

THE VOTE,
JANUARY 5, 1917.
ONE PENNY.

1917 C. DESPARD.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, JAN. 5, 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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THE WOMAN OF 1917.

“Three Weeks’ Training—Perfection Guaranteed.”

The part women may play in the making of this new year, “is one of the most fateful in the world’s destiny,” says a correspondent to *The Times*, who believes that through being organised and helped by the State, the women of Great Britain in 1917 ought to be able to avert the crisis of decreasing food production. The three problems which must be faced are:—

(a) The necessity for each village to have its gang or gangs of women workers, under a responsible forewoman.

(b) The demand for a large number of educated young women trained in land work.

(c) The great shortage of housing accommodation.

A strong appeal is made to the women of education to seek a *short course* of training in such subjects as milking, calf-rearing, care and management of stock and farm horses, general farm management, tree pruning and spraying, hedge culturing, market gardening and vegetable growing, poultry keeping, packing for market, book-keeping. Three weeks’ training—then a woman is to start forth and direct other women. It sounds simple, but the folly of it! Granting that women are cleverer and more versatile than men, still, it is ludicrous to expect that in three weeks they can pick up the knowledge gained by men in anything from three to seven years. After the war a great chorus will arise: “Women had their chance, but did not embrace it; they failed; they could not do the work.” Of course they are bound to fail if they are foolish enough after three weeks’ training to profess expert knowledge in farm life.

Why are the only jobs, dealing with the food problem, offered to educated women those that are given to uneducated labourers? There are other important things besides increasing the food supply. There is the preserving of what we have already, but no woman has been asked to be food controller, a position many women are well qualified to fill. Waste will not cease until women have power to prevent it. No such post has been offered women. Instead of taking so reasonable a step, a woman is dubbed unpatriotic if she has not liked hoeing turnips, lifting potatoes, milking cows, cleaning byres, feeding pigs and spreading manure.

At the outset of war, had women been consulted in one thing that affects them, the food and feeding of the people would have received attention, but no man troubled to think of such obvious matters, until the grim spectre of famine threatens Europe. Had the appeal to women gone forth then, with two years of practical work and training behind them they would now be capable of much; as it is all is chaos and disorganisation. If women, after three weeks’ training, undertake to superintend “gangs of women,” they are bound to fail.

Women must exercise constant vigilance, or under the word “patriotic” such liberty as they have may be snatched from them. In a well-known paper I read:

A national conscription for women would bring more rapid results not only in food production, but in all Government work. It would stimulate and vitalise women’s latent powers—to a large extent an unworked mine—and produce discipline and emulation.

Before the colossal impertinence of such a suggestion one stands dumbfounded,

Compulsion for voteless women means slavery. The dictionary definition of a slave is "a bond-servant, a person who is wholly subject to the will of another who has no will of his own, but whose person and services are wholly under the control of others." But in any case, compulsion for women would not help at all. Votes for women would, for then, and then only, would the Government get the help of women's brains, and it is in brain power, alack, that the Government is so sadly deficient.

"Women on the land!" "Back to the land!" is the cry on all sides, yet it is fast becoming impossible to live on the land. Trains are being taken off, intercourse with town life is at a standstill. In-

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

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



DARE TO BE FREE.

3 p.m. Speakers: Mr. George Lansbury and Mrs. Mustard, "Daughters of the Empire." Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Hall at 4.30 (6d.).

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, "Lessons in History."

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. Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Hall at 4.30 (6d.).

Wednesday, February 7.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, 3 p.m. Speakers: The Rev. W. Major Scott, M.A., on "Neutrals," and others.

Friday, February 9.—CROYDON PUBLIC MEETING, Lecture Room, Public Hall, 7 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Despard.

PROVINCES.

Monday, January 8.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Public Meeting, Suffrage Club, 231, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road, 7.30. Paper by Mrs. Morrish. Report of Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases. READING. Whist Drive, Trade Union Club (Lecture Room), 40, Oxford-street, 7.30. Tickets, 6d.

Tuesday, January 9.—SOUTHSEA. Members' Meeting, 17, Lombard-street, 7.30 p.m.

