

THE VOTE,  
Sept. 18, 1914.  
ONE PENNY

*Co-operative Bread-making.*

# THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. X. NO. 256.

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 18, 1914.

Edited by C. DESPARD.

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LÆSEFORENING

"THE REALITY OF WAR."

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 Secretary—Miss F. A. UNDERWOOD.

## OUR POINT OF VIEW.

### The Home Secretary's Trick.

Mr. Chancellor, M.P., has sent the following letter to the National Political League's Information Bureau for circulation:—

The Home Office,  
 8th September, 1914.

DEAR CHANCELLOR,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply earlier to your letter of 1st September. As regards the Suffragists, as I stated in the House of Commons, all the women in prison were released and their sentences remitted. I also promised that during the war none of those released from prison on temporary discharge will be re-arrested, and if they report themselves to prison their sentences would be remitted. You will see from this that there is no real ground for irritation. In fulfilment of my promise no Suffragist has been arrested, but I understand that a Mrs. Crow was detained by local police in the North of England while instructions were being obtained from a superior officer, and she was soon set free. I would point out that all risk of inconvenience would disappear if all those out on temporary discharge would avail themselves of the amnesty and report themselves to prison. I will consider the other three points mentioned in your letter.

Yours very truly,  
 (Signed) R. MCKENNA.

Mr. McKenna's letter sheds a bright light on the generosity with which the supposed but altogether bogus "amnesty" was conceived. Deserters from the Army have only to return to duty to be forgiven; the women suffering for freedom's sake must "report themselves to prison." By making this preposterous condition, Mr. McKenna not only contrives to cut a pose as a magnanimous administrator, but also to achieve for the police what they were unable to do by their own efforts, *i.e.*, find out the numbers and identity of the various "mice," and the *alias* each might have assumed. This discreditable trick was put forward by the Home Secretary in His Majesty's name. A more consummate piece of official impudence we do not remember to have encountered.

### Mr. Churchill's Democracy.

Another interesting piece of correspondence is the letter sent by a Clapham member to the First Lord of the Admiralty. It expresses our point of view admirably:—

46, Lynette Avenue,  
 Clapham Common, S.W.,  
 Sept. 10, 1914

To  
 MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL, M.P.,  
 First Lord of the Admiralty.

SIR,  
 My attention has been drawn to an interview between yourself and Mr. William G. Shepherd, the representative of the United Press Association of America, in which you are stated to have said that we are one of the "Democratic nations of the world—the nations, I mean, where the people own the Government, and not the Government own the people"; and I feel that, while believing that this present war is a just one, and must be fought to the end, I must also protest, with all my might, as a woman, against the cant which is talked of "the people owning the Government." While no British woman and a large fraction of the men have any share in the National system of Imperial Government, I for one, member of the Woman's Freedom League, whose President is Mrs. Despard, the honoured sister of our esteemed military officer, Sir John French, mean to voice my discontent till the Liberal promises have been kept, and women's claims considered.

Yours faithfully,  
 (Mrs.) H. SAMUEL.

### The Prime Minister's Generosity.

Yet another official letter claims our attention. We ask our readers to consider it in connexion with Mrs. Despard's leading article.

(Copy of letter sent by War Office.)  
 (Form A.)

WAR OFFICE,  
 Sept. 12th, 1914.

Memorandum for.....

With reference to your application of the..... for payment of Separation Allowance and Allotments as the wife of....., you are informed that the same has been forwarded to the Regimental Paymaster, Army Pay Office....., who has been requested to furnish you with a reply, as well as to return certificates.

If your claim is in order, payment will be made to you in due course by the above Paymaster, and all further communications on the subject should be addressed to him, and not to the War Office.

L. MILES,  
 for Assistant Financial Secretary.

This man enlisted nearly a month ago, since when his wife has not had a farthing. She applied to the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association in her district and was told that if she went to their office the next Wednesday she would receive two shillings. She was also told to send to the Local Government Board for a form to fill in for relief from the Prince of Wales's Fund; to this application she has had no answer. It is only a short time since "The Times" made a fine flourish of trumpets about Mr. Asquith's "generous concessions" to the wives of the men at the front—concessions which sounded well in Mr. Asquith's rolling phrases, but which work out in actual fact as above. How long are women going to stand it?

