

# THE VOTE

(THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE).

VOL. III. No. 70.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1911.

ONE PENNY.

## 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.

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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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## WHAT WE THINK.

### Wanted—A Pressing Remedy.

As we go to press, the great debate on the Parliamentary Bill is in progress. Mr. Asquith has in his succinct way said many things with which we find ourselves in entire agreement. "No democratic country can safely rest its fortunes on the hazard of a perpetual recurrence of special providences," said the Premier, referring to the perpetual self-abnegation for which the proper exercise of democracy calls. We, too, cannot risk our chances, as we have done once again this year, on fortuitous events; we cannot trust to what luck will do for us—a luck that can be turned by one man. We, too, want to "mend it or end it."

Again, the Premier said, as we might have said: "We have seen and suffered enough from the evils of a single Chamber. . . . The real question before us is, 'Are we to have relief and release from an intolerable and even dangerous situation.' . . . In the meantime is all progressive legislation, however clearly desired and demanded by the people, to come to a standstill? We say 'No,' and this has been said twice within twelve months by the electors—once in January and again in December. This country requires a pressing remedy for a pressing ill." (Cheers.)

We, too, demand "a pressing remedy for a pressing ill," and we want it this Session.

### Experimenting with the Referendum.

We are told that:—"There is a strong disposition among members on the Unionist side who are opposed to women's Suffrage to concentrate on the demand that the question should be submitted to the whole body of electors by way of special Referendum, in accordance with the hint thrown out by the Prime Minister himself." Mr. Asquith finding Unionists who will take his hints is a sufficiently amusing situation. Mr. Churchill, who is by way of being Mr. Asquith's understudy, threw out the same hint to a deputation of Suffragists who waited upon him at Dundee. The dodges of politicians for shelving causes they dislike are not always so transparent.

### Boycotting the Census.

One of our critics describes our tactics as neither war nor magnificent; another as a "crime against science"—and so forth and so on. The use of an elderly cliché does not argue a good case, and neither does the accusation of an assault on science. We have plenty of

evidence as to the attitude of scientists towards us; we are part of the raw material they work upon, but when we endeavour to be something more they raise the batteries of traditions and use shot and shell upon us that was old-fashioned in the time of Waterloo. They close the doors of every learned society against us because housework and attendance to the comfort of their sex, in their opinion, is the metier of the eternal feminine. The recent action of the French Academy towards Mme. Curie and the continued boycotting of distinguished women by the learned societies of England, proves pretty conclusively the attitude of the male scientists towards women.

### A Prelate on Emancipation.

When a high dignitary of the Church of Rome—a Church which has been frequently accused of endeavouring to keep women in subjection for selfish ends—of his own free will declares frankly the need for the freedom of women, we may feel that we are making headway against tradition. The power of the Church as a conservative force, and its capacity for winning respect for the doctrines and principles it upholds, makes it a valuable ally. With the precedent of Cardinal Moran, a staunch feminist, before him, Bishop Vaughan delivered a brilliant address at a meeting of the Catholic Women's League, in Manchester, on "The Emancipation of Women." "Among the nations of the earth," his lordship said, "the best men recognised her as their equal, and were prepared to throw open to her the position from which she had long been excluded and to offer her freedom such as they themselves enjoyed." He further stated that there was far more piety among women than was to be found in men, and that there were more women saints than men saints.

The capacity for self-immolation has, partly from the manner of their upbringing, hitherto been greater amongst women than amongst men. Perhaps when things are equalised out a bit more the hagiology of a future era would show an increase in the number of male saints. As long as it shows that women are on the voters' lists we will not grudge them their spiritual progress.

### Taxing Married Women.

As was to be expected when the Government discovered that married women had awakened to the fact that they could not legally be taxed as the law at present stands, they determined to take measures that they would no longer have this easy method of retaliation. Amongst the "good" resolutions which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has formulated reads:—"That where the additional duty of income tax at the rate of sixpence is chargeable on the joint income of husband and wife, a part of that duty proportionate to the wife's income may be assessed on and recovered from the wife."

This alteration in the law relating to Married Women's Property is decidedly premature—and as far as Suffragists are concerned, it will be treated as if it did not exist. Suffragist wives are not likely to give the information required—or to pay the taxes, should their husbands be weak enough to answer for them. When Mr. Lloyd George proves himself an honest Suffragist it will be time enough for him to make new taxes for women. He has a certain glibness in wailing over any Bill that might leave out the married women; but as far as honest effort in removing their disabilities is concerned, he does nothing. It's their money he wants.



## PROPAGANDA.

It is impossible not to feel keen regret at Mrs. Borrmann Wells' departure. The loss of her personality, of her energy, and of her influence in the Propaganda Department is a very heavy one. I am fully conscious that I cannot take her place, but in attempting to carry on the work that Mrs. Wells has left I feel confident that I can rely on the support and practical assistance of all my colleagues, both known and unknown, in our League. The work before us is full of interest and full of hope. The Census boycott has stirred our branches all over the country to fresh action, and every member is stimulated by the thought that she has this power of protesting against the exclusion of women from political power. A greater sense of union and interdependence has sprung up amongst us, and we feel that we are one big co-operative society. This will help us more than anything to increase our work.

### Caxton Hall "At Home."

On Thursday next, February 23, at 3 p.m., the programme will be a specially interesting one, and it is hoped that no member in London who can possibly help it will miss the delightful opportunity of hearing Miss Decima Moore and Miss Annie A. Smith speak. Admission is free, and the hostess is Miss C. V. Tite. Mrs. Despard is travelling a long distance to be present on this occasion.

### Whist Drive.

Mrs. Fisher is arranging a whist drive to take place in the Supper Room, Caxton Hall, Friday, February 24, at 7.30. As this is a special effort to get funds for the League, and as it will certainly prove a most enjoyable way of spending an evening, members are asked to do their utmost to make it a success. Tickets 2s. 6d. each; evening dress optional.

### Members' Meeting.

Next Sunday's meeting, from 4 to 7 p.m., should prove specially attractive, for we shall have the opportunity of meeting the provincial members of the N.E.C. These Sunday afternoon chats are very popular with those who have taken part in them. Others who have not yet done so may be assured that they are missing some real pleasure.

### Hard-up Social.

A vigorous committee is working up this matter. The Small Holborn Hall has been booked for Saturday, March 25, from 6.30 till 11.30. Each guest will pay one shilling and bring provisions enough for himself or herself and something over for the hard-up hostesses. These provisions will be at once handed over to the commissariat department, and, later in the evening, all will be invited to partake of the spread in communistic fashion. The programme will include Miss Cicely Hamilton's Wax-Works, conducted by herself, Suffrage songs by Mr. Frank Witty, a Suffrage meeting, with interruptions, "How the Vote was lost," infant prodigies, side shows, dancing, and a clearance sale, the musical items being under the direction of Mrs. Van Raalte. Old clothes are optional.

### (S.W.) Battersea Centre.

Anything that can be sold will be most welcome at the Suffrage Shop, 316, Battersea Park-road, for the Jumble Sale to be held Saturday afternoon, Feb. 25.  
F. A. UNDERWOOD.

## STREET SELLING.

The thing of the moment is the Census boycott, and all members are asked to help in every way to make this protest effective. We are having poster parades to advertise both THE VOTE and the above, every Monday and Thursday, at 2 p.m. sharp, and helpers are urgently needed for parading or for distributing handbills and selling the paper along the route. I shall also be glad to hear from those who can give an hour or so a week to selling at one of our street pitches.

It is more important than ever that THE VOTE should be widely circulated, and if only every Freedom Leaguer realised that now is the time to concentrate all her energies on winning the victory which is not far distant, time might be found to give at least one hour a week to this very necessary work.

ETHEL M. FENNINGS, "Vote Sales," Organiser.