Monday, January 15.—MIDDLESBROUGH. "At Home," Suffrage Club, 7.30. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge. Subject: "The Position of the Women of Canada and South Africa—A Suffrage Tour in Both These Countries." Music.

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

THE MINERVA CAFE, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Open every day except Sunday to men and women. Vegetarian lunches from 12 to 2 p.m.; teas from 3 to 6 p.m. Smoking-room. The large room is available for meetings. Apply to Mrs. Fisher.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W. 1d. and 3d. meals, weekdays at noon. Children's Guest House and Milk Depot for Nursing Mothers.

THE DESPARD ARMS, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. (five minutes' walk from Maple's). Open to all for refreshments (dinners and suppers from 6d.) and recreation. Weekdays, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Breakfasts from 7 a.m. Sundays, 4 to 9 p.m. Bedrooms for women at work.

stead of back to the land, the tending of practical people is to hasten back to the towns. The Harmsworth Press are always unearthing plots; is this a plot to ruin the country and the trade of the country?

Instead of appealing to women to go on to the land, let us demand votes so that they may make the country attractive and country work possible. Men alone are quite incapable (has not the war once more proved this to the hilt) of governing. Give women the vote so that they may face the problems that confront us to-day, and be ready to take part in the reconstruction of the social and political world that will come with peace. EUNICE G. MURRAY.

OUR POLITICAL WORK.

Preparation for the Future.

It is believed by many who should be in a position to judge that the war is certain to end this year. If this is the case, then it becomes more than ever the duty of all suffragists to rally round their flag, and prepare themselves for the difficult time that always follows the end of a great war. Women must be in possession of the vote, and ready with their programme of important reforms, in order to take part in the inevitable reconstruction.

With this object in view, the Women's Freedom League have arranged a meeting to be held at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., on Saturday, January 13, at 3.30 p.m. Branch secretaries and active members are particularly urged to come to this meeting, to discuss with the political committee our present work and to help draw up a programme in which all suffragists will be able to join for the benefit of their sex and their country. Mrs. Despard will take the chair; Mrs. Tanner, Mrs. Corner, and others will speak. Tea will be served to those who wish it at 4.30, so that there will be an opportunity for general conversation, which it is hoped will stimulate to greater and greater activity.

The Speaker's Conference.

We hear on good authority that the Conference has resumed its sittings on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10.30 a.m. Our picketers will, therefore, leave this office as usual at 10 o'clock, to parade outside the House of Commons while Members are entering and leaving the Conference, in order to show them that we are watching, and are determined not to allow any franchise reform to be carried through which does not include women.

Will all members who can help in this important service to the suffrage cause come to headquarters on either or both days each week at a few minutes before 10 o'clock? ANNE E. CORNER (Acting Political Organiser).

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.

DAUGHTERS AND DAUGHTERLANDS.

The watchwords of the politics of to-day are Co-operation and Consolidation. In the hour of danger, while their help was as yet unasked, the sons and daughters of the Dominions beyond the seas hurried to the aid of the Motherland—the sons wearing the uniform of soldiers of the King, the daughters that of the army of healing. It would be impossible to estimate the value of the devotion given so ungrudgingly, though the general approval of the invitation to the representatives of the Dominions to join the War Cabinet may be taken as an indication of the gratitude of the Mother-Country. Already an urgent summons has been sent to the Prime Ministers of these lands that, together with the statesmen of this country, they may deliberate on questions of war and peace—that peace by means of which the British Empire is to be more firmly welded together and upon which the fairer future of a more civilised world is to be built.

It is true that the tendency towards co-operation and consolidation has not been entirely the result of the war. The movement in favour of Imperial federation is more than thirty years old, though it scarcely came within the sphere of practical politics until after the Boer war. The federation of the Canadian provinces in 1867, of the separate colonies of Australia into the Commonwealth in 1900, and the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, were the natural precursors of that further interaction of national forces, for which the daughter-lands have waited and which the call across the seas seems to herald.

Standing Together for the State.

