

THE VOTE,
FEBRUARY 14, 1919.
ONE PENNY.

MORE HARD WORK.

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON, L.L.A.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. XVIII. No. 486.

(Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper and transmissible through the post in the United Kingdom at the newspaper rate of postage, but to Canada and Newfoundland at the Magazine rate.)

FRIDAY, FEB. 14, 1919.

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.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

MORE HARD WORK - Margaret Wynne Nevinson, L.L.A.
WOMEN AND THE STANDARD WAGE - Dorothy Evans.
THE ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD, G. Bernard Shaw and
WOMEN CANDIDATES FOR THE L.C.C. Grace Jacobs.
THE UNCONSCIOUS MISSION OF THE WOMEN'S LAND ARMY.

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.
AWARD OF MILITARY MEDAL TO GALLANT NURSES.
OUR "WEDNESDAYS."
FORTHCOMING EVENTS.
OUR TREASURY.

WHAT WE EXPECT OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

"It will be the duty of the New Government to remove all existing inequalities of the law as between men and women."

NO SHIRKING !

ELECTION MANIFESTO signed by
MR. LLOYD GEORGE, Prime Minister. **MR. BONAR LAW**, Chancellor of the Exchequer

WOMEN COUNTY COUNCILLORS.

The day of the London County Council election—March 6th—is fast approaching.

We regret to learn that Mrs. Ayres Purdie and Miss Bathurst have decided not to contest the Chelsea division at this election. Mrs. Lamartine Yates is therefore the only candidate representing the London unit of the National Federation of Women Teachers. Members of the Women's Freedom League are urged to give her all the assistance in their power. They will find their old friend, Miss Anna Munro, in charge of Mrs. Yates's committee rooms at 10, Hercules-road, Kennington-road, S.E. (close to North Lambeth Tube Station). Canvassers and other workers needed daily from 10 a.m.

Other Women Candidates at present announced are:—

Battersea Mrs. C. S. Ganley (Women's Co-operative Guild)
Hackney, Central Miss Adler (Progressive).
Hackney, North Lady Tristram Eve (Municipal Reform Party).
Poplar Miss Susan Lawrence (Labour).
Fulham, East Mrs. Hudson Lyall (Municipal Reform Party).

Southwark Duchess of Marlborough (Progressive).

Shoreditch Miss Rosamond Smith (Municipal Reform Party).

Woolwich Miss Margaret Bondfield (Labour).

At the time we go to press no seat has been found for Alderman Kate Wallas, the first woman to be a Deputy Chairman of the L.C.C.

Outside London the elections will mostly occur during March; in some places they have been postponed till November.

Cambridgeshire - Mrs. Russell Jarman.
Miss Constance Cochrane.

Hertfordshire (Watford Division) Miss Eveline Bradford.

Kent - Mrs. Heron Maxwell.

Sheffield - Mrs. Barton (Labour)

Surrey (Barnes and Mortlake Division) Miss Attwell; P.L.G.

Warwickshire - Mrs. Dykes.

The Women's Election League, Hendon, has invited Mrs. How Martyn to stand for one of the divisions of Hendon for the Middlesex County Council.

Women's Freedom League

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. 1.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.



**DARE TO
BE FREE.**

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Saturday, February 15.—National Executive Committee Meeting, 10.30 a.m., 144, High Holborn.

Wednesday, February 19.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss F. A. Underwood on "Wanted: A Revival of the Militant Spirit." Chairman: Mrs. Metge. Admission free. Discussion. Tea can be obtained in the Café at 6d. each.

Saturday, February 22.—London

Branches Council Public Meeting to forward the candidature of women for the L.C.C., Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Ayres Purdie, Mrs. Lamartine Yates, Miss Anna Munro, Miss Marian Berry. Chair: Mrs. Mustard. Admission free. Discussion. Tea can be obtained in the Café at 6d. each.

Wednesday, February 26.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge. Subject: "The Child in English Literature." Admission free. Discussion. Mid-London Branch Meeting, 144, High Holborn, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 5.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Margery Fry. Admission free. Discussion.

Wednesday, March 12.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

Saturday, March 15.—National Executive Committee Meeting, 144, High Holborn, 10.30 a.m.

Saturday, March 22.—London Branches Council Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m.

Saturday, April 5th.—Women's Freedom League Annual Conference. Caxton Hall, 10 a.m.

PROVINCES.

Saturday, February 15.—Ashford. Opening of Women's Freedom League Club at the Co-operative Hall, High-street, 4.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck.

Tuesday, February 18.—Bexhill. Practice Class at 28, Parkhurst-road, 3 p.m. Hostess: Mrs. Gipps. Manchester Political Meeting for Women only at Milton Hall, Deansgate, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss M. I. Neal. Subject: "Why we must have an Independent Women's Party." Open discussion. Admission free. Silver collection.

Wednesday, February 19.—Southsea. Practice Debating Class, 2, Kent-road, 3.15 p.m. Discussion: "The Child's Claim on the State." Opener: Mrs. Whetton. Chair: Mrs. Barber.