### TO THE WIVES OF OUR SOLDIERS.

Complaints having been made to our workers that women seeking certificates of birth and marriage at Somerset House, in order to claim the War Office allowance on behalf of their husbands, had been charged heavy fees in regard to such certificates; we are enabled to make the following statement for the information of the public:—

Somerset House is not allowed to issue certificates without a fee of 3/7; to meet the present situation, therefore, it has been arranged that a "verification order" shall take the place of the certificate and shall be issued free in all cases where the applicant needs it for War Office purposes.

Local registration officers have been notified that, where the officials cannot see their way to issue certificates free, the applicants should be told to apply to the Registrar-General, Somerset House, direct, by letter, giving dates and places of the births or marriages of which certificates are required, and verification orders will be returned free of charge.

Any woman who has paid the fees at Somerset House and sent in the certificate to the War Office, should at once write to the War Office for a refund of the money. If she has paid the fee, but not yet sent in the certificate to the War Office, it should be posted to the Registrar-General, Somerset House, when it will be exchanged for a verification order and money will be returned.

Any woman applying at a local registration office should state that her application is for War Office purposes. If the local officials do not inform her that she can get her certificates free on application by letter to Somerset House, she is requested to communicate at once with Miss C. Nina Boyle, Office of the VOTE.

## AT HEADQUARTERS.

That the London members were right in their determination, expressed at a members' meeting last week, to continue making Woman Suffrage the dominant factor in the campaign of the Women's Freedom League has been proved by the splendid Suffrage meetings held in the Parks and at street corners during the last fortnight. We confidently anticipate that our indoor meetings during the coming autumn and winter months will be equally successful, and we would direct the special attention of our London members to the following arrangements.

Friday, September 25th, at the Suffrage Club, York Street, St. James's, Mr. Laurence Housman will open a discussion on "Sinful Charity." The chair will be taken by Miss Nina Boyle at 8 o'clock. Discussion will be invited and admission will be free, a few seats being reserved at 1/- each; tickets for which can be obtained at the W.F.L. Office, 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.

By the kind permission of Mrs. Ronald McAllister a meeting will be held at 1, Mount Street, Berkeley Square, W., on Wednesday afternoon, October 7th, at 3.30, the speaker being Mrs. Despard and Mr. Laurence Housman. The chair will be taken by Mrs. McAllister. On the following Wednesday afternoon, October 14th, our meeting will be held at the Suffrage Club, York Street, St. James's, S.W., when the chief speaker will be the Rev. C. Baumgarten, who has chosen for the subject of his address: "War and Franchise."

Mrs. Despard's Birthday Party will take place on Saturday evening, October 10th, at the Portman Rooms, Baker Street, W. A members' meeting will be held the following Monday at the W.F.L. office, when we hope to have short speeches from Mrs. Despard, Miss Eunice Murray, Mrs. Schofield Coates and Mrs. Tippett, and the chair will be taken promptly at 8 o'clock by Miss Anna Munro.

Vote Sellers.—Again we appeal for more volunteers to sell our paper in the streets of England, Scotland and Wales. Now more than ever we want the public to be acquainted with the women's point of view. We have not yet secured women's political enfranchisement, and there must be no slackening of effort on our part until victory is secured. Names of volunteers will be gratefully received by the Secretary, W.F.L. Office, 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.

### DEAR FELLOW MEMBERS,

Once more and very urgently I appeal to you to support our little organ, THE VOTE. It is no exaggeration to say that, if every member of the League would pay a penny for each weekly number, our anxiety would be over. I appeal to individuals and I also appeal to Branches. My earnest request is that until the war is over and our advertisements return, they will take THE VOTE, not on the usual trade terms, but on a payment of one shilling for thirteen copies. It is only in this way that we shall be able to carry on our organ. Surely, that is not too great a sacrifice. Every member of the League will agree with me that it would be not only a calamity, but a disgrace, to drop at this critical moment, when we need it so sorely, the paper which is our medium of communication one with the other. I am compelled to speak strongly, for the occasion is urgent. My fellow members would certainly blame me later if I did not now make our need known.