The same tendency towards co-operation and consolidation can be traced in home politics. It has grown with the growth of freedom and enlightenment. Religious and social prejudices have, to a great extent, been broken down. The bands of party politics have been loosened. The recognition and reconciliation of conflicting interests have liberated energies, brought dormant forces into action, and added intensity to the life of the body politic.

Long before the war it had become apparent that the old party system, as this generation had grown up to know it, was undergoing considerable modifications. Mr. Asquith recently expressed the opinion that the party system was the most efficacious instrument of government in times of peace. Since his whole political life has been spent under the shadow of party politics, it is scarcely conceivable that he should think otherwise. On the other hand, there has been a growing feeling among more independent politicians, both inside and outside of the House of Commons, that party government was not likely to be a lasting element in British politics. The late Coalition Government and the present Government, over which Mr. Lloyd George presides, have shaken together the old political elements, and the old lines of cleavage have disappeared. Whatever this Government does, or does not, represent, it certainly stands for a union of conflicting ideals. Conservative papers urge it towards large and comprehensive schemes of social reform. They commit it to the policy of reconciliation with Ireland, and it is the part of the Radical *Daily News* to insinuate that initiative should be balanced by caution. The expression "party truce" might lead us to the conclusion that existing manifestations of co-operation and consolidation are transient, but Mr. Walter Long, an "Aboriginal" Tory, of the days before the Tory party was swamped by the flood of Liberal Unionism, is of opinion that we shall not go back to that old

system, under which a politician opposed a measure, quite apart from his individual opinion of its usefulness, because it was supported by the rival party. He prophesies, in fact, that insistence on the duty of an opposition to oppose will no longer be the inspiration of British politics.

In face of a common danger, the interests of this country and of the Empire are seen to be at one. Welcoming hands are held out to the daughter-lands, in recognition of their devoted service. The olive-branch is extended towards the sister-isle. From a still larger circle the Allies gather together, and international meetings in London, Paris, and Rome are the manifest signs of the consolidation of their aims and interests.

Welcome the Women, too!

Is this Government, which is standing for consolidation and co-operation at home and abroad, going to take any action towards the reconciliation and political recognition of the larger half of the home population? Woman suffrage has always been one of the subjects of deep-rooted interest which has transcended the bounds of party politics. It was for this reason, so we were told in the past, that, in spite of large majorities in the House of Commons, women still continued to find themselves voteless. With a party Government in power, it was said to be impossible to pass a non-party measure. Unfortunately, the converse of this proposition can not be established. It might have been thought that one of the first acts of a non-party Government would be to pass a measure of Woman Suffrage. But the non-party Coalition Government came and went, and, though women found ever and ever fresh duties devolving upon them, their right of citizenship was still denied, even though that right was now acknowledged by many who had been their opponents in the past.

Mr. Lloyd George has only been Prime Minister for a few weeks, but he has already shown that his administration is likely to be marked by courage in enterprise and conciliation in method. He knows that the settlement of the problems of Imperial federation, of Ireland, and of Woman Suffrage are long overdue, and cannot be deferred without grievous loss to the State, which now, more than ever before, needs the loyal service of all its sons and daughters, both from far and near. No one knows better than he the truth of the proverb that union is strength. He aims at the consolidation of the British Empire by means of the co-operation of its several parts. To achieve this he calls upon the units of Empire to accept its duties and its responsibilities. He knows the miracles which can be achieved by collective action when on each individual worker is laid the responsibility of using every power to the utmost in the service of the nation. He holds the modern conception of a State whose citizens shall be equal before the law, and from each of whom service may be demanded in the interest of the whole.

Will he have the courage to do justice to women, as he has expressed the desire to do justice to Ireland? Will he show due recognition to the daughters of the home-land, and insist that they shall have the same rights as are enjoyed by the women of the daughter-lands which he has called into council—those rights of full citizenship which are the possession of the women of New Zealand, of the Commonwealth of Australia, and of the Western provinces of Canada? E. M. N. C.

THE OFFICE HOURS of the Women's Freedom League in future will be from 9.30 to 5.30, and from 9.30 to one o'clock on Saturdays.

THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, January 5th, 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 VOTE orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

Telephone: MUSEUM 1429.
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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.

1917.

