirectly as individuals and as a nation.

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I have in this appeal taken perhaps a somewhat narrow view of the great question of Woman Suffrage, but it is a very real and genuine and, indeed, anxious and dangerous phase of the matter. It is one, moreover, with which we have to deal at once. It is, and will be, one of "daily bread" for thousands of us, and as the Greatest of Teachers did not scorn to include an appeal for bread in the prayer that covers the whole range of human and divine possibilities, perhaps its narrowness may be pardoned, and even approved by those of my brothers who think that perhaps the common things of life are among the most important, and among them the equality of men and women the most important of all.

"Particularly by Women."

Apart from the fact that they fully confirm my own knowledge, practice and observation, and the sweeping predictions I formulated therefrom long before the present war, and embodied, to take only one record, in "Man, Woman, and the Machine," the following quotation from a recent paper, read by its President before one of our most active professional engineering bodies, may not be without weight and interest:—

"So successful has this work of dilution been, that in some of the national shell factories the women's labour amounts to as much as 95 per cent. of the total. Nor has dilution only been applied to those classes of work in which repetition by the million or by the thousand takes place, but it has been found that very many other classes of work can be done after but short training by men previously reckoned unskilled, and particularly by women. Of work done by women at the present time, selected from an ever-widening field, I take the following examples:—All varieties of machine-shop work, such as drilling, boring, shaping, slotting, key-seating, milling, surface-grinding, tool-setting, fitting, skilled assembling, and erecting. These are among the classes of work of main interest to the members of this Institution, but I may mention that women are making equal progress in such industries as wood-working, aeroplane building, boiler-making, laboratory work, optical work, and instrument making, as well as in nearly all branches of ordnance small arms, etc. They have also successfully taken up such occupations as driving, overhead travelling cranes, shipyard and building cranes, motor testing, and, as is well known, inspecting and testing materials of all descriptions, involving the use of micrometers, verniers, surface gauges, and other measuring instruments, including the slide rule. In fact, so wide is the scope of women's work that a well-known member of this Institute, who has taken a leading part in the dilution campaign—and his view is not a solitary one—stated that it was his firm conviction that, given two more years of war, he could build a battleship, from keel to aerial in all its complex detail, and have it ready for trial, entirely by women's labour."

Need I say more! To workers that are wise goes this appeal: Give the women the vote, make them equally with yourselves members of your unions, and in protecting your sisters protect yourselves and protect your country!

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

Come and join in our great game of PILING UP POUNDS next Saturday, 4.30-7 p.m.—pounds of anything eatable or cookable, or of money—to enable the Despard Arms to carry on its great national service of providing both good food and recreation for women and men at work and for Tommy and Jack. Mrs. Despard will be present. Mrs. Corner will sing, Miss Julie Huntsman recite, Mrs. and Miss Van Raalte play pianoforte duets. Tea at usual prices. Walk in, please! Walk out pleased!

THEY SUPPORT US.

OUR POINT OF VIEW.

Of Urgent National Importance.

At a Conference of the National Union of Teachers, held at Birmingham last Saturday, a demand was made that the Executive should put immediate pressure upon the Board of Education to raise the salaries of teachers and in the event of refusal "to formulate strong measures." This has a militant ring and, in the circumstances of to-day, comes largely from women teachers. In last Sunday's *Observer* a correspondent calls attention to the scandalously low salaries offered, which, as he observes, "is not a matter that concerns teachers themselves: it is a matter of urgent national importance. Our indifference has checked and deteriorated the supply of entrants to the profession in a way that can be called nothing but alarming. The country is getting barely half the number of teachers it needs." He instances an advertisement from the Metropolitan Asylums Board for "A Head Teacher (Female) for the School at Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton," and remarks: "The Metropolitan Asylums Board might have said more briefly 'Headmistress,' but that would have lost them the chance of publishing our national and official contempt for teachers." This head teacher is to be fully trained and certificated and is to organise the educational work of 550 children—work "which, from the nature of the institution, presents special difficulties." "The salary offered is £130 per annum, rising £5 per annum to £160, with dinner on school days." At a meeting of the Berkshire County Council, an Alderman said that "the starvation salaries paid to some of the teachers employed by the Education Committee were a disgrace to the country." A correspondent, referring to the recent Education Conference, in London, states that women were urged to regard their small salaries as affording them opportunity for doing their bit for their country. Meanwhile, Germany is not neglecting education: she knows its value. The *Observer's* correspondent insists that the first and most urgent of all educational reforms is the payment of adequate salaries to competent teachers, and considers that this vital matter should be taken out of the hands of "petty wrangling local authorities" and made a national concern, a simple way being the ear-marking of a portion of the Government grant as a salary fund. His concluding words may well be considered by the Labour Conference and the weight of their new influence thrown into the scale in favour of a speedy realisation:—