Saturday, February 22.—Southsea. Jumble Sale, Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, 3 p.m. Helpers, 2 p.m.

Wednesday, March 5th.—Southsea. Public Meeting, 2, Kent-road, 3.15 p.m. Speaker: Miss Friend (Ryde). Subject: "The Need for Preferential Tariffs." Chair: Mrs. Whetton.

Monday, March 10.—Westcliff Branch Meeting, at the Labour Hall, 6, Broadway Market, Southend, 7.30. Speaker: Miss Anna Munro on "Housing."

Wednesday, April 2.—Middlesbrough. Café Chantant and Sale, Suffrage Club, 231a, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road.

SCOTLAND.

Saturday, February 22.—Edinburgh. Social Meeting, Masonic Hall, Melbourne-place, 6 p.m.—11 p.m. Tickets, 2s. 4d. (including tax), from Miss Jacob, 34, Dalkeith-road.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Saturday, February 15.—Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. Annual Meeting in Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m.

Monday, February 24.—Women Writers' Suffrage League Annual Meeting at 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m.

Sunday, March 16.—Kingston Church of Humanity, Fife Hall, Fife-road, 7 p.m. Speaker: Miss K. Raleigh. Subject: "Savage Survivals in Modern Life."

ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD AND THE FAMILY.

"Are you in favour of the endowment of motherhood and the family, and what do you believe would be the effects of such legislation?"

A Symposium of Opinions.

Miss Grace Jacob, of Edinburgh, fears State Tyranny.

As the principle of the Endowment of Motherhood is coming more and more under consideration, one welcomes a discussion on the subject in feminist publications. It appears to me very necessary not to be carried away by sentimental reasons to give it our support. While welcoming any scheme that raises the status of women and better their conditions of life, we must be chary of adopting a principle which in its operation may not prove the success expected for it. That it is to the fore of late seems chiefly due to the fact that the just demand of women for equal pay for equal work, if conceded, would mean that the woman was better off than the man, as she would not be "handicapped" by the existence of a wife and family. The male trade unionist poses as a national benefactor because he marries and becomes a father (one would think from the tone adopted that marriage and fatherhood were compulsory!). It is somewhat difficult to put one's mind in the attitude of the man in a case of equal pay for equal work when woman is in question. It seems to me he sees it like this: "If I get £5 a week and she gets £5 a week, then she will have a better time than I will, as I am burdened with a wife and family." But if his trade union obtains for him a living wage, what concern is it of his that the woman gets the same? Surely the only concern he has where she is concerned is the fear that she may earn less than he does and undercut him. The outcome is, however, that if the principle of equal pay for equal work is conceded, the man will expect to be compensated for marriage and children by a Government allowance or "Endowment of Motherhood."

If the State adopts this principle, then there will of necessity require to be regulations and conditions in the administration of it, such as (1) the production of a medical certificate by both parties before marriage (as a side issue this might have a very beneficial effect in reducing venereal disease); (2) periodical inspection of the children and home to ensure the allowance being properly used; (3) severe penalisation of either parent who is guilty of transmitting venereal disease to any of the children. Other conditions may require to be imposed. Are the advocates of the "Endowment of Motherhood" prepared for them?

The reason I have dwelt at some length on the equal pay for equal work problem is that I believe that it is as a benefit to the male worker that the endowment of motherhood may come into operation, not as a feminist triumph.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw thinks a Bad Mother is better than a Good Beadle.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw points out that this is not a question as to whether it is desirable that children should be born, or as to whether fathers should be considered essential; but it is a question of the life-saving of the children that are there and will be there in any case. He says: "A child must, after all, be looked after by somebody until a trustworthy combined incubator, stomach pump, and vacuum cleaner is invented, and that somebody may as well be the child's mother. It is proposed, in short, to tear the children from the aching arms of the official guardians of the poor and the beadle, and fling them naked on the maternal breast. Within reason, even a bad mother is better than a good beadle."

WOMEN AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The "Protection" of Women.

The Industrial Commission of the Socialist Congress, now in session at Berne, has presented its report in the form of an International Code for the protection of the workers of all countries. This code has fifteen points, the majority of which appear to be essentially reasonable. The first point prohibits the employment of children under fifteen—a proposition which will receive almost universal agreement. One wonders, indeed, what the employing classes of civilised countries would say to the proposal to turn their own boys and girls under fifteen into wage-earners. The second point prohibits more than six hours work a day for young persons between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, and provides, as this country has done by the recent Education Act, for their part-time instruction. Point 3 deals with the work of woman, and proposes that women's hours should not exceed four a day, and they should not be employed at night or in dangerous occupations. We wonder what the women delegates (and especially a feminist such as Mrs. Philip Snowden) had to say to such a monstrous proposal. These Rip van Winkles have been so accustomed to regard their wives and children in the same category that they seem to be unconscious that a new generation of women has arisen who are not at all likely to be content to have the condition of their work settled for them on such lines, however much these pundits may asseverate that they are framing these regulations in the interests of women. We all know that deep down in our nature, from earliest youth, was implanted a mistrust of those things which we were assured were for our own good. We are ten thousand times more mistrustful of the type of "protection" which is so evidently aimed at protecting the man worker from the competition of women. The proposal is so preposterous that we cannot but think that there has been a misprint in the report. However, any limitation of this nature would be quite unworkable. On the statistics of murder, burglary, and drunkenness we flatter ourselves rightly that we are the law-abiding sex, but it passes the wit of Governments, with or without Dora, to force women to keep regulations concerning matters of daily life of which they are wont to assert that they "do not see the sense of."