We stand on the threshold of a New Year and look forward. Dark is the prospect with which we are faced. Events move as swiftly as storm clouds in these days, and it may be that before many weeks are over our heads the political horizon will clear; it may be that reason will prevail; and that the tortured nations will be able to rejoice in the hope of an early peace. On the other hand, so mighty are the forces engaged, so tangled and intricate are the problems to be settled, that this year may end as it begins in the awful grip of war, prolonged to fierce bitterness and an inevitable weakening of the nations.

Never in living memory, seldom in the history of the world, has a year opened to such tremendous issues, and never has the question, What are we to do; how are we to meet the future? been more difficult to answer.

In the decisions that may be taken—though they will affect women far more deeply than words can express—they will have no voice. Indeed, at the present moment, by far the greater number of the men of Great Britain are in the same position. They have allowed their liberties to be filched away from them, and now they stand where the women have stood for generations, unrepresented.

It is possible that the push of hunger may make popular feeling in Germany vocal, so that some attention will have to be paid to it; but we are safe in predicting that the time and the terms of the peace will be settled over the heads of the peoples.

What, then, are we to do? Is there any use kicking against the pricks? Why not let things slide?

Had it not been that so many in the past, who knew what was right and did not even attempt to do it, have taken up this attitude, we should not stand where we do to-day; and if we wish to avert any recurrence of the tragedy through which the world is passing now, we must adopt a different line of thought and action.

In our private affairs, the New Year is a time of settling up, writing off failures, making a fresh start. Let us try to carry this process into the wider life of which we form a part.

Our League to begin with. Nearly ten years ago we constituted ourselves a Society, and chose the title which we bear before the world—the Women's Freedom League. Through fair weather and foul we have held together. We have braved difficulties; we have made sacrifices, nothing has seemed too hard for us in face of our object: women's freedom, and with and through it the freedom of our nation.

Not yet have we achieved our purpose; generations indeed may pass before our vision of a State, ordered and free, giving opportunities for happiness and service to all within its confines, will be fulfilled. Our part is never to lower our ideals. And this should be the first of our New Year resolutions.

It may be that 1917 will open to us the door of opportunity. Everything will depend upon the way in which we use it.

We are apt to forget at these times that there is a mental and spiritual, as well as a physical world. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the world we see—the social system under which we live—is but a reflection of that other world. Hence the great importance of a righteously directed public opinion.

We ask for the recognition of our citizen rights, partly because we know that the power behind our demands for social righteousness will give them in the nation such a weight as they have never had before. As, therefore, the hour of our political emancipation draws nearer we should be definitely formulating these demands.

Now is the time to think and act; now, when the house in which we have lived with all its buttresses of conventions, prejudices and illusions, is breaking up, and when, if we are to survive the shock, the work of reconstruction must begin.

What is our plan of campaign to be? We are glad to know that this question is in the minds of a number of our members. At first sight our task may seem so complex as to be almost hopeless. But if we remember that in the many is the one, and that progress consists in an ever closer approach to practical realization of that one—humanity in its perfection—we shall not be daunted.

Looking at it so, we shall find the vistas ever widening before us. In the meantime there are certain definite steps to be taken, and these, in our League and through our organ, THE VOTE, we must press forward unceasingly.

The People and the Land—some well-thought-out scheme for freeing the earth, our mother, so that she may bring forth abundantly, and that all her sons and daughters may be fed.

Labour and the State—not compulsory, but free service, gladly rendered, wisely organised and adequately rewarded; man's work and woman's work fitting in one with the other, through the medium of a mutual loyalty.

Commerce—no longer war-producing; but, being based on wise co-operation, wealth-producing.

"Our heroes' homes"—using the time that remains before the disbanding of our armies in allotting to their service, and preparing for their occupation, something better than the dreary, shapeless hovels from which, alas! many of them went out when the war-call came.

Preparation for the infants who are to make the nation of the future, careful consideration of mother-welfare and child-welfare; some national provision that will, in the near future, make infant mortality and child poverty impossible.

An extended and amended educational system, for all classes of the people, by means of which each individual child may be prepared for its own particular place in the world.