If we want the future citizens of the Empire to be worthy of their birthright we must give them the best teachers. If we want the best teachers we must pay for them; but if we are content to let the minds of our children be starved or murdered by eleven shillingsworth of "female," then in heaven's name let us stop prating about our zeal for education.

Women and the Law.

Great interest is aroused in Mr. Holford Knight's motion, to be brought before the annual meeting of the Bar Council after we go to press, in favour of breaking down the sex barrier in the legal profession. The *Times*, in a leader advocating the reform, says (January 17):—

"The present position is that both branches of the law remain closed to women, not by any natural incapacity, but by formal and traditional enactment. It is not a satisfactory state of affairs, and for our own part we should rejoice, on the broadest grounds, to see these artificial barriers abandoned. . . . If, as we hold, our strength as a nation depends largely on a proper distribution of the energies of all our men and women—on the final emancipation of men from women's work and the retention of women wherever they can fairly compete with men—then it is not too soon to give practical expression to the principle wherever it is found."

Soldiers' Wives and Drink.

Again, the old cry is being raised of the great increase of drinking among soldiers' wives, and there is talk of enforcing the Memorandum issued in December, 1914, which threatened loss of the separation allowances if soldiers' wives were frequently convicted of drunkenness. We are glad to see the *Daily News* taking a sound attitude on this question, by pointing out that the Civil Law is competent to deal with such cases and that "the War Office is only asking for trouble if it proposes gratuitous interference with people with whom it has no concern." We could not have put it better ourselves!

"Very Valuable in These Days."

A small boy of five was run over in Stoke Newington last week, and, at the inquest, the Coroner is reported to have said: "Boy life is very valuable in these days." We conclude that if the boy's little sister had been killed, Dr. Wynn Westcott would have considered the incident of less importance. A rapid production of babies, particularly of boys, is being urged upon the mothers of to-day, so that the wastage of human life caused by the war may be made up and an army supplied for future wars. If boys could readily be supplied to order, there is little doubt the authorities at the War Office would offer the mothers a bonus for a liberal consignment of young humans of the bellicose sex. It might be pointed out to Dr. Wynn Westcott that, at the Guildhall last week, the Prime Minister repeated the remark he had already made as Minister of Munitions, to the effect that the war could not be carried out without the work of the women. If this is the case, in fifteen years time, the importance to the country of the little sister making munitions at home might be equal to that of the brother manipulating a machine-gun abroad.

The Weakness of the Law.

In the Press early this week there appeared a report of a case in which a woman appealed to Mr. Denman, the Marylebone magistrate, for the recovery of her child. She stated that twelve months ago she had been obliged to enter a hospital to undergo an operation, and as her husband was at the Front his family had taken the child. When she recovered she applied for the child, but her parents-in-law had told her she could not have it unless she paid £12 for its keep. Mr. Denman regretted his inability to help the woman, and recommended her to apply to a society for the protection of women. Of course, we all know our own capacity and that "the law's a hass," but it is something of a novelty for a magistrate to suggest that women may be able to act where the law is powerless.

CONGRATULATIONS TO HUGH WALTER HARBORD, son of our good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Harbord, of Tottenham, who has received the D.S.O. recently, and is now promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 88.

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THE VOTE

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MISCELLANEOUS.—cont.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE will hold Public Meetings at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, every Wednesday afternoon, at 3 o'clock. Jan. 24th, Mr. George Lansbury, Mrs. Mustard, "Daughters of the Empire."

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