Another Disappointment.

It may be inferred that more than one American Senator is having an uncomfortable time. If only one of those who voted against the Woman Suffrage Constitutional Amendment last Monday had voted for it, the amendment would have passed. Eighty-four votes were cast, of which a two-thirds majority, i.e., 56 votes, were required to pass the measure, which has already been adopted by the House of Representatives. The figures unfortunately were 55 for and 29 against. The Suffrage leaders declare that they will carry on the fight. But what else could be expected from them?

Scholarships for Women.

A sum of £6,800 has been collected towards a fund to provide scholarships for women at the University of Manchester. The promoters of the fund point out that it is estimated that there are about a dozen scholarships tenable by men at the older universities against one tenable by women. Though the proportion tenable by women is greater at Manchester, it is wholly inadequate to meet the demand.

The Household of the Nations.

It would be well if all the delegates at the Peace Congress would take to heart Miss Maude Royden's apt reminder to Mr. Asquith at the World Brotherhood Demonstration at the Albert Hall early this month.

"Mr. Asquith," she said, "used just now a phrase about this League of Nations which struck me as a very happy one. He spoke more than once, I think, not of the League, but of the Household of the Nations. I think that there might have been a woman delegate to fill an empty place at the Peace Conference. . . . I represent a section of the community which has not been supposed to have a direct interest in the peace of the world. Labour has been called rather belatedly to the Peace Conference, and for a sectional interest. . . . And, like Labour, another great section of the community has been ignored. Have the mothers whose sons have been slaughtered in millions on the battlefields of Europe and Asia no immediate or direct concern with the decisions of the Conference of Peace? Our contribution would have been a reinforcement of the phrase Mr. Asquith used, that what we want is not merely a League, but actually a family or a household of nations. That point of view might have been put with special power by those who have had the bringing up of families since the nations began."

Another Inter-Allied Conference.

We have as yet had no report of the Inter-Allied Women's Congress, which has been held this week in Paris. The Congress was convened by Mme. Schlumberger, President of the Union Française pour le Suffrage des Femmes. It is intended that a request shall be presented to the Peace Conference demanding that equal suffrage for men and women shall be granted in all countries, that an equal moral standard for men and women should be recognised as the basis of all sex legislation, that there should be freedom of access for women to all trades and professions, and that married women should have the right to retain their own nationality or to adopt that of their husbands. There will probably be a demand for equal pay for equal work. Mrs. Fawcett thinks that President Wilson can be counted upon "in laying the women's claims before the Peace Conference."

Women in the New German Parliament.

There have been various reports as to the number of women in the new German Parliament. The last account is that there are 34. Of these, the Majority Socialists have elected 15, among whom is Frau Juchacz, editor of *Gleichheit*. The Independent Socialists have elected 4, one of whom, Clara Zetkin, has been elected in two constituencies. The Central or Clerical party have elected 7 women, the Democrats 5, and the Conservatives 3. Men and women can vote at the age of 20, and there are said to be 21,000,000 women and 18,000,000 men of this age.

Women's Franchise in Belgium—A Set-Back.

There has been a temporary set-back to the franchise movement in Belgium, and the clause in the new Electoral Reform Bill, which would have enfranchised women, has been lost by a majority of 8. Sixty-two votes were cast for the inclusion of women and 70 against. The misfortunes of that unhappy little country have apparently not taught its legislators the duty of making their little corner of the world safe for democracy. The National Congress of Miners, which met in Brussels on January 27th, adopted a resolution protesting against this attempt to prevent the acceptance of the principle of political equality, and denounced "the manoeuvres of political reactionaries to prevent the carrying out of the solemn promises made on the subject of universal suffrage." The Congress pledged itself to secure political equality in Belgium.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD.

Offices:—144, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

FRIDAY, February 14th, 1919.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—

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To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.

To the Secretary—on all other business, including VOTE orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.

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Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

EDITORIAL.

The Editor is responsible for unsigned articles only. Articles, paragraphs, or cuttings dealing with matters of interest to women generally will be welcomed. Every effort will be made to return unsuitable MSS. if a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed, but the Editor cannot be responsible in case of loss.

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MORE HARD WORK.

The arduous and endurance of the parliamentary elections are hardly over before we find ourselves on the brink of the County Council and Poor Law elections, which have not been held for six years owing to the war. It is rumoured that, owing to the uncertain life of Boards of Guardians, the latter elections may not be held. Certainly very little interest is being taken in a possible moribund body, judging from the recent figures of a London bye-election, where the woman candidate headed the poll with 16 votes and her male opponent polling 4.