A larger protection for the young, the untried, the congenitally weak and the aged. These are some

of our problems, and we should like to see them worked out in detail in successive issues of THE VOTE.

Going out beyond the League into the nation. There is much to strike off—mistakes, failures, a vacillating policy at home and abroad, an ominous relaxation of that initiative, that independent thought and action of which the nation has boasted in the past. Yet is there no reason to despair. Right through, the vitality of our race, the undreamt of reserves in wealth, and the innate strength of our deeply-rooted principles have been apparent.

It is on these that men and women of goodwill must work, and it may be that before this year has run its course we shall see in our land the birth of a democracy such as the world has never known.

With such a hope before us, we can go forward, fully confident in the ultimate triumph of reason and goodwill over prejudice and passion.

C. DESPARD.

WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

Surprising the Men.

The *Times*, in its "Review of the Year," published on January 1, says: "The employment of women on munition work has steadily increased and has extended to a great variety of operations previously confined to men. Their capacity, adaptability, and industry have surprised managers and foremen and have won general acknowledgment."

Chairman of Company.

Lord Rhondda's place as chairman of the Sanatogen Company has now been formally taken by his daughter, Lady Mackworth, who is a keen suffragist, as also Lord and Lady Rhondda.

Director of Company.

The publicity given in the Press to the splendid service of Mrs. Thomson-Price, a "reforming" director of Slaters' Restaurants, as evidenced at the recent meeting of the company, has brought pleasure to her many friends. The enthusiasm and appreciation of the shareholders were shown not only in words of highest praise, but in deeds—unanimous re-election, with confidence in still greater achievements in the future.

Honouring the Nurses.

Nurses, to the number of 180, are included in the New Year's decorations, and it is gratifying to know that the heroism of these women is being more and more widely recognised. Members and friends of the Women's Freedom League will be specially glad to see that among the sisters in charge thus honoured is Mrs. Duncan, whom so many knew as a staunch suffragist and devoted worker at headquarters.

Indispensable Women.

Women in omnibuses and in other departments had helped materially to save the situation, and it hardly seemed possible that the company could do without them in future, said Mr. T. Clarkson, chairman of the National Steam Car Company, at the annual meeting in London a few days ago.

Outside Their Province.

It is stated officially that the executive committee of the National Union of Railwaymen have declined to support the movement for urging upon the Government the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women. The executive take the view that the function of the committee is administrative in character, and therefore is not empowered to make a declaration of opinion upon women's suffrage in the name of the National Union of Railwaymen.

Women and the Law.

Mr. Holford Knight, at the general meeting of the Bar on January 18, will move: "That the General Council do consider and report upon the

desirability of making provision for the admission of duly qualified women to the profession."

Women and the Church.

Mr. Holford Knight urges a statement by the Archbishops that women's claims will be considered by the committee of inquiry as to the more effective teaching office of the Church.

A Rare Distinction.

The Order of St. Catherine has been conferred on Lady Buchanan, wife of the British Ambassador at Petrograd. It is rare that this distinction is given to a foreigner.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

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

A FORWARD POLICY.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR MADAM,—I have been much pleased by the letters appearing in your paper from "Winifred Giles," and thoroughly agree with her that NOW is the time for a big forward movement to emphasize our demand for immediate enfranchisement. The campaign suggested by your correspondent promises important results without incurring a very large expenditure. If any class of people require special educative attention it is women war-workers and other women working for the nation in its hour of stress and danger. Thousands of such women (I have met some of them) are working for the Government with that blind devotion to duty—man-directed and man-controlled—characteristic of a sex to whom human initiative has been so long denied, but without a single thought of the actual disabilities and threatened perils which their political subjection entails. To all such women a suffrage missionary should be sent with no uncertain message as to the absolute need of the vote to safeguard their industrial position and interests. Further, it is distressing to every devoted suffragist to note the curious apathy, which the present holds in contrast to that great wave of enthusiasm which swept womanhood and which might be said to have reached its culminating point in the cry: "Votes for Women, or Death for Women!" by a voice now silent. Yet if signs and portents of the moment be trustworthy never were the issues so fateful; never was the need greater for a tremendous rally of all the enthusiasm and determination of our suffrage forces. We are faced by the prospect of changes in the male electorate, but there is no indication that the question of woman suffrage will be seriously considered and included in any new adjustments of the franchise. The Women's Freedom League has been a splendid example and inspiration to all suffragists throughout this dark war time. Will its members now rise to the grand height of the present opportunity for service? Will they lead the vanguard in a fresh crusade suited to the temper and conditions of the times? If politicians can effect the changes they desire, leaving the women out, we may hang our harps on the weeping willow tree as far as our hopes are concerned for a generation or two. And it would seem, despite the petting and praising women have been receiving, that men have no idea of presenting us with justice in the shape of the vote unless they are *compelled*. It behoves us then as sensible suffragists to see what form that compulsion can best take, and then apply it. Your correspondent is perfectly right in her condemnation of lethargy at this critical juncture, so let us be up and doing now.—Yours sincerely,