## CENSUS PROTEST.

The Press has given very fair notices of our intention to boycott the Census, and many provincial papers have devoted short leaders to it. Some of these will be found on another page.

Professor Sadler, who is so well known in connection with educational work, had a letter in *The Times* against the protest. Many of our members doubtless replied to this letter, but only two have so far appeared (see page 217).

We are delighted to notice that in last week's *Votes for Women* the N.W.S.P.U. announces its intention of joining in this protest. We cannot too often repeat that this protest, perhaps almost more than any other that has ever been made, depends for its success on numbers, especially on the number of women-occupiers who join in it.

### Men Supporters.

To set against the attitude of Professor Sadler and those who agree with him we have the enthusiastic co-operation of Mr. Laurence Housman, whose articles have been so much appreciated by our readers. In writing to express his regret that at present he cannot speak for us on the subject, though before April 2 he hopes to be in a position to do so, he says:—

I am with you heartily. In making your scheme please bear in mind that the thing to aim for is not big all-night gatherings in one particular place, but as many householders as possible refusing to make a return. Secure a "fighting line of temporary occupiers" who will face imprisonment and whose goods the Government can't get at to distract on. Blank papers can be returned to the Census officer with an indication, "House full of Census resisters—no return." If you can get quite a few thousand householders to do this, the Census is broken down and a splendid example given that government has nothing to do with physical force, but depends on the consent of the governed.

Some men supporters are going to absent themselves and make their wives responsible for making the Census returns—or not doing so. Others are going to remain, fill in the form for themselves and any other men who may be in the house, each adding that the house is full of Suffragist ladies who refuse to give any information about themselves, and as the Government has not supplied any legal means to force them to comply, he is unable to make any return, and being a Suffragist himself, he sympathises with the logical protest they are making.

### Census Agents.

I shall be glad to hear from sympathisers in any district where we have no branch who will be willing to act as local Census agents and to whom I shall be glad to send all particulars of the work. I have already got such helpers in Bournemouth, Cambridge, Dewsbury, and Uxbridge.

### New Pamphlet.

Which contains a reprint of Mr. Laurence Housman's article, "News from No-Man's Land," together with practical instructions on "How to Evade the Census," is now ready, and can be had from the Literature Department, price 1d., or 10d. per dozen. Will Branches please write to Mrs. Mitchell for a supply at once?

### To Suffragists.

90, Elm Park-mansions, Chelsea, will be vacated by the owner on April 2. Anyone wanting a bed or *piéd à terre* is most welcome to go there any hour before 10.30 p.m., when the outer doors of the mansion will be open; other refugees can obtain admission by ringing. There is a bedroom, drawing-room, and kitchen, comfortable chairs, plenty of books and food, and a hearty spiritual welcome to all Census evaders!

All such other offers and the names of those who would be glad to take advantage of them should be sent to me as soon as possible. EDITH HOW MARTYN.

## TREASURER'S NOTE.

The donations from M. and A. E. Colby and acknowledged in last week's VOTE were sent in memory of their dear and valued friend, Mrs. Harriet McIlquham, a notice of whose life-work appeared in No. 16, Vol. I., of THE VOTE.—CONSTANCE TITE.

## NEWS FROM NO-MAN'S LAND. WAYS AND MEANS. By LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

One of the humours of the situation in No-Man's Land with regard to Census-resistance, lies in the fact that a good many Anti-Suffragists will be taking part in it. At every Census there have always been a number of ladies who, priding themselves on the privacy of their lives, and objecting to any participation in things which savour of politics, have evaded the Census by spending the night in travelling. It may fairly be assumed that these ladies are all of an Anti-Suffragist tendency, yet on this occasion they will be contributing their quota to the boycott organised by their opponents. But it is not only these retiring characters who will be drawn into the broadcast net of the various Suffrage societies; a good many Anti-Suffragists will be staying, as guests or boarders, with hostesses whose political opinions they have never troubled themselves to inquire into; but when the day for the return of the Census forms, they will find themselves included willy-nilly among the boycotting forces, for their hostesses, who alone will be responsible for the filling up of the Census forms, will refuse absolutely to put down the name of any person, however eager for registration. And if the Anti-Suffragists think this a very unfair proceeding, it will open their minds as to the feelings of other women when in legislation things are done "over their heads" without their being consulted. I hear of one ardent Suffragist owner of a large boarding-house at a watering-place on the South Coast of No-Man's Land whose house is full of "Antis," and who runs her establishment far too well to be in any danger of losing them. A good many of these ladies steadfastly refuse even to look at the Suffrage papers which she occasionally offers them, so they know nothing whatever of the scheme which is afoot; but on the day following the Census they will hear, to their indignation, that they have all gone passively to swell the number of the "unreturned." "I've got thirty of them under my thumb," their hostess triumphantly remarks, "and not all the physical force in the world is going to make me put their names down."

This particular Resister is prepared to face a fine for non-compliance with the Census regulations; but it is pretty generally recognised in No-Man's Land that if the resistance is sufficiently widespread there will be no prosecutions at all. It is already known that the numbers of resisting householders will mount into thousands. The Government cannot afford to make open confession in a few thousand prosecutions through the length and breadth of the country; it may prosecute a few of the ringleaders of the "conspiracy"—a possibility which they are quite prepared to face; but, if the women play up in full numbers, it will let the rank and file alone. There is an additional reason for their doing so, which I shall come to later.

The other day I met, in the manufacturing centre of No-Man's Land, a famous professor, who is himself an ardent but a very law-abiding Suffragist. He has to do with a good deal that goes on behind the scenes in the Government Education Department. The plans for the Census-Boycott had not then been published: believing that I was speaking to sympathetic ears, I told him of the proposal. It upset him dreadfully. "The Census," he said, "is so very important in so many Government departments; they depend upon it in all sorts of ways. Its failure would really be a very serious matter." I suggested that its seriousness and its importance were precisely the reason why the women were attacking it. "The Government has only to promise time for a Woman's Suffrage Bill to go through," I said, "and the boycott will at once be withdrawn." He did not recover his spirits for a long while; and I was glad to have evidence, practically at first hand, that the women had hit on a spot where the Government was very vulnerable indeed. I was able to tell him, too, what, as an educationalist, interested

him very particularly, that there were actually heads of boarding schools who were going to make no returns of their scholars; and I asked him if he thought the authorities would try to patch things up afterwards by mere guesswork, where it was known, for instance, that a school contained some forty or fifty pupils. But he had no hope whatever that red tape could so stretch itself.

Another of the humorous aspects of the Resistance is the amount of trouble of quite a strenuous kind which some of the so-called "Constitutional Suffragists" will put themselves to in order to remain technically "law-abiding." Not only are some of them prepared to take night walking expeditions, but some are even joining in all-night gatherings and torch-light processions, which start at about eleven o'clock, and march through the streets of the larger towns to the appointed rendezvous. A good many of these, all the same, have handed over their houses or their flats to some of their more militant sisters, so that from all available households the protest may be made. But who would have thought, only two years ago, of any "Constitutional Suffragists" in No-Man's Land joining in midnight protest meetings and processions?

Occupiers of flats find that they have special opportunities for making easy and effective protests. A good many who, for various reasons, cannot risk fine or imprisonment, will simply exchange with some friend on the same or an adjoining staircase, so as to be away from their own tenements, and will have in, as temporary occupier and hostess, some volunteer of the "fighting line" who is able to laugh at fines and face the risk of imprisonment. Others, who cannot be persuaded to lend their flats for active protest, will, after receiving the Census form, leave their flats vacant for the week-end; but tied on to the knocker will be the placard, "No Vote, no Census," and the collecting officer will have considerable trouble given him to discover whether the flat was in occupancy or vacant on the night of the Census. It may be that a good many summonses taken out against exhibitors of these placards (on the presumption that they were active resisters) will have to be withdrawn when it is discovered that they were not in occupation at all.