The Women's Municipal Party and the Women Local Government Society are hard at work organising for the fray, but whether it is their apparent unpopularity with electors, over-work (few of us can obtain domestic help), or the necessary £250 or £300, many suitable candidates are declining to stand.

The most humble and feminine amongst us need have no hesitation in putting herself forward as candidate, for, aghast at our persistence and success, did not Mrs. Humphry Ward and Lord Curzon—hoping to side-track us from our goal—the parliamentary vote—declare that municipal and local affairs were our true sphere, and that a wise Creator had so planned our brains that, excellently ordered for County and Borough affairs, etc., they stopped there. Parliamentary matters had special cells allotted, to be found in the male cerebrum only.

We may therefore step forth from our homes under the great *agis* of these two great "Antis," and let the nation have the benefit of our wisdom and experience. After all, the right of women to be called "the practical sex" has been won in the home, where we have learnt how to administer money as well as the distribution of food, drink, clothing, etc., sometimes for big families and many dependents on a large and lavish scale, more often in scarcity and pinching in the hard and bitter school of poverty. On the questions of housing and education we have great knowledge, practical as well as theoretical. We have lived in houses great and small that men (who live and move and have their being abroad) have built for us, and few of us have found them good. The report of Lady Emmott and her committee on the housing question must have struck all who read it by the knowledge,

ability, and constructive power displayed. Mothers know the needs of growing boys and girls, and are born educationists by the grace of God and the divine sympathy given to them. In the old days of school boards, how many of us almost wept with horror at the ignorance and stupidity of our boards, chiefly composed of old gentlemen (many of them childless). That we do not have a worse standard of physical and mental health shows the tough constitution of the average British child, though pessimists may say that we must not boast with over a million young men found unfit for military service, as well as a large proportion of Class C3, the high figures of tubercular and other diseases, and the schools (unfortunately necessary) now established for mentally and physically afflicted children. At least now we do not see the terrible spectacle of sleepy infants of three or four dozing in natural and wholesome sleep on each others' shoulders, being prodded to attention and future insanity and idiocy by the merciless stick of the pupil teacher.

Most schools now make some provision for the drying of children's garments, and pupils, it is to be hoped, are no longer caned for getting wet, caned for being late, and caned for stopping away, as we have been gravely assured by a sufferer was the case in an East-end school in his day.

The terrible system of medals for regular attendance (not allowing for infectious disease) is now reformed, and we understand the frequent spectacle of a keen competitor, smothered with the rash of measles and scarlet fever, with incipient diphtheria, etc., carried helpless and speechless into the classrooms, a danger to itself and the public, is seldom or never seen.

It was generally the women (and especially the mothers) who noted and protested against these patent stupidities. Ignorance, however, is expensive, and the nation has paid dearly for the loss of and injury to these little lives.

Women are far-sighted and usually born economists (taught, besides, so often in the school of poverty), and, once elected, the ratepayers know their value and seldom or never "chuck" them; it is the new-comer they are shy of, and for that reason well-known local women, who have served as school managers or on local committees, will always have the best chance. A list of the women candidates for County Councils is given this week in THE VOTE; probably more will be forthcoming. We understand that Mrs. How Martyn has been invited to stand for the Middlesex County Council. To get our candidates returned will need hard work and good organisation from all our various societies.

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON.

Meetings to Promote Candidature of Women for the March Election.

On Saturday, February 22nd, in the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., at 3 p.m., the London Branches Council will hold a meeting in support of the women candidates for the L.C.C. election. Chairman, Mrs. Mustard. Speakers: Mrs. Ayres Purdie, Miss Berry, Miss Anna Munro, and others.

On Tuesday, February 25th, at 3 p.m., a meeting to stimulate interest in the candidature of women in the March elections for local authorities will be held at Bedford College, York Gate, Regent's Park, at which the Lady Denman will preside, and the speakers will be Lord Henry Bentinck, M.P.; Lady Nott-Bower, P.L.G.; the Rev. W. H. Cobb, D.D.; Captain Haden Guest, and Mrs. E. R. Pease.

Admission free to both these meetings. A collection will be taken for expenses.

WOMEN AND A STANDARD WAGE.

According to the Ministry of Reconstruction, about a million extra women have come into industry since 1914, and one of their publications states "that even if the 400,000 domestic service or employment at home return to their former work there will still be a surplus of women in industry on a pre-war basis."

This extra competition for civil employment does not necessarily mean that demobilisation must bring with it the curse of unemployment. The almost universal demand of the workers for shorter hours and no overtime will do much to facilitate the resettlement of ex-soldiers and munitioners. This is extending now even to the women clerks in Government and municipal offices, who are putting forward a demand for hours to be gradually reduced to six. Another of their demands is that "sex differentiation in the rates of pay should be abolished in all grades. This is an even more necessary reform."