I remain, yours sincerely,  
 C. DESPARD.

## OUR TREASURY.

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I remain, yours sincerely,  
 R. J. C. WOLSELEY.

Stafford, March 16th, 1914.

PLEASE NOTE ADDRESS—

435, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

## THE VOTE.

Proprietors—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd.,  
2, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.

FRIDAY September, 18th, 1914.

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.

At Home and Abroad ... 6/6 per annum, post free.

"THE VOTE" may be obtained through all Newsagents and at the Bookstalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son.

## YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU.

Everywhere the same notice meets our eye. Your country is in danger. Come in your thousands; come in your tens of thousands. You may have great and onerous responsibilities—a mother whom it has been your pride and happiness to keep from harsh treatment by the Poor Law; a wife, young children; a home with a few little decencies and comforts—never mind these! Let them go! You may return to find your mother in the workhouse; your house bare, your wife broken down under the burden of feeding, clothing and housing her children, on the small allowance granted to her by the State or obliged—she the wife of one of the heroes whose steadiness and valour have been so justly extolled—to sell up some of the furniture, which she and you had been able to get together in your life of industry. Nothing of all that matters; your country needs you. Go to the nearest recruiting centre and join the new army.

Let it be clearly understood: we would not dare to discourage recruiting. This war is on us! The very existence of Great Britain as an independent nation is at stake. Moreover, no man feels more keenly than the women of the nation feel that since it must be done "twere well it were done quickly." If, by almost superhuman efforts, we can shorten this war; if we can crush the militarism "made in Germany," but not confined to that unhappy land; if we can put a quick end to barbarities which, we hear on good authority, are being perpetrated by our foe, then any and every sacrifice ought to be made. It is true we do not consider it our business to become recruiting sergeants. When unknowing men in our great audiences have advised us to go home and mind the baby, we have considered it an impertinence. Women know what their work is and the great majority of them do it. We believe that it is so with men. In times of national peril they have always done their duty. They will do so now. Of this we are fully convinced.

What we desire to point out is that the women and children, the aged and infirm, whom, at the bidding of their country, the men leave behind are not being justly and properly cared for. Nor are they treated by those who distribute what they are pleased to call "relief" with the respect due to free and independent citizens. Stories which can easily be authenticated are abroad of women being advised to sell their furniture and go into smaller rooms. When the wife of a man who has enlisted, leaving her often without any money at all, goes to a depôt of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association, she is told that a lady will call and

enquire. In many cases three or four days pass before the enquiry is made, and then five shillings, or if there are six or seven children, a larger sum is given, and nothing more will be heard for a week. Often she will have to go to the office again and another small sum will be given. In the meantime she will have to pawn and sell her things or to apply for help to friends and neighbours.

None but those who have seen how the present system, or no system, works, can have any conception of the misery, the hopeless dejection, that it causes.

It may be said that all this is exaggerated. The wives of our soldiers must know that, sooner or later, they will be attended to. We assert with knowledge that these women, who have never been treated with consideration by the authorities, have no confidence in the State. We maintain also that when, generally at the end of a month, the Government allowance is sent to them, with, in most cases, three and sixpence a week from the men's pay, it is not enough to live upon. Seven and sevenpence a week for the wife, one and twopence a week for each child. Which of us would like to try our hand at living upon that? Certainly we should soon give it up.

But there is a deeper depth than this. Men, in many cases, are sons as well as husbands and fathers. The mothers or disabled fathers may depend upon them. They may have been helping widowed mothers to bring up the younger children. Yet these have no claim upon the State.

In noble and emphatic words, Mr. Asquith pledged himself and the nation to generous support of all the soldiers' and sailors' dependents—not charity—not relief, but the support which is undoubtedly their due. Prince of Wales' Fund and charity institutions should have nothing to do with the business. It lies between the nation and the brave men who are fighting her battles. Let a special tax be imposed for this purpose. If it is ear-marked no one will complain. Let the wives and mothers receive their money weekly, as they had been accustomed to receive the wages of their men. It could be arranged from the Post Offices; and after a very short time there would be no difficulty.