The collecting-officers are already looking rather blue over the business; for it is pretty evident that in some districts the collection of the forms, or of information as to the action or attitude of householders is going to take a considerable amount of extra time and trouble. If it should turn out that the collectors have undertaken a very unremunerative job, it will not be an unwholesome reminder to the hangers-on of officialdom that the non-enfranchisement of women may come to bear very directly upon their own interests. If they are touched in pocket these thousands of collectors will begin to think that, after all, "votes for women" have come to be practical politics. I hear of one lady, with a voluble tongue and a large family, whose husband will not allow her to resist as she would

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like to, though, being absent himself, he leaves to her the filling of the forms; and this lady has undertaken, if she can do no more, to occupy at least a quarter of an hour of the collector's time while supplying him with the completed return. It is rather a frivolous form of resistance, but apparently it assists the good lady to feel that she is "in the movement"; and when people join in a protest against misgovernment, each must follow the line of militancy which comes most naturally. The unfortunate collectors would probably prefer to have to deal only with the more serious forms—they are less trying to the temper.

These are some of the light and comic touches which seem always to brighten the life of the Suffrage movement, even at its most strenuous moments. But, of course, behind all this is a deadly seriousness: the women of No-Man's Land mean business. Resistance, passive and active, is more than ever in the air. Behind this Census-boycott, tax-resistance is beginning to loom large; and it is whispered that it is not always going to remain "passive." Women who are unjustly taxed, or unjustly fined, are beginning to feel that, as a matter of principle, the Government should not be allowed to profit by what it has unconscionably laid hands on; and we may before long hear of women "taking back" the amount of fines, taxes, and costs levied against them in ways which will make the Government the loser pecuniarily as well as morally.

We are now on the very eve of the Census in No-Man's Land. I have not yet heard definitely as to the full total of householders, men and women, who will take part in it; but it is certain that behind each protesting householder will be far larger numbers—how many the Government can never discover, except by granting Women the franchise and taking another Census—this time with their consent—immediately afterwards.

### THE "PIONEER PLAYERS."

The "Pioneer Players" is a society recently formed for the purpose of playing propaganda plays, chiefly those dealing with the Women's Movement, that being at present the most important. The list of authors who have promised their help includes the names of such well-known and ardent supporters as Miss Cecily Hamilton, Miss Beatrice Harraden, Miss Bessie Hatton, Mr. Laurence Housman, Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer, Mr. J. Sackville Martin, Miss Elizabeth Robins, Miss C. St. John and Mr. Bernard Shaw.

The first performance, which will take place at a London theatre early in April, will include a one-act realistic scene by Mrs. H. W. Nevinson, a specially written play in which Miss Ellen Terry will appear, and a one-act comedy.

Arrangements are made by the Pioneer Players under the direction of Miss Edith Craig, the hon. general director, to visit Suffrage centres and give performances in aid of local societies. The society also wishes to encourage plays dealing with the Women's Movement, and will be pleased to consider any that are sent in. Among future plans will be the arrangement for Miss Ellen Terry to give one of her lectures on Shakespeare's women which have been so successful in the United States, and a performance of Mr. Laurence Housman's "Pains and Penalties." Members of the society consist of acting members, who pay a subscription of one shilling per annum, and amongst whom may be mentioned Miss Lily Brayton, Miss Auriol Lee, Mr. Charles Hawtreay, Miss Janette Steer, Miss Ellen Terry, and ordinary members who can join the society on subscribing for the six performances of new plays, &c., which will be given annually in London, on the payment of 3s. 6d., 16s. 6d. or 7s. 6d. annually, and are entitled to a single seat at each performance. Prospectus and full particulars can be obtained from the secretary, "Pioneer Players," 2, Adelphi Terrace House, Strand, W.C.

## Special Clearance List

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## THE PRESS ON THE CENSUS BOYCOTT.

We give below a few excerpts from the Press criticisms of our latest anti-Government policy. They are almost uniformly petulant and abusive, and take no notice of our pledge to withdraw from this protest if Mr. Asquith will give us a definite promise of facilities. This pledge has been made by the speakers at every one of the King's Speech meetings which have been held all over the country since February 6, when our claims to representation were impudently ignored while matters of small domestic or imperial importance were given an amazing prominence.

### "Doubtful" Tactics.

It seems doubtful that the Women's Freedom League has chosen well in selecting census evasion as a means of promoting the cause. People may say that this is only the tendency to understate ages carried to extremes. In any case a great many members of the League can have no qualification either to fill up or refuse to fill up census papers, and they can hardly prevent their parents from doing so on their behalf. The plan of campaign, as explained last night, is for leaguers to spend Census Sunday in the houses of sympathisers, who will refuse to return papers. A collection will be taken to defray the expenses of such sympathisers—namely, the £5 fine. This may provide a pleasant change from pavement chalking, but does the scheme really strengthen woman's claim to political influence? And what will the W.S.P.U. do by way of counter stroke against its rival? Will it insist on filling up two census papers?—*Glasgow Herald*.

### The Age Clause.

Mrs. Despard's threat that suffragettes will refuse to give information to the census takers is nothing new. It is the age clause that is the trouble.—*The World*.

### A Formidable Weapon.

The suffragists have discovered a formidable weapon with which to attack the Government unless they give an immediate undertaking to facilitate the bringing forward of the Conciliation Bill. They will organise a national women's movement to resist the taking of the census! This is an alarming extension of the principle of law-breaking in order to secure what they regard as a political right. The carrying out of the new plan of campaign would greatly embarrass the Registrar-General, and impair the value of his work. There must be many thousands of women, heads of households, who would willingly fling the hated papers into the fire. As it is, the census is regarded in some households as inquisitorial, and others who are not suffragists might not be sorry for an excuse for not stating a maiden lady's age. To remind the militant claimants to the feminine vote that there are severe penalties attaching to a refusal to fill up the census forms would have no weight with those who regard the filling of the prisons as the most effective weapon against an unsympathetic Government. Here is a means of filing every gaol in the land and of rendering the decennial numbering of the people partially valueless. We can at any rate commend the proposal as more ladylike than butting policemen in Parliament-square.—*Bradford Daily Telegraph*.

### Smart Petulance.

This smart bit of petulance is defended on the ground that, because women do not possess votes, they are justified in doing anything to hamper the Government who refuse or do not give them. It would be quite as logical if Tariff Reformers refused to pay taxes imposed by a Free Trade Government; indeed, it would be more so, for the Tariff Reformers would be able to say that, having the franchise, the Government had added mockery to taxation by disregarding their votes. The new tactics are so petty and so futile that they will probably offend many of the ladies' best friends, certainly the more thoughtful among them. The census statistics are at best only approximate by the time legislation of any kind can be based upon them, and legislation at its best is only a reaching after perfection. A little more inaccuracy this way or that cannot seriously matter.—*Yorkshire Daily Post*.

### Large Numbers of Protesters.

The Women's Freedom League has definitely decided to carry out the threat to upset the coming census by organising opposition to it on the part of the militant suffragists. Since the idea was first put forward an unexpectedly large number of men and women have intimated their readiness to co-operate in this latest move "against the Government." Elaborate preparations are being made to carry out the proposed boycott on the largest possible scale.—*Manchester Dispatch*.

### Certain of Public Sympathy.

The Women's Freedom League are adopting a course which they may be certain will bring them a vast amount of public sympathy. They are starting upon a campaign of "hindrance to public business." The idea is really a splendid one, worthy of the liveliest and most ingenious suffragette brain, and it is possible to imagine practical men and sensible women, too,

lauding their efforts to the skies, while the legislative machinery is rendered useless, or as nearly useless as their strenuous efforts will make it.—*Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*.