The danger of the future is not much unemployment, but rather that the women's undercutting will damage the bargaining power of the men. It threatens to come about in this way.

Take the papermaking trade, in which the proportion of women to men employed has risen enormously. Whereas before the war for every 100 men employed in this trade there were 57 women, there are now 89 women. For the processes in which women compete with men the different rates are 20s. to 25s., with 11s. 6d. war bonus for women, and 27s. 6d. to 30s., with 21s. 3d. war bonus for men.

The same thing can be seen in the woollen and worsted industry, where the proportion of women to every 100 men has risen from 128 to 170. The women must earn not less than four-fifths of the men's wage. In the building trade, which we hope will afford great chances of employment for the demobilised, 25,000 women are now employed where only 2,500 were employed before the war. The rates paid vary from two-thirds to five-sixths of the men's rates.

With the increasing skill and efficiency women are attaining in all these trades, the prejudice of most firms in favour of the employment of men will no doubt be overcome by the bias towards the saving in wages woman labour affords.

With a lowered demand for male labour, the power of their collective bargaining is bound to be weakened. This will be a disadvantage to all of us. First because the men workers are members of our own families, and again because their organisation is older and more stable than ours, and might and should be a protection to women as newcomers in industry.

The question is, How can we universally establish equal pay and do away with this unfair competition? We have not been strong enough to do it sectionally, trade by trade, with the exception of the engineers, who have almost established it in their trade. But we could win if we united throughout the whole of our industries through our trades councils and their parliamentary committee.

It would be better far for women workers if an equal standard rate with men in all trades was made one of the Labour Party's international labour laws, rather than a restrictive rule, such as "no night work for women." We shall be told this is "for our own good" no doubt. Will the Arbiters of our Fate make an exception of nurses and other such who minister to men's physical needs? Are our actresses' working hours counted as day work, and will the attention of waitresses on duty at the National Liberal Club at 11 p.m. be dispensed with? Such restrictions on women's labour only further encourage their payment below the man's rate.

It will not be enough even to establish that where men and women are both employed on a certain process the pay shall be equal, as has been done in the boot and shoe trade and several others since the war. The tendency of that is to get different jobs labelled "men's" or "women's," and then the women's jobs are paid well below the average standard; and at every opportunity a process once employing men is transferred to the "women's" section, and another well-paid trade is lost to the workers as a whole.

The short-sighted policy adopted by some trade unionists is to make a counter-move and use their trade union strength to secure the exclusion of women from a trade altogether. Apart from the injustice of this to the women who have made themselves efficient, and who could hold their own on equal and fair terms with the men, it can never be anything but a temporary expedient. Women are in industry "for keeps," and from the day of their exclusion they will never cease to clamour at the gates, and will continually tend to leak into the trade as blackleg labour. In the long run, then, they will have to be taken into the unions, organised, and the standard rate of wages secured.

Moreover, let the policy of "Turn 'em out" be cloaked in no matter what innocent guise—be it the excuse of protecting us from injury through heavy work, or from degradation through dirty work, or the old plea of our contamination by association with "foul-mouthed men" at the pit-brow—the women clearly recognise it as a policy of despair and of hostility, and will oppose it to the utmost.

DOROTHY EVANS.

Award of Military Medal to Gallant Nurses.

The King has been pleased to approve of the award of the Military Medal to the following ladies for distinguished services in the field as recorded:—

NURSING SISTER HELEN ELIZABETH HANSEN, C.A.M.C.—For gallantry during an enemy air raid at Etaples, May 19-20, 1918. She worked devotedly in the operating room throughout the period of the severe bombardment, which lasted for two hours. Sister Hansen was ready for any duty, and exhibited qualities of coolness and courage.

NURSING SISTER BEATRICE MCNAIR, C.A.M.C.—For gallantry during an enemy raid at Etaples, May 19-20, 1918. She carried on her duties throughout the night without interruption, and throughout the period of the severe bombardment, which lasted for two hours, Sister McNair showed great solicitude for the patients in her wards, and was wholly unmindful of her personal safety.

The Right to Live, to Work, and to Leisure.

This is the working woman's charter to be proclaimed by the National Federation of Women Workers at the Albert Hall to-morrow (Saturday) night, February 15th. The doors will be open at 6.45 p.m. Meeting 7.30. No seats reserved after 7.15. Chair, Mary R. Macarthur, and the speakers will be women shop stewards, supported by Fred Bramley, Mrs. Despard, Miss Susan Lawrence, L.C.C.; Harry Gosling, L.C.C.; Francis Meynell, and Ben Spoor, M.P.

Police Court Work.

Readers will be glad to know that Mrs. Metge has very kindly undertaken to attend London Police Courts to watch the cases of girls and women. At next Wednesday afternoon's meeting in the Minerva Café she will give some account of this work. Those interested are urged to attend.

The Unconscious Mission of the Women's Land Army.