L. A. M. PRIESTLEY McCracken.

EDUCATION IN A LAND WHERE WOMEN VOTE

"What the people need is, first of all, bread, and then education," said Danton the great leader in the French Revolution, and his statue in Paris represents him as standing with his protecting arms round the shoulders of a pitiful little couple, a boy and a girl, who have never had either the physical or the spiritual nourishment that they require. Lord Haldane, addressing a large audience recently, deeply deplored the inadequacy of our educational system, but even the great cataclysm of the last two years has been totally unable to rouse him to the need for a complete revolution in our educational ideals. It has only stimulated him to devise bridges by which the rivers dividing our educational system into class departments, elementary, secondary, and university, may be crossed by daring and exceptional spirits. His imagination does not rise to the possibility of these conventional boundaries being swept away, and a national system evolved for the whole people.

In real Democracies, such as Australia and New Zealand, this is the aim of all thinkers, and it is such a simple solution of apparently involved problems that no nation, save one enslaved to ancient feudal ideals, would have hesitated for a moment to adopt it. In Australasia a great and momentous change has taken place in education, and this revolution in ideals dates from the accession of women to political power. Twenty years ago, Miss Newcomb and I visited one of the highest educational officials in Sydney, and he told us with calm complacency that no country could equal New South Wales for its educational system, and that the inspectors and teachers had nothing to learn from their European compeers. Even at that very time, however, an educational renaissance was struggling into life, and as soon as the officials of the old order were swept away by superannation or death, the country became eagerly receptive of new ideas, leading teachers were commissioned by Government to enquire into the different European systems, by visiting schools and interviewing educationists on the Continent, in these islands, and in America. Even now, in spite of the dark war cloud that hangs over all enterprises, education in the Commonwealth is not in any way allowed to suffer, for it concerns the future of a race that now realises the significance of the past neglect of this most potent force for improvement and progress.

When Danton urged his famous plea, he was demonstrating the need of an equal opportunity for all, without distinction between rich or poor, boy or girl. An attempt has been made in Australasia to carry out this ideal. Since women have voted education has been made free in most of the Australian States. The crèche, the free kindergarten, the elementary and secondary schools, the polytechnics, are state supported; the universities are State endowed. Any child can be well equipped for any trade or profession, without his or her parents having to spend one penny on education, or even upon board and residence during the years of study, for State Bursaries are obtainable by all who need them. A Boer mother, in the Orange Free State, sighed sadly when she heard of this land of promise; her boy wished to be a civil engineer, but he could not afford a university training, so he had to continue as a clerk doing dreary routine work for a poor salary.

The abolition of fees in the State schools of the Commonwealth is due to the woman's vote, as is also the complete equality of boys and girls in all educational establishments. The new university at Perth (Western Australia) is entirely free, and as it takes

large numbers of women students, the Senate consists of an equal number of men and women. A preparation for that university is found in the modern school at Perth, where boys and girls are taught together from the lowest to the highest forms. The headmaster of this school said that the last few decades had proved the folly of the old belief that girls were intellectually inferior to boys. For three successive years girls have been the most successful mathematical candidates in the examinations in this State, as in others. Given equality of opportunity, they have, on an average, quite equal capacity with boys.