### A Cute Move.

The latest dodge of the ladies who are so anxious to have the vote is a very cute one. They are determined to defy and boycott the census. They will refuse to give their ages, and they appeal to their sisters in the country to back them up. Many ladies who have not hitherto given the suffrage question a thought will suddenly discover something very sensible in the movement. Once a lady has turned twenty-one her age is always a mystery. The suffragette leaders know this, and they offer an easy way of preserving the mystery. Why submit to the census inquisition? Come and join us. Defy the census man and cease to be a citizen until we have citizen's rights. The Government ignores us. Ignore the Government. The idea seems feasible enough. It might be supplemented by the preparation of a signboard to display at the door or window. The word "Suffragette" would be sufficient. At this dread sign the census man will pass by on the other side.—*Dundee Evening Telegraph and Post*.

### Keep Hammering Away.

I see that the Women's Freedom League, furious at the omission of Women's Suffrage from the King's Speech, are resolved upon putting every obstacle in the way of taking the census this year unless the Government gives a pledge that the Suffrage Bill would be taken this Session. They are quite right to keep hammering away, and I think have hit on a clever device. It can hurt no one, and it will demonstrate the force of obstinacy. But I hope they will give the Government one more chance, and not annoy or disgust them at this critical juncture.—*Cambridge Independent Press*.

### Professor Sadler and Mrs. How Martyn.

Sir.—As one who (from long knowledge of the value of the public work of women, especially when it is done in conjunction with men) not only supports woman suffrage, but would welcome the admission of women to Parliament and the Cabinet, I hope that the leaders of the Women's Freedom League may reconsider their plan of resisting the Census. To boycott the Census would be a crime against science. Upon the completeness of the Census returns, upon the punctuality of their decennial recurrence, depend a hundred inquiries into the social and educational welfare of the people—inquiries which aim at bettering the conditions under which girls and women, not less than boys and men, live and work and learn.

To sulk against the Census would not be a stroke of statesmanship, but a nursery fit of bad temper.

Yours faithfully, M. E. SADLER.—*The Times*.

Weybridge, February 13.

Sir.—Kindly allow me a short space to reply to Mr. Sadler's letter.

The officials of the Women's Freedom League will reconsider their plan of boycotting the Census on one condition only, and that condition is that Mr. Asquith promises facilities for the passing into law this Session of a Bill to enfranchise women.

"To boycott the Census would be a crime against science." I reply that for women to take part in the Census or to pay taxes willingly when governed without their consent is a crime against the fundamental principles of liberty, and therefore to refuse to do either is a just and logical act incumbent on all public-spirited women.

Were the Census papers drawn up by a committee of scientific experts, were the Census to be administered in a scientific manner, were the data being obtained to be used by scientists, it would still not be difficult for the Women's Freedom League to justify its action. But the Census is designed, not by a scientist for scientists, not even for statesmen, but for politicians with the knack of juggling with statistics to make the figures appear to support any theory. The laws, too numerous to mention, which press unfairly on women show that at present the results of one-sided legislation are so unsatisfactory to women—and necessarily so until women are enfranchised—that it is our duty to use every means to protest against our exclusion from citizenship. The Census boycott is the most effective one at the moment, and it will be the means of proving to Mr. Asquith, that the demand for political freedom on the part of women is widespread and urgent.

I am glad Mr. Sadler is a supporter of women's suffrage, and I am sorry to have to remind him that "a nursery fit of bad temper" is more appreciated by and has more effect on the politician than "a stroke of statesmanship."—Yours faithfully, EDITH HOW MARTYN, A.R.C.S., B.Sc.—*The Times*.

1, Robert-street, Adelphi, W.C., Feb. 15.

In *The Glasgow News* a "Freedom Leaguer" writes:—"It is just because we are aware that the census returns will be used for future legislation that we object to giving any information until we have a voice in that legislation. Let Professor Sadler come and help us to gain the suffrage, and then we will gladly help him and 'all the powers that be' to make better and wiser laws to govern us."



## THE VOTE.

Proprietors—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., Ltd., 148, Holborn Bars.  
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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1911.

### WHERE MR. ASQUITH STANDS.

"It would be a scandal and an outrage for the Government to slip in and rob these members of their good fortune in the ballot," says Mr. Philip Snowden in the current issue of *The Christian Commonwealth*, alluding to the fact that two Members who wished to bring in the Women's Bill were first in the ballot. But more than that, it would be an act of very bad policy on the part of Mr. Asquith, whose present position is by no means as secure as he would have us believe. When we accused him of depriving private Members of their constitutional privileges that he might evade any irksome discussion of our Bill, there was an air of indulgent amusement on the part of the politically-tired man-in-the-street. "Mr. Asquith is too busy with the Parliamentary Bill to pay much attention to the Conciliation Bill," we were told, on the principle that the Premier was "too big to be bothered." But Lord Hugh Cecil has his rapier wit has described him as "the subtlest of all the beasts of the field," and penetrated the dark intricacies of his mind, finding there the same effort at evasion that we have found.

"The Government attach urgent importance," said Lord Hugh Cecil, "to not discussing Women's Suffrage and the Osborne judgment. Therefore they propose to take as much time as they can get. I expect they see that awkward questions are coming up, and I can imagine the Prime Minister coming down after Easter with that wonderful manner which he has of taking things simply, but being all the time the subtlest of all the beasts of the field—(laughter)—and depriving the House of further time. I feel sure that if in earlier days the right hon. gentleman had undertaken the work of the tempter he would not have been so injudicious as to take the shape of the serpent, but he would have appeared as a retired archangel of moderate progressive opinions. (Laughter.) In that guise undoubtedly he would have achieved remarkable success."

But the subtlest beast, even though for the nonce in the guise of a petticoated archangel, can overreach himself, and it is because with the political situation as difficult as it is at present we think that the country may be constrained to resent his efforts at getting power that we urge him not to incur the further resentment of Suffragists at this moment. The Premier has two ways open to him of hurting us at the present time: he can appropriate for Government business the day that has fallen to us in the ballot, or he could prevent the Bill, when it has passed its second reading, from going to Grand Committee. Either method would draw upon him the anger of many of his stalwarts and the practical wrath of those women who have worked for this measure through a long and weary term of years. That he would like to do this we know; that statesmanship may prevent him we hope.

Mr. Asquith made it very evident to the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee from the Trade Union Congress that his idea of the perfect franchise was very different from ours—"One citizen, one vote"—the citizen being a man of full age and competent understanding. If we are to travel to democracy on these lines we may presently find ourselves a nation where every man regards himself a king—and not a modern king with Constitutional restrictions, but a mediæval king with unlimited opportunities for corruption. We see what a male democracy means in America, and we know that as that nation has been described as a contemporaneous posterity, it may well be prophetic of our own case. From Mr. Asquith's idea of Adult Suffrage as from Mr. Byles' Bill, for which we have no present use, we desire to be saved.

But will Mr. Asquith's present tactics bring him success? Will it bring him nearer his ideals of democracy and his desire for an open road for the car of

progress? Can he afford, on the strength of his so-called mandate from the country, to pass over our claims to an immediate promise for the necessary facilities? We venture to think that there is considerable doubt. Apart from the fact that he does not think on all fours with his Cabinet, we have had during the recent elections the evidence that the country is not, owing in no small measure to our work in the constituencies, as friendly towards the Radicals as it was. The majority of every Minister of any note—with the exception of Mr. Lloyd George—was reduced, and this fact ought to be carefully considered by the Premier when making his decision as to his action with regard to our Bill.