Some of us have seen pathetic letters from men about to embark for the seat of war, expressing their fear that the wife and children would be pinched. One fine fellow, urged to enlist, answered: "Yes, I would, if I could be sure that my mother would be cared for. I have tried to keep her out of the workhouse. I don't want to find her there when I come back." Surely these men would join more readily; surely they would go into the perils of the battle-field with greater heart if they knew that their families were being properly supported. "Your country needs you." Not to the men of the nation alone is the cry going forth. Never in the whole history was there a time when the women of the land—the brave, uncomplaining, heroic mothers and wives, and nurses and teachers—were more needed than they are now.

As, day after day, we watch processions of young men, strong and resolute, pass with swinging step along our streets; as we think of the thousands who have fallen, of the thousands who will fall before this war is over, our thoughts turn instinctively to the homes that they have left. We think of the babes, the little children, the girls and boys attending our schools—of those who are to be the nation of to-morrow, and we cry out to our fellow-women, "Your country needs you." If these are to grow up into a strong maturity, if when militarism and all it means is over, they are to possess the char-

acter, the determination, the knowledge, which will enable them to build up a peace that cannot be shaken, we, the women, must be at work now.

But even women cannot make bricks without straw. While the Government allowance to soldiers and sailors' wives is what it is; while, when their men fall, they are promised no more than five shillings a week, is it to be expected that they will bring up healthy and capable children?

Let the country realize that it does indeed need the women; that it needs them no less than it needs the men, and there will be an end of impertinent prying and of foolish parsimony.

We recommend to the Government as the best means of stimulating enlistment that a juster and more adequate provision be made for mothers and wives.

C. DESPARD.

## How Domestic Industries can be Re-organised by Women.

During the present national crisis, when women are being called with some degree of dignity into council and co-operation with men, when social problems are being approached by those in high places, from the inside, instead of from the surface only; when questions of feeding the masses of our population, and of feeding them wholesomely and scientifically are under consideration, it behoves women, the natural feeders and nurturers of the race, to come forward with well-thought-out and suitable plans for reorganising, on the lines of Twentieth Century industrial development, these temporarily lost domestic industries, through which they, in the past, fed and clothed the people. The Committee of the Woman Suffrage National Aid Corps considered in all its bearings this question at its last week's meeting, and it was decided that an article on the lines of the debate should be written for this week's VOTE. We women, now taking counsel together, desire to re-found on a stable basis for the future the Women's Domestic Industries, which have been removed from the home. We desire, at the same time, to re-establish the dignity of women who work in these industries as the feeders, and the nurturers of the race. In order to do this, food and clothing must be produced by us under absolutely pure conditions, and its production and distribution must be organised on a co-operative basis. Speakers for the Suffrage, when tracing the evolution of the Twentieth Century Woman Movement, frequently point out to their audiences how the various domestic industries, such as baking, brewing, butter and cheese making, weaving, spinning, fruit preserving, washing and still-room work, have been gradually, during the last fifty years, taken by men out of the home (where they were carried on for use) and have been now organised outside the home, and carried on for profits. We have further pointed out that the products of these domestic industries have, in consequence of the "profit" element, all deteriorated in quality, and, as a result, women's great maternal function, as the feeder and nourisher of the race, has seriously suffered. "Bread like mother makes" is the fraudulent cry of the baker desirous of pushing wares which, being kneaded and baked for profit, do not contain the bone and teeth-making ingredients which the flour, ground between mill-stones, and kneaded and baked by mothers of the past, contained. The cottage-brewed, unadulterated beer, did not create an artificial thirst, as does the beer made by the brewer for profits; and the home-made jams were genuine mixtures of fruit and sugar (or honey) instead of

being coloured compounds of glucose, pips and flavourings. The washing was carried on in homes with the primary object of providing clean, wholesome linen for body and household use, while the methods used in cleansing ensured a fair treatment of that linen; the washing done in steam laundries is undertaken *primarily* to pay a dividend to the shareholders, and only *secondarily* to return to the customer at the end of the week the linen, on which bleaching liquids, wringing and washing machines have worked their wicked will. Beside all which—and this is the most discouraging side of the question—women in this commercialising process have been dethroned from their control and queenship of domestic industries, and have been made the ill-paid wage-slaves of these man-owned and managed commercial enterprises.