The woman's vote has introduced a training in mothercraft into all the schools. We were much impressed by the awakening of the maternal instinct in the souls of those girls who watched the tender care combined with scientific skill with which the teacher demonstrated the proper method of washing, dressing and feeding a real live morsel of humanity. The teacher told us that when there were no visitors present she had long talks with her girls about the wonderful potentialities of the tiny mite in her arms. "Not one of my girls," she added, "has ever gone wrong on leaving school, and I have taught here for eight years. They understand too well the responsibilities and privileges of maternity to bring an unwanted baby into the world." Women doctors teach in the schools and lecture in the training colleges throughout the Commonwealth upon care of infants and expectant mothers, and the rapid diminution of infant mortality throughout Australasia is due to the training the girls receive in the duties of motherhood. Fathercraft, too, is beginning to be studied, and Dr. Arthur, of Sydney, has written some excellent pamphlets for boys upon this subject.

The educational system of Australasia is marked by three main characteristics. 1. Liberty: the discipline is mainly self-discipline, and hence independence and self-reliance are developed, as has been shown again and again by the Anzacs in this war. 2. Fraternity: there is no artificial barrier of intellectual snobbery between students of different subjects; the classical scholar is in no way superior to the searcher into scientific truths. 3. Equality: equality of opportunity is given to all irrespective of creed, sex, or class. There is no State Church, therefore there is no social advantage to be derived from holding to any one special form of belief. Liberty, fraternity, equality, surely fitting ideals for a young and vigorous democracy.

MARGARET HODGE.

OUR POINT OF VIEW.

"The Empire—One."

With apologies to the *Observer*, we cull the following from the leading article in last Sunday's issue—the slight alterations which we have ventured to make being in italics:—

How many things which seemed alarming and complicated become plain and manageable when all the tortuous weakness of doubt and hesitation is put aside, and the simplicity of full courage is shown! Acting again where its predecessor faltered and postponed, the National Ministry has done a really great thing in *deciding to bring in a Woman Suffrage Bill directly the House meets in February*. The wonder is that so bold a step was not taken long ago. There is nothing to compare with the strange anomaly which has existed in the King's dominions since the struggle began. *Women with men have engaged in a common business, the most momentous that ever concerned them all, yet they have had no common means of management.*

"On Broader Lines."

With virile insight and splendid patriotism, *women realised the nature of the issue from the first, and rose to it. They have been thanked for their vigorous assistance to the old firm, where they ought to have been*

taken into partnership, that the work might be carried on in a new spirit and on broader lines. . . . *To leave women out of partnership* was a state of things which no man could defend on its merits, and that it could indefinitely continue with practical advantage or moral safety to Imperial relations was impossible. . . . *Women are in the struggle not only because it is our war, but also because they well know it to be their war. They would have been kindled to still more fervent effort had that moral been applied long ago by giving them their proper portion of control and responsibility. What was so suspiciously amiss is now at last to be remedied.*

We hope this is no fancy picture. As the *Observer* has already expressed its adherence to woman suffrage, the Editor will, we think, forgive us for the liberty we have taken, and welcome the wider application of his words.

Which IS Reasonable.

Says the *Weekly Dispatch*, of December 31, 1916:

A series of private inquiries among Members of both Houses have elicited the fact that opposition to a reasonable form of Women's Suffrage has altogether disappeared, and we must expect important developments in the near future.

Which is NOT reasonable.

TWOPENCE AN HOUR FOR FARM WORK.—One of the cases before the last meeting of the Worcester Board of Guardians was that of a woman field-worker who was not able to get work while the wintry weather lasted. She was paid 2d. an hour by her employer, and allowed no food. A member said the wages were scandalous, and another said the woman left home at about five o'clock in the morning and reached home again about eight o'clock at night. The Board granted outdoor relief.—*Daily News*, December 27, 1916.

And yet it is asked: Why are not many more women working on the land?

A New Ally.