Concerning the schemes of any party, as we stand outside all of them, we have nothing to say; but it is impossible for us not to realise exactly where Mr. Asquith and his Cabinet stand and to realise better than they can the dangers of their position should it become necessary for them to be reduced to the dire alternative of creating peers. The Unionists are devising a new fighting system; they are reorganising themselves, and what the result will be it is hard to say. They may not have such a strong band of orators as the Liberals, but as a party they are humbler about their shortcomings; they are aiming at better co-ordination of Parliamentary management and at the flotation of electioneering and agitating machinery in the constituencies. This setting of the Tory house in order must not be overlooked in the event of the creation of the 500 peers. It may be necessary for Mr. Asquith to call upon some hundreds of his supporters in the House to label themselves with such convincing titles as Lords Limehouse and Mile-end, &c., and travel with their contumelious and discredited honours to the Upper House. This will mean many hundreds of by-elections throughout the country and more bullying and baiting of the tired voter. And many of the electorate who are not prepared to go as far as Mr. Lloyd George in his attacks on the "eldest born" will have a strong feeling of resentment against the lifting to the peerage, which still bears a halo of romance from the many great names that history teems with, of their greengrocer or their butcher, even though it be in the sacred interests of democracy. The creation of a regiment of fustian peers may cause another swing of the pendulum at these countless by-elections where every Radical seat will be fiercely contested by the Tory party, now newly organised, and where the Suffrage forces will be found adding fuel to the fire and telling the truth about the Government without fear or favour. The Government majority at the present moment is small, and the loss of sure and doubtful seats—a by no means unlikely state of affairs once the Member hitherto known to the constituents is sent to the other House—would be irreparable. It would mean that Mr. Asquith had burdened the country with 500 ridiculous peers and for payment brought back a Unionist Government!

And how can he prevent this not unlikely débâcle? He can give us his pledge of full facilities; he can remove once for all our guerilla forces that swoop down on the rocky seats and turn out the Government as they did notably at Torquay at the last election; he can draw once more to the aid of his party the Liberal women who are standing aside most regretfully and who, if once shown that he is willing to overcome his personal hostility to women's enfranchisement, would gladly put their shoulder to the wheel once more and help their party.

Mr. Asquith must know that our majority in the present House is greater than ever, and is greater than his own. The maxim that the House of Commons as a whole is wiser than any single person in it is something that the subtlest of beasts disguised as the most progressive of retired archangels cannot afford to disregard unless he be prepared to risk having to spread the archangelic wings in flight to the other side of the House.

MARY O. KENNEDY. ☞



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### BRANCH NOTES.

**NATIONAL OFFICES, LONDON.—1, Robert-street, Adelphi, W.C.**

**Crystal Palace and Anerley.—Miss JESSIE FENNINGS,** 149, Croydon-road, Anerley.

We hope to hold a drawing-room meeting here early in March to explain the Census protest, and later on one at the Suffrage Offices. Helpers are urgently needed.

**Clapham.—Miss F. UNDERWOOD,** 31, Rush-hill-road, Lavender-hill.

Tuesday evening last we held a meeting at the Women's Freedom League Shop, Battersea Park-road. Mrs. Hicks was in the chair, and explained that although women had abandoned militant methods until after the fate of the Women's Suffrage Bill, to be introduced May 5, was known, they intended to protest against their exclusion from the franchise by boycotting the Census and by refusing to pay their taxes. Proceeding, Mrs. Hicks pointed out several present disabilities for women, and condemned the Wandsworth Board of Guardians for recently refusing to consider the qualifications of the three women applicants for the post of dispenser, merely because they were women. Miss Hurst read an admirable paper on "Equal Pay for Equal Work." Will all Suffragettes living in South-West London please note that Mrs. Despard will speak on the Census boycott, Friday, March 3, in the Lecture Room, Battersea Public Library, at 8 p.m. It is hoped that the room will be crowded.—F. A. U.

**Herne Hill and Norwood.—32, Geneva-road, Brixton, S.W.**

On Wednesday afternoon, February 15, by kind invitation of Mrs. Jenks, a musical "At Home" was held at 170, Peckham Rye. There was a good attendance of members, and this formed a pleasant change from our ordinary meetings, and we all felt encouraged and inspired by the singing and music, and we were greatly indebted to Mrs. Wotton, who kindly played the accompaniments to several of the most popular Suffrage songs.

We are making special efforts just now to increase the circulation of our paper, THE VOTE, in this neighbourhood, and Mrs. Presbury, who has kindly consented to act as Vote organiser for our branch, has started a new pitch at West Norwood near the tram terminus, and we shall be very grateful to any members who will help us to sell the paper, even if they can only spare one hour a week.

The next members' meeting will be held at 28, Carson-road, Dulwich, on Wednesday, March 1, at 7 p.m.—B. SPENCER.

**Stamford Hill.—Mrs. CUNNINGHAM,** 114, Holmleigh-road. We have had two most successful open-air meetings this week at West Hackney Church and Amhurst Park. The speakers were, respectively, Mrs. Mustard and Miss Weir, both of whom, we hope, we shall soon have the pleasure of hearing again.

Will members kindly bear in mind that our next afternoon "At Home" is, by kind invitation of Mrs. Griffiths, to be held at 6, Fairholt-road, on Tuesday, March 7, at 3.30 p.m.

**Mid-London Branch (late Central).—Mrs. TRITTON,** 1, Northcote-avenue, Ealing, W.

On February 14 we held our annual branch members' meeting, and after the delegates' report of the Conference had been laid before them, those present turned their attention to the revision of the branch constitution and the election of officers and committee.

It was decided to re-name the branch as above. The old name has sometimes caused confusion with the headquarter offices, so besides the new name sounding well any such misunderstanding will now be avoided.

The minimum subscription to the branch was fixed at 1s. 6d. on account of the capitation fee which each branch has now to send to the League Funds in view of the affiliation fee which was formerly the required contribution.

We have, unfortunately, lost some of those who during the last year have worked enthusiastically as branch officers.

The following were elected to serve for the coming year:—President, Miss Cicely Hamilton; Chairman (to be elected quarterly), Mrs. Hyde; Secretary, Mrs. Tritton; Assistant Secretary, Miss Hunt; Treasurer, Miss F. A. Arnold; Literature Secretary, Miss Edith Craig; Committee, Mrs. Macpherson, Miss Henderson, Mrs. Hyde, Miss Hillsworth, and Miss Levy.

We shall have a short members' meeting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28, at Chandos Hall, before the public meeting, at which the speakers will be Lady Stout and Mrs. Arncliffe-Sonnett, with Mrs. Cope in the chair and Mrs. de Vismes as hostess, while we are to have the pleasure of hearing "The Awakening," sung by Miss Marta Cunningham.

I hope very much that all members who can will be present, and bring as many friends as possible with them.

The handbills must be distributed this week, and the meeting made known in all directions.

I shall be glad to learn the names of all members willing to steward, sell literature or help with the decorations of the hall.—E. G. T.

**West Hampstead.—23, Pandora-road, West Hampstead.**

On Wednesday, February 15, a King's Speech meeting was held at the Lecture Hall, Burrard-road, Finchley-road, preceded by a short concert. Phyllis and George van Raalte opened the concert with an effective duet. Miss C. Gould recited, dramatically, Housman's "Woman This and Women That." Miss D. Gould sang a ballad with great charm, and afterwards gave a spirited rendering of "The Awakening." Mme. van Raalte accompanied.

Mrs. Nevinson, who was in the chair, made an interesting and witty speech, which was received with great favour and applause.

Mrs. How Martyn then spoke for three-quarters of an hour, during which she gave a very clear exposition of the women's movement, and fully explained the Census boycott. Great interest was evinced in this, and several questions were put which were satisfactorily dealt with by the lecturer.

The following resolution was then put and carried without a dissentient:—"That this meeting approves of passive resistance as a means of calling attention to the Women's Suffrage question, and calls upon Mr. Asquith to grant facilities for passing into law the Women's Suffrage Bill now before the House."

The hall was decorated in the colours by Miss Dickeson, assisted by Mrs. Hyde, who had also given other valuable assistance in the preparation of the meeting. This was the first public meeting held by the West Hampstead Branch. The sale of tickets, with the collection, amounted to enough to well cover the cost of the meeting. A fair amount of literature and VOTES were sold, Miss Fennings selling the greater number of the latter.