An interesting article in last week's *New Statesman* relates to the war work of women on the land, which is characterised as "unselfish, often self-sacrificing, and in the main efficient." The writer says:—

Women have shown themselves capable of performing much of the regular work of the farm. In the dairies they have shown themselves particularly adaptable, and their cleanliness has created something akin to a scandal in establishments of the old kind, where cows are never washed and the milkman dips his tired hands in the pail as a matter of course. The handling of stock and even of horses has found women at their best; they are naturally kind, and animals respond to kindness, respond to an extent that would surprise those who believe that they require to be coaxed at short intervals with a hob-nailed boot.

The reference to the practice of the male milker will naturally cause housekeepers, and more especially mothers, to desire that the institution of the dairymaid and woman milker may be a permanent one. While work requiring great physical strength or long experience has been found unsuitable to women, they have been found invaluable to the farmer in seed-time and at harvest, and have been found capable of performing work, such as thatching and sheep-shearing, which have hitherto been considered as exclusively men's work.

The question is asked whether women really care for work in the fields. It may have formed an enjoyable holiday to college girls and women from the towns, when the weather has been favourable and the conditions of life bearable, but the call to which the majority of the land-workers responded was the call of their country, and the keenness of their desire to help in its hour of need fortified them to endure the incidental discomforts which awaited them—the appalling housing conditions in some areas, the coarse and scanty food in others, the struggle with Mother Earth in her unsympathetic moods, the vagaries of climate, the early rising and the early retiring to rest, which to many town-dwellers must have been as great a trial. Can it be expected (asks the writer) that women will continue to work on the land now that the sense of novelty has been sated and the claims of patriotism are less clamant? If this end is to be secured, it is recognised that the external conditions of their work must be secured. "They are intimately concerned with the housing problem, with the creation of facilities for social life in the villages, with the wage that permits independence, with alternative winter work under a roof and with proper warmth, with a dozen other questions."

The writer shows that the effectiveness of the work of women on the land is relative to the ability shown by the County Councils in organising their services. In Hertfordshire there are nearly 500 land-workers who were early attracted to work in this county through the medium of scholarships at the agricultural colleges. But the county of Cornwall is said to be "a model of what progress should be." "Its increase in the wheat area over the year 1916 is the highest in England—295 per cent.—and in the domain of woman's work it has not only provided for its own needs, but has actually been able to help its neighbours." The Women's Land Army in this county numbers several hundreds, every parish has its local registrar, and there are nearly ten thousand seasonal or part-time workers, county training centres, and a minimum wage of £1 a week is guaranteed to all Land Army women. This might be a reasonable wage during a time of probation, but it cannot be said to be a munificent return for the women who are said to have saved the country's food. In contrast to the excellent organisation at

work in Cornwall, Dorsetshire seems to have no use for women. Railway facilities from large areas were bad, and the shortage of petrol made motor transport difficult. "There was no market for surplus produce in these districts, and consequently there was no great stimulus for increased production. Even if women could have been taken to the outlying farms they would have found no accommodation there." In Essex, women were working at a wage of 2s. 6d. a day, thus, evidently, lending themselves to the accusation of being blacklegs.

The conclusion of the writer is that what is needed is a system of co-ordination, embodying much of the energy and expenditure which is now running to waste, and through which "the worst would learn from the best." The establishment is suggested of "one great organisation, State-aided, if need be, but not necessarily State directed, with headquarters in London and branches in the centre of every agricultural county."

Women responded to the call of their country in an emergency. Will they stay on the land? In asking this question, it is clear that the writer of the article is not merely concerned with the temporal seed-time and harvest of the nation's fields, which can be measured in terms of acres and bushels. The writer envisages also the seed-time of an immeasurable harvest.

All of us who have seen women at their work among the dumb animals of the farmsteads and fields and the dumb humans of many a forgotten village cannot help hoping that they will stay, because they will take so much with them when they go. If they could remain long enough to establish a tradition, to help in the work of social reconstruction that happily will soon begin, they might do as much and more in the years before us than they have accomplished in the stern times through which we have passed on the way to a security that may be permanent. To overlook this aspect of the case is to be blind to what concerns us most. Only those who have seen what women with practical knowledge and keen sympathy can do in the village, whose life in all its primitive simplicity they have elected to share, can realise their full potentialities. To imagine that the presence of educated women on the land is a benefit to the farmer alone is to take the short-sighted view. The wives and mothers of our agricultural labourers stand in perennial need of the gifts their better-trained sisters of the great cities have in abundance. Of the work done already there is not and cannot be a detailed description, but those who may chance to travel through the country-side will find the record. There are no missionaries like those who are unconscious of a mission, who came to share rough work and rough conditions with those who have known nothing different, who teach without self-consciousness or dogmatism, and mainly by force of example, who, while teaching, learn. Woman's work on the land has a significance of its own; properly encouraged and developed, it may become one of the great landmarks of our national progress.

OUR "WEDNESDAY'S."