News from Mr. and Mrs. Cousins—whose departure for India some time ago meant personal loss in inspiration and enthusiasm for the women's cause to their many friends in Great Britain and Ireland—is always welcome, and the following letter recently received will rejoice all our readers, as it tells of a new ally, none other than the Education Department of the Government of India, in spreading the fame of the Women's Freedom League. Mrs. Cousins writes to *THE VOTE* thus, under the heading of "Mrs. Despard and Indian Students":

It will interest your readers to know that every Indian student appearing for the public school final examination in India, equivalent to the Western matriculation examination, is introduced to our President in the following words, which occur in their text-book, "Heroes and Heroic Deeds of the Great War" (Mackenzie):—

"Sir John French's father was a captain in the Navy. After his death a Scottish uncle, Mr. William Smith, became the guardian of the family, which consisted of one son—the future great soldier—and five daughters, one of whom is Mrs. Charlotte Despard, of the 'Women's Freedom League.'"

I am doing what I can, by direct contact with a class of 150 boys and by writing to the Indian newspapers, to explain this allusion by giving facts of Mrs. Despard's life, and stating the aims and past work of the League. Thus the suffrage cause in India has found an unexpected ally in our Indian educational authorities, which is helping to controvert the usual misrepresentations concerning suffragettes circulated by the Press here in the past.

Mrs. Cousins' help in expanding the official statement will be invaluable, and we may look with confidence to an accession of woman suffrage strength in Madras and other parts of India as a result of the presence of such able and undaunted champions of votes for women as Mr. and Mrs. Cousins. Readers will hear, too, with pleasure that the Minister for Education in India, Sir Sankaran Nair, is a personal friend of our President. It is not surprising that he is a staunch champion of woman suffrage, as he belongs to that section of the people of India in which the matriarchate, not the patriarchate, has been the long-inherited tradition. The mother is the head of the family and takes the position held by the father among patriarchal people. He is the first Indian to hold the important office of Education

Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, and special efforts are likely to be made under his régime to facilitate the extension of education among the girls and women of India.

News from Salonika.

We have received through Mr. Aldridge the welcome news of the safe arrival at Salonica of Miss Nina Boyle, Mrs. Aldridge, and the members of their party, and shall look forward to hearing, in due course, further reports of their experiences.

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

Our soldiers spent a very happy Christmas before going on leave; they hope to return, but the ways of the military are mysterious. Miss E. J. Barrow most kindly took charge, in order to set the staff free, and was in residence from December 23 to 26. Our sincerest thanks to her for unfailing and devoted service. We are still in need of tablecloths, tea-cloths, a knife machine, and a pair of steps.

BRANCH NOTES.

Glasgow Suffrage Shop, 212, Bath-street.


A public meeting, to be addressed by Miss Margaret Hodge, London, will be held in the Central Halls, 29, Bath-street, on Tuesday, January 9, at 7.30 p.m. In Miss Hodge woman suffrage has a true and staunch friend. Members and all interested in our noble cause are asked to turn out in large numbers, and thus give Miss Hodge a Scotch welcome. Miss Hodge will also speak at an "At Home" in the Women's Freedom League Rooms, 212, Bath-street, on the same day, at 3 p.m.

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

Will members and friends please note that fortnightly afternoon meetings on the second and fourth Fridays will be held as previously, commencing on January 26, at 3.30 p.m. On February 9 Mrs. Despard will speak for our Branch at an early evening meeting at the Lecture Room, Public Hall. That date should be booked at once, so that our President may have a hearty welcome. We wish to thank Mrs. Bennett for the gift of a carpet for the office. WANTED: A sixpence or a shilling from every member, so that we may give a "good" social to our soldiers' and sailors' wives early this year. Our National Aid Corps funds are very low, or we would not make this appeal.

"IT'S AN ILL WIND . . ."

The practice recently adopted of sending quarterly income-tax papers to artisans and others who are now earning abnormal wages has provided what is regarded as official information by the wives, who now declare that the actual earnings of their husbands are put beyond doubt. In a case of wife assault at West Ham Police-court on December 30, the woman said her husband had always stunted her of money, but now that he knew she saw his income-tax paper a fortnight ago he gave her 3s. extra a week.



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brooches, 35s. 6d.; twin pins, blue
enamel, 19s. 6d.; twin pins, mother of
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