Meetings are being held at 23, Pandora-road every Wednesday evening, when sympathisers will be welcomed.—J. VAN RAALTE.

**LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.—Hon. Organiser:** MISS MANNING, B.A., Harper-hill, Sale, Cheshire.

**Chester.—Miss WOODALL,** 13, Abbey-square.

Our King's Speech meeting, on February 13, was successful, except from the point of view of our chairman, Colonel Verschoyle, a Liberal Nationalist, who advocated *patience*, and even assistance, for the Government, as they, the Irish Nationalists, were giving, until the question of the Lord's Veto is settled.

Miss M. I. Neal (Manchester) eloquently declared that we are "tired of patience," which phrase the local Press used as a heading for an account of our meeting.

Miss Sidley's able speech was also greatly appreciated, and in response to her appeal twenty-four names were given as Census resisters.

Notwithstanding the unexpected opposition, or in spite of the chairman, the local Press states: "An embarrassing resolution in favour of hampering the Government was carried"; and it is noteworthy that care is taken by the Press not to mention our plan to boycott the Census.

Several new members were made, and four dozen VOTES have been sold this week. THE VOTE can always be obtained from above address.



A member, on whom I called to-day, told me that a party of men with whom she discussed the Census protest last evening, were "furious" about it.—E. WOODALL.

**Eccles.**—Miss J. HEYES, "Newholme," Hazelhurst, Worsley.

On Wednesday afternoon the Eccles Branch gave an "At Home" in Burgon's Room, Monton-green. The secretarial work done by Miss C. Wright and Miss Kippe during the week brought a good response, and our room over-flowed with guests. We were only sorry that there were not enough chairs to go round. The Rev. B. O. F. Heywood made, as usual, a delightful chairman. Mrs. Despard spoke of the lack of the mother feeling in politics. "Poor old mother," who sat by the chimney corner darned stockings, was sadly needed as adviser in the national house-keeping.

Mrs. Manning seconded a resolution, calling upon the Government to give full facilities to Sir George Kemp's Bill, and a second resolution requesting Sir George Pollard (Member for the Eccles Division) to join the Conciliation Committee was proposed by Miss Manning, seconded by Mrs. Norbury (Secretary for the N.U.W.S.S.), and carried unanimously.

**Manchester (Central).**—Miss A. E. HORDEEN, 89, Clitheroe-road, Longsight.

On Wednesday evening a King's Speech meeting, organised by the Eccles and Manchester branches, was held in the Pendleton Town Hall, when Mrs. Despard, Miss Neal, and Miss Manning were speakers, and Miss Janet Heyes occupied the chair. Our resolution was carried by a large majority.

**Sale.**—Miss GELDER, "Thornlea," Wardle-road.

On Monday the fortnightly lecture was given by Mr. P. T. Johnstone, on "The Underfed Children of the Nation." Mr. Johnstone gave us some exceedingly interesting statistics and diagrams illustrative of experiments made at Bradford and elsewhere. A discussion ensued, and at the end of the meeting a resolution was carried by calling upon the Sale and Ashton-on-Mersey Education Sub-Committee to take steps to get the Act put into operation as soon as possible.

On Tuesday a large audience gathered in the Free Library to hear Mrs. Despard: the Rev. C. M. Wright, M.A., occupied the chair; H. B. Knowles, Esq., M.A. (Principal of the Salford Secondary School), and Miss Manning, B.A., also spoke. On the platform were Mrs. Joseph Johnson, Mrs. Coombs, Mrs. Sandys, Mrs. Hines, the Rev. A. H. Coombs.

The meeting opened by the singing of "The Awakening," by Miss Uttley, the audience joining in the chorus, after which Miss Rhys Davids presented Mrs. Despard with a bouquet in the colours of the League, and Miss Edith Nightingale distributed button-holes to our supporters on the platform.

The Rev. C. M. Wright said that although personally he disbelieved in militant methods, one could more respect those who employed them than those captious critics who never did anything whatsoever, who did not possess the intelligence or moral enthusiasm or backbone to stand out against conventional modes of opinion.

Mrs. Despard, who took as her text words from "The Awakening," spoke eloquently of the need of women in politics and the importance of the Census protest.

Mr. H. B. Knowles seconded the resolution, calling upon the Government to give full facilities to Sir George Kemp's Bill, and was greeted with a round of applause when he announced that he occupied the platform as a representative of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

Later, Miss Manning proposed, and the Rev. A. H. Coombs seconded, a resolution calling upon Mr. Ketty-Fletcher (Member for the Altrincham Division) to be in his place and vote for Sir George Kemp's Bill on May 4.

At the end of the meeting an eager group of women surrounded Mrs. Despard to discuss ways and means of evading the Census, and we expect a strong band of protestors from this neighbourhood.

Next Monday evening Miss Manning will lecture in the Temperance Rooms on "Shakespeare's Women," with dramatic illustrations by the Misses B. and R. Manning.

**Urmston.**—Miss H. MUDSON, "Oaklands," Flixton.

A good number of members gathered in Wills' Room. Unfortunately, Mrs. Aldridge was unable to come, and Nurse Griffin and Miss Manning took the meeting between them. Next time, Friday, March 3, we hope to have Mrs. Margaret Lawson with us. At this meeting THE VOTE, which contained an article by one of our associates (Mr. Beanland), sold exceptionally well.—M. E. MANNING.

**West Hartlepool.**—Miss J. H. LEIGHTON, 16, Clifton-street, Hartlepool.

On Thursday we held a record drawing-room meeting in Birks' Café, when Miss Marie Clavering, of the Actresses' Franchise League, read a stirring paper on the legal and economic disabilities that Englishwomen suffer. So inspiring was Miss Clavering's address that several new members were gained, and a large number of VOTES sold to sympathisers. Mrs. Walters and Miss Delafield kindly sang for us, and Miss Clavering recited with much sympathy and dramatic power the "Awakening." All agreed that it was a most successful meeting.—M. E. A.

**EAST ANGLIA.**—Hon. Organiser: MISS ANDREWS, 160, Norwich-road, Ipswich.

**Ipswich.**—Miss ANDREWS, 160, Norwich-road.

Last Wednesday, Miss Andrews opened a discussion on

Woman's Suffrage at St. Nicholas' Chapel Schoolroom. A good debate followed and many questions were asked, the chief objections being those of tactics. Mrs. Garner presided at our weekly meeting last Thursday. She made a good opening speech, and alluded to the present political situation. Questions were then distributed, and some excellent speeches were made. Three friends present joined the League, and two dozen copies of THE VOTE were sold.

On Friday we held a jumble sale. Our thanks are due to Mrs. and Miss Pratt, who were responsible for getting in the goods, and to those who willingly came forward and helped to sell. The money raised goes to pay the rent.

In a week or two we shall be moving from 13, Friars'-street to 16, Arcade-street. This change is being made in order to secure a better position, and although we shall have more rent to pay we feel assured that extra help will be given us. I shall thankfully receive donations towards the expenses of our new premises.

**Stowmarket and Bury St. Edmunds.**

A meeting will be held in Stowmarket on Tuesday afternoon, March 7, and in Bury on Monday evening, March 20.—CONSTANCE E. ANDREWS.

**WALES AND MONMOUTH.**—Hon. Organiser: MRS. CLEEVE, "Chez Nous," Sketty, Glamorgan.

**Llanelli.**

On the invitation of the Young Liberal League, Mrs. Cleeves and Miss Anna Munro addressed the Young Liberals League at Llanelli on Wednesday evening on Women's Suffrage. After a comprehensive address by Miss Munro on the history, aims and objects of the women's movement, many questions were asked, and considerable discussion ensued from the audience both for and against the subject, which were ably answered by Mrs. Cleeves and Miss Munro. The proceedings terminated with a hearty vote of thanks and an invitation to come back again.