In spite of the bad weather on Wednesday, January 29th, a fair number of valiant souls came to hear Mrs. Whish speak on "The Humorous Side of Journalism," and were rewarded by a very interesting lecture. Dr. Knight presided, and introduced Mrs. Whish as a welcome member of the League. Mrs. Whish compared literature and journalism, describing the former as "revelation" and the latter "sensational," and told many humorous tales to illustrate her points. "People," she said, "get the newspapers they deserve," and she described how "copy" was sometimes manufactured, but "even a newspaper can speak the truth." Mrs. Whish hoped that out of the wreckage of world war a new newspaper may emerge. There was a good discussion afterwards, and Mrs. Metge, who took the chair when Dr. Knight was obliged to leave, joined with the audience in thanking Mrs. Whish very heartily for giving the audience the opportunity for good laughter and cheer on a gloomy day.

OUR POST BAG.

The following replies have been received in answer to the letters sent by the Women's Freedom League last week urging that the delegates to the Peace Conference should include some women:—

American Commission to
Negotiate Peace,
Paris, February 4, 1919.

My Dear Madam,—I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 1st addressed to the President, and to say that it will be brought to his attention at the earliest possible time.—Sincerely yours,

(Signed) GILBERT F. CLOSE,
Confidential Secretary to the President.

My Dear Miss Underwood,—Colonel House asks me to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 1st, and to say that its contents will have his earnest consideration.—Very truly yours,

(Signed) F. B. DENTON,
Secretary.

British War Cabinet Offices,
Villa Majestic,
Rue la Prouse,
Paris,
4th February, 1919.

Dear Madam,—I am desired by the Prime Minister to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st February.—Yours faithfully,

(Signed) F. L. STEVENSON.

British Delegation,
Paris,

5th February, 1919.

Dear Madam,—I have to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of the 1st February.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT CECIL.

From the following we are glad to learn that the Home Secretary has caused an inquiry to be made in regard to the death of the girl mother, Ellen Sullivan:—

Home Office, Whitehall,
4th February, 1919.

Madam,—I am directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, and to say that he is still awaiting the result of inquiries he has caused to be made into the case of Ellen Sullivan.—I am, Madam, your obedient servant,

J. B. SIMPSON.

We have repeatedly asked that we should be allowed to send a representative of THE VOTE to the Press Gallery of the House of Commons. We have received the following letter, but are pressing the matter further:—

House of Commons,
8th February, 1919.

Madam,—With reference to your letter of 16th December, 1918, and my reply of 20th December, 1918, I beg to inform you that, as promised, I have brought your said letter to the notice of the Speaker.

He desires me to say that, after giving careful consideration to your application, he regrets that he is unable to see

his way at present to admit a representative of THE VOTE to the Press Gallery of the House of Commons. There are many applicants who applied before THE VOTE, and there is no vacancy now.—I am, Madam, yours faithfully,
(Signed) COLIN KEPPEL, Admiral,
Serjeant-at-Arms.

OUR TREASURY. NATIONAL FUND.

Amount previously acknowledged, October, 1907, to
December, 1917, £29,465 2s. 11d.

	£	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged	1,955	7	6
Branch Funds—			
Nottingham	£28	11	0
Nottingham Women's Police Court Association—			
Mrs. Hutchinson	10	0	
Mrs. Sisson	10	0	
Mrs. Richardson	10	0	
Mrs. Robert Hutchinson	10	0	
Miss Burgis	10	0	
Mrs. Chambers	5	0	
Mrs. Simon	5	0	
Miss Gunston	5	0	
Miss Wallis	2	6	
Miss De Hersant	2	6	
Miss Massey	2	6	
Mrs. Meadows	1	0	
Miss Watkins (collected)	16	6	
Collected at meetings	10	0	
	5	0	0
	£1,988	18	6

Cheques to be made payable to the Women's Freedom League, and crossed "London and South-Western Bank."

THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

Through the exigencies of printing and publication, we are obliged to go to press just as the King's Speech is appearing. We are therefore obliged to defer until next week any discussion of the points raised or of the legislation proposed for the coming session of Parliament. It is clear that we are at the beginning of a new era, that "the times are ripe and rotten ripe for change," and that the radical change in the position of women in politics will affect every aspect of the social and industrial life of the nation.

Miss Maude Royden preaches in the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, E.C., next Sunday, at the 6.30 p.m. service. Subject: "The Kind of World we Want: V., Making our Laws."

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB,
9, Grafton-street, Piccadilly, W. 1. For men and women. Subscriptions: London members, £1 11s. 6d.; country members, £1 5s.; Irish, Scottish, and foreign members, 10s. 6d. per annum. Entrance fee, £1 1s. LECTURES, HOUSE DINNERS, etc. Luncheons and Dinners à la Carte.—All particulars, Secretary. Telephone, 3932 Mayfair.

WORKING WOMEN'S NIGHT AT THE ALBERT HALL,
on Saturday, February 15th, 1919, at 7.30.
Unemployed women will demonstrate.