The suggestion is that we should follow, in part, the lines of the Belgian co-operators, and begin with bread-making from stone-ground flour, thus ensuring the use of all the nourishing constituents of the wheat. Our customers must be from the first the thousands of organised women whose aim is the political, social and economic freeing of women in order that they may take their place with men in the conscious evolution of the race. The W.S.N.A.C. invites correspondence and practical offers of help and finance for this scheme. A second article, giving details of the Belgian Co-operative Bakery, will appear next week, and will point out how our brave allies in Belgium helped to solve, in times of peace, the problem of feeding a population which is denser to the square mile than any other population of Europe.

DORA B. MONTEFIORE.

## OUR SUGGESTION COLUMN.

Valuable suggestions have been received as to the forms into which the activity of Suffragists might be directed. We propose, therefore, to open a suggestion column, and are glad to have the opportunity of giving our correspondents a wider hearing. It will be understood that we do not necessarily endorse all the views or support all the suggestions we have received. We hope, however, that they will provoke discussion, and that, in some cases, even if not feasible for adoption by the W.F.L. or the W.S.N.A.C., they may be taken in hand by individual readers of THE VOTE.

Mrs. Margaret J. Scott, of Pennant Hall, Abermule, Montgomeryshire, proposes the formation of Red Cross soup kitchens. She says that a cup of good Scotch Broth, or other soup, containing vegetables and meat, can be sold for 1d. a cup; coffee, tea, or cocoa, with bread and butter for ½d. a cup; a child's portion of rice and milk with sugar, or oatmeal and milk for ¾d. Roast beef, boiled beef or beef steak pudding can be sold for 3d.; jam roll and other puddings for 1d. These prices will more than pay the price of the provisions provided, but do not include the rent of kitchen, coal and paid help. Mrs. Scott gives an account of a kitchen, which she carried on some years ago in Westminster, which she believes will be interesting to individuals or societies about to embark on similar work. She writes: "We fed as many as sixty women a day. We never gave away food; it was always paid for. Our patrons included shirt makers, earning 5s. a week, and uniform makers, who earned 12s. weekly. It was wonderful to see the change our good cheap food made in their appearance." Mrs. Scott will be happy to send further details to anyone who cares to write to her on the subject.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE announce a DISCUSSION MEETING at the Suffrage Club, 3, York Street, St. James's, S.W., on Friday, September 25th, at 8 p.m. Subject: "Sinful Charity." Opener: Laurence Housman, Esq. Admission Free. Collection. Discussion. A few Reserved Seats at 1/- . Tickets to be obtained from the WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE OFFICE, 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, Strand, W.C.



ONE  
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# THE VOTE

WEEKLY

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

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### SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES' MEETINGS.

WE accept Announcements of Suffrage and kindred Meetings for this Column at the rate per single insertion of 2s. for 24 words, 1d. every additional word; four insertions at the price of three. All Announcements must be Prepaid, and, to ensure insertion, copy should reach the ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER, VOTE Office, 2, Robert-st., Adelphi, London, by the *First Post on Monday Morning*.

THE MID-LONDON BRANCH of the Women's Freedom League holds open-air Meetings in Regent's Park every Sunday at 12 o'clock. Speakers next Sunday: Mrs. Mustard, and Mr. J. Y. Kennedy.

HAMPSTEAD BRANCH.—"Birthday Fund" Party, by kind permission of Mr. Henry Holiday. Oak Tree House, Branch Hill, Hampstead Heath, October 3, 3-6 p.m. Mr. Holiday and Mrs. Despard will be present. Particulars later.

### TO LET.

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### Miscellaneous Advertisements.

For insertion in the next week's issue, copy must be sent in by Monday morning to THE ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER, 2, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.

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