**Swansea.**—At the Albert Hall, on Friday evening, Mrs. Cleeves announced that her house, Chez Nous, would be open for any present who wished to evade the Census. (Applause.)

## SCOTTISH NOTES.

**Glasgow: Suffrage Centre, 502, SAUCHIEHALL STREET.**  
Suffrage Centre Manageress: MISS K. McARTHUR.  
Hon. Secretary: MISS B. S. SEMPLE.  
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**Edinburgh.**

Hon. Secretary—Miss A. B. JACK, 21, Buccleuch-place.  
Hon. Treasurer—Miss M. A. WOOD, 67, Great King-street.  
Hon. Shop Secretary—Mrs. THOMSON, 39, Rosslyn-crescent.

Mrs. Scott, of the National Society, very kindly addressed the Tuesday afternoon "At Home," talking for her subject some of the pioneer women. She dealt mainly with Mary Wollstonecraft, Elizabeth Fry, and Harriet Martineau, and her account of the difficulties they overcame in an age of almost unassailable conventionalism, made us realise afresh the debt we owe to those who broke down the barriers. Mrs. Scott strongly recommended the study of those and other lives, only too apt to be forgotten in the stress of the modern movement.

We earnestly hope that every member will be present, and will bring friends to hear Mrs. Israel Zangwill and Mr. Charles Price, M.P., in the Oddfellows' Hall, on Friday, February 24. Both speakers are coming specially from London, and Mr. Price, a consistent advocate of our cause, represents the division (Central Edinburgh) in which our shop is situated.

The Whist Drives arranged by Miss Caroline Dalziel have resulted in the sum of £2 3s. 6d. being handed over to the treasurer. Very sincere thanks are due to Miss Dalziel, whose functions having been very successful socially as well as financially.—HELEN McLACHLAN, Assistant Secretary.

**Glasgow.**

A "Boycott the Census" meeting was held on Monday, February 13, in the Berkeley Hall, at which Miss Eunice Murray and Miss Alison Neilans were the speakers. Mrs. Wilson, who was in the chair, introduced the speaker in a delightful little speech. Miss Murray, in a rousing speech, called upon all who were not already members to come and join the League and help in the good work.

Miss Neilans gave a brief outline of the militant movement. The Freedom League protests had all been logical and effective. Now there was another chance to show the Government that it need not expect help from women so long as it denied them the right of citizenship. When the Census paper comes in, all good Suffragists will refuse to give any information regarding themselves. In every town throughout the country, where there is a branch of the W.F.L., women occupiers have promised to fill their houses with as many friends of the cause as they can squeeze in on Census night. In the morning the paper will be returned with the words, "No votes for women, no information from women," written across it. Members and friends who cannot absent themselves from their own homes, or in any way evade the Census, need not feel left out in the cold in this new protest—they can subscribe to the funds which will be needed to pay the fines of those who refuse to fill in the Census paper.

There was a good sale of The Census Act and other literature, and a very good collection.—L. S.

## THE BOOK OF THE MOMENT.

### SPLENDID MARY.\*

The day in his elegant, nicely-ordered life with which Horace Walpole had least reason to be satisfied was the one when he set it down that the author of the "Vindication of the Rights of Woman" was a "hyæna in petticoats." The shot—discharged in petulance, perhaps, and a little natural envy—is so laughably wide of the mark; and Horace hated to be laughed at. The poor man is not without excuse. His bad shot was merely the result of the assumption, arrived at *à priori* from his cherished prejudices, that no really womanly woman could bring herself to write such a book; just as a century and more later nine-tenths of his sex were willing to fire the same shot in the belief that no true woman could agitate on a platform for a vote. Nor is there any evidence that Walpole had the advantage of going on to improve his early acquaintance with Mary Wollstonecraft. Godwin, himself confessing to being a little terror-struck by the vigorous personality behind the "Vindication," went on to read the "Letters from Norway," and wrote of it: "If ever there was a book calculated to make a man in love with its author, this appears to me to be the book." Then, like a sensible man, he proceeds to fall in love with its author, and subsequently to marry her.

Mary Wollstonecraft is one of the most magnificently lovable women in history. Gifted with a splendid intellect, a healthy indignation at the crookedness of the line along which womanhood was made to develop, and a brilliant "pen that darted rapidly along" to get it straight, she possessed also (in her own words) "that exquisite relish of the beauties of Nature of which the common herd of eaters and drinkers and child-begetters certainly have no idea." Over and above, "Mary was (the words are Mr. Taylor's) in every sense an alluring woman. Her bright auburn hair covered a head of singular beauty." Mary Wollstonecraft, moreover, mastered life in a hard school, and the power her mastery gave her cannot have been the least of her attractions. As a child she was accustomed to lie whole nights upon the landing-place near her parents' chamber-door, ready to rescue her mother from a husband who combined brutality with improvidence. As a struggling schoolmistress she came "almost to wish for a husband, for I want somebody to support me." At last she won an honoured place in literature, and the respectful admiration of Thomas Paine, Fuseli, and Godwin. By a curious and ingratiating irony she never mastered her own "tenderly susceptible heart." We find her proposing in all solemnity to Mrs. Fuseli that she should take up her residence in the house, such was "the sincere affection which I have for your husband." Inlay brought her twice to the point of suicide. With Godwin she was extremely rational (they occupied separate rooms in the same street, lest either should tire of their "everyday dish") and extremely happy. She died in giving birth to his child; and one is wrung with regret for the brilliant work she would still have done. Oh for that comedy she might have written!

"Yours truly and tenderly, Mary," she ends, to Godwin, one of her delightful letters. It is an apter phrase than Walpole's to remember her by. The difficulty, of course, for any biographer of Mary Wollstonecraft would be to render her uninteresting. All her mastery, susceptibility and fascination have been clearly and ably brought out by Mr. G. R. S. Taylor. There has for years been need of the book, and the feminist cause could not have been better served than by its appearance in a form offering so many inducements to popular perusal. P. P. H.

\* "Mary Wollstonecraft: A Study in Economics and Romance." By G. R. Stirling Taylor. With Photogravure Portraits. (Martin Secker. 7s. 6d. net.)

THE Church League for Women's Suffrage had a very successful meeting at the Steinway Hall on Friday evening, when Mrs. Archibald Little and Miss Maude Royden spoke on the White Slave Traffic in relation to Woman's Suffrage.

## SHAKESPEARE'S WOMEN.

Speaking at the Central London Branch meeting held recently at the Bijou Theatre, Mr. G. E. O'Dell referred to Mr. George Bernard Shaw's interesting playlet about Shakespeare. He said that certainly Shakespeare owed a great deal to Queen Elizabeth, or at least to the notion people had concerning the character of the virgin queen. Unfortunately popular ideas about Shakespeare's women had largely been formed not directly on Shakespeare so much as on what Ruskin had said about Shakespeare's women. Probably the most acceptable gift-book in this country was "Sesame and Lilies," in which Ruskin told us that Shakespeare's women were the inspirers of the men, their guides, their redeemers, their best friends; that in his plays the man was nearly always a fool, the woman nearly always wise.

But if we read Shakespeare's plays for ourselves, we find that the women divide themselves into two groups. There were those women who were unable to do anything except bemoan their lot when it was a sad one, or else give way to cursing—for instance, those terrible women in *Richard III.*—all they could do was to look on at the wickedness of the men and say what they thought about it.

**Queen Katherine.**

Queen Katherine, in *Henry VIII.*, however much she might shine upon the king, did not seem to win him to any better sort of life. Queen Katherine, when she realised that it was no use any further to fight, that her cause was unavoidably going against her, retires—she will not go back to the court, she refuses to go, they may do their worst. Some people said one should fight to the last in one's own cause. Shakespeare borrowed history, but he gave the stamp of his approbation to what Katherine did. It was not a matter of just refraining from fighting; as Rossetti said: "To men of yearning thought and aspiration, to do naught is almost an act," and that is what one feels about Queen Katherine. Amongst the historical women she stands out as being of that great dignity which sees the great thing to do is to do nothing.