THE RIGHT TO WORK. Miss MARY R. MACARTHUR in the Chair. Speakers—Mrs. Despard, Miss Susan Lawrence, Mr. Fred Bramley, Mr. Francis Meynell and Mr. Ben Spoor, M.P., and

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Reserved Seat Tickets, available up to 7.15, can be had on application to Miss MARY R. MACARTHUR, Dilke House, Malet Street, W.C. 1.
Collection to defray expenses.

IF you Believe in Equal Rights and Opportunities and an Equal Moral Standard for Women and Men,
Join the Women's Freedom League.

Fill in your name and address and send it, with subscription (minimum 1s.) to the Secretary, Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

Name _____
Address _____

FRIDAY,
FEB. 14,
1919.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

BRANCH NOTES.

Edinburgh: 13, Charlotte Street.

A special meeting of the branch was held on Wednesday, February 5th, to welcome Miss F. A. Underwood on her flying visit north. The members were much interested in her account of the varied activities of the League at headquarters, and realised the valuable work carried on in the interests of women. Miss Underwood begged members to send to **THE VOTE** any items of local interest regarding women, that both headquarters and the branches might benefit.

The postponed social has now been fixed for February 22nd, to be held in the Masonic Hall, Melbourne-place, from 6 to 11. The tickets are 2s. 4d. (including tax). The programme is a very attractive one, including the card party scene from Cranford, solo dancing by a party of Miss Lawson's pupils, musical items, dancing, competitions, etc. Tickets can be obtained from the hon. secretary, Miss Jacob, 34, Dalkeith-road.

Portsmouth.

In spite of a very wet afternoon, there was a good attendance at our public meeting on February 5th. The Rev. G. W. Thompson gave a convincing address on "The Principles of Free Trade." Questions and a good discussion followed. Mrs. Layton presided. Next month Miss Friend, Commandant of the Red Cross Hospital, Ryde, will speak on "The Need for Preferential Tariffs."

A Jumble Sale will be held at the Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, at three o'clock, on Saturday, February 22nd. Helpers are asked to be there at 2 p.m. to arrange the goods. Parcels will still be gratefully received, at 17, Duncan-road, Southsea.

Montgomery Boroughs.

A highly important meeting of women voters was held in the Free Library, Newtown, on January 31, it being the outcome of Mrs. Nevinson's visit to Montgomery Boroughs the week before. The objects were to discuss the need of women Councillors and to nominate candidates. The meeting was very representative. Alix M. Clark was voted to the chair, and spoke at some length on the need of women on our Town Councils. An animated discussion followed, in which Miss Haines, Mrs. Bellis, Mrs. Burnford, Mrs. Fred Roberts, Mrs. Bates, Mrs. Morris, Nurse Latham, and others took part. The following resolution was carried unanimously:—

"That this meeting is of the opinion that the work of Newtown and Llanllwchairan Urban District Council would be carried on more efficiently and satisfactorily by men and women working together, and that this meeting pledges itself to work whole-heartedly for the return of women candidates."

The nomination of candidates was then proceeded with, and the first woman nominated was the chairman. Unfortunately, Alix M. Clark was unable to accept nomination owing to great pressure of other work. Mrs. Bellis, Miss Haines, Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Bates were nominated, and all agreed to stand.

It was agreed to form a sub-committee to further the candidature of the women, Alix M. Clark acting as hon. sec.

It was also agreed to hold a public meeting in the support of the candidates, and that a speaker from the Women's Freedom League be asked to speak. The meeting was most enthusiastic, and concluded with a vote of thanks to Alix M. Clark for having convened the meeting and for presiding. Great regrets were expressed at her inability to stand for nomination, but, recognising the great work she was doing in furthering the cause of women throughout the country, they had very reluctantly to accept her refusal. In reply, Alix M. Clark thanked the audience for their kind words and sentiments, and said that when women had full equality with men she would be at the service of the town and county. In the meanwhile there were excellent women in Newtown who would keep the seats warm on the Town Council until that time came.

S.E. District. Organiser: Miss White. Women's Freedom League Club at Ashford.

The above will be opened next Saturday, February 15th, at the Co-operative Hall, at 4.30 p.m. Ever since the last election the members of the local branch have been agitating for some place where they can meet together to discuss women's questions and keep up to date with affairs in and out of Parliament. This can only be done by having competent speakers whose facts are sound, so we are going to have a club where women can discuss any subject of interest to them. Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck (by special request) is opening the club. It is hoped that Mrs. Despard will be able to come in March. Kind friends are helping with a tea for next Saturday, and all seems to be very promising for the success of the club.

Speakers' Class at Bexhill.

Mrs. Pertwee paid her first visit to Bexhill last Tuesday. The class was well attended, and everyone present was asked to give her ideas on the Coalition Government. Will members remember that the next Speakers' Class will be held on Tuesday, March 4th, at 19, Marine-mansions. Our thanks are due to Mrs. Williams for again placing her room at the disposal of the class. The secretary, Mrs. Bryan Gipps has very kindly invited members of the class to meet for a practice class at her rooms, 28, Parkhurst-road, on Tuesday, February 18th, at 3 p.m.

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