**Portia and Queen Elizabeth.**

The women in Shakespeare's other plays, when there is anything to be done, go ahead and do it. Portia knows her husband far too well to tell him to go to the court and fight with the Jew—she goes and does it herself. Shakespeare was largely inspired, if not by the actual personality of Queen Elizabeth, by what people thought of her. Shakespeare has taken one little incident from Elizabeth's life and shown it over and over again. It shows his feeling of what women ought to do. Elizabeth put herself into a man's armour when she saw it was necessary to go and review her troops. Shakespeare's women, when obviously the one thing to do was to get into a man's clothes, went and did it. That simply typifies Shakespeare's attitude towards women, that the great thing is to act, to use the means that will gain some end, not simply to sit down and look wise, and tell other people what they ought to do. The speaker wished to urge that this was also the attitude which the modern Suffrage movement should take up towards women.

## BYLES BILL.

Mr. Byles proposes in a Bill he has introduced into the House of Commons to allow every man and woman of full age, whether married or single, to vote at Parliamentary or local elections in the area for which they are registered, unless disqualified for a reason other than sex or marriage by common law or Act of Parliament. University representation will be abolished and also the disqualification of women from being elected to "either House of Parliament, or of a Borough or County Council, or from exercising any public functions whatever." The Bill is supported by Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. John Robertson, Mr. King, and Mr. Sheehan.



### FREE OPINIONS FREELY EXPRESSED.

\* \* \* *In this column we publish, as far as space permits, the views of our readers on any subject of interest to members without favour and without prejudice. Only matter coming within the scope of the law of libel will be barred. 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, however, that we do not necessarily identify ourselves with the opinions so expressed.*

#### Woman's Kingdom—A Suggestion.

DEAR MADAM,—During some lobbying which was done by some friends of mine and myself to-day on the subject of our forthcoming Bill, I gathered that Mr. Asquith might "climb down" to a certain extent. I gathered, too, from his previous "climblings" that the forthcoming "climb" would go just as far as would make the electors say, "But he's promised you," &c., &c., and no farther. Another thing I gathered was the fact that a peaceful Coronation was hoped for by the Government as far as Woman's Suffrage was concerned. And I pricked up my ears!

The King and Queen are come into their kingdom, and by the rights of the Constitution it is to be sealed by the Coronation. By the rights of the Constitution and the will of the elected representatives of the people, the women of the people are come into their kingdom, and if Mr. Asquith declines to set the seal upon their human inheritance by the vote, then surely there must be something lacking in the pacific spirit which should be abroad that day for which this autocrat will be alone responsible.

A woman has come to share the throne who is no doll, and she is already giving abundant proof that woman's intellect and capacity are worthy to be recognised by the State and worthy of the throne she shares. If a woman is competent to occupy or share a throne, she is equally competent to occupy the franchise and share in Mr. Asquith's democracy!

If we are tricked, cheated and again manoeuvred, may I humbly suggest that we take some share in the Coronation?—Yours obediently,

MAUD ARNCLIFFE-SENNETT.

6, Wellington-road, St. John's Wood, February 14.

#### A Correction.

MADAM,—May I correct a serious mistake in your issue of this week? On page 1, third line from the bottom of the first column, you refer to the Canadian Pacific Railway as being the originator of the "5,000 wives" advertisement. This is not the case. It is the Canadian Northern—which has nothing to do with the C.P.R.—which is responsible for the insult to British womanhood. I myself have heard a prominent C.P.R. official refer to it in no measured terms of disgust.

May I add that in an interview with a Press representative to-day I had the satisfaction of impressing on him (for publication) the fact that such a method of advertising emigration (which in itself is a splendid thing) would only defeat its own ends and encourage the lowest instead of the highest type of woman, of whatever class, to seek for herself an independent career in the overseas dominions?—Yours, &c.,

DOROTHY M. DAVIS,

(Women Writers' S.L., Church League for W.S., W.S.P.U.).

27, St. Mark's-crescent, N.W., February 16.

#### Showing "The Vote" Posters.

DEAR MADAM,—There are two posters displayed at two stationers from whom I take THE VOTE for one day each week—that is all they seem inclined to do.

For three months our Branch has paid for a bill to be posted at West Croydon Railway Station. The three months ended on January 5. I will put it to

our Branch whether they will continue to pay for the poster.

One member has a bill displayed at a stationer's at Woodside, another member one at South Norwood, and another member one at Thornton Heath; these are all in the Borough of Croydon, and lately one has been displayed at Coulsdon.

One poster is shown on a greengrocer's cart in Thornton Heath and, I am told, attracts much attention.

I will gladly see if members will do more.—Yours sincerely,

E. TERRY, Hon. Secretary.

9, Moreland Avenue, Croydon.  
January 19, 1911.

#### CAXTON HALL "AT HOME."

There was a large attendance on Thursday last, and Mrs. How Martyn, who was in the chair, gave a warm welcome to those who were present for the first time. She briefly explained the aims and objects of the League, and then went on to give details of the Census Protest.

#### Finnish Police Women.

In the unavoidable absence of Mr. McCabe, Mme. Malmberg kindly took his place at very short notice, interesting and delighting the audience with her account of the present position of women in Finland, and by her original remarks on some of the arguments advanced by the Anti-Suffragists. One such argument she had come across was that women ought not to have the Vote because they could not do police duty. She supposed that Finland must be a barbarous nation, since for some time they had had women acting as police. The practice was begun in one of the small towns and acted so well that it was gradually being extended over the country. The audience applauded enthusiastically when the chairman announced that Mme. Malmberg is prepared to go to prison rather than give the Government any information in connection with the Census.

#### Success of Census Campaign.

Mrs. Despard, who had just returned from a series of meetings in the provinces, spoke of the keen enthusiasm with which her announcement of our new plan of campaign was greeted at every meeting she had addressed. From her experience she thought that we had really hit upon something which would bring home to the ordinary man, more than anything else that had yet been done, the injustice under which women are suffering.

Mrs. Thomson Price began a most delightful and instructive speech by relating that at the age of eleven years she became a Suffragette when her governess read to her the story of patient Griselda. She was unable to appreciate the virtues of this lady and was reproved in consequence. She then outlined briefly the difficulties which had been overcome by women in opening the doors of the various professions and pointed proudly to the record which has already been achieved by women in these different departments.

There was an appeal from Miss Fennings for help with making THE VOTE more widely known, and nearly all present decided to join in the Census Protest.

At the meeting next Thursday, and at those on the Thursdays following, an account will be given of the progress which is being made with the Census Protest, and any members or sympathisers who want to hear further details should try to be present on Thursday afternoon at Caxton Hall.

SPEAKING at a representative gathering of women in Cape Town, recently, on the subject of Women's Suffrage, Miss Nina Boyle said: "As far as aims went, they took as their motto the words of their supporter, Lord De Villiers, 'A matter of common justice.' They had behind them an enormous volume of male opinion. At the Union elections they had done a great deal of work, and had gained many adherents. They had questioned the candidates, and only three had openly declared against them. Dr. Jameson had expressed himself entirely in their favour, and General Botha did not 'choke them off,' although he had said he did not look upon it as an urgent matter. The Labour party was wholly with them."

## MEN'S LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING, QUEEN'S HALL, FEB. 20.

The friends and supporters of the Men's League and the members of the different Suffrage societies mustered in full force at the Queen's Hall on Monday evening. There was a strong platform of well-known men, over whom Mr. Nevinson presided. Letters of regret for absence were received from Messrs. Goulding, M.P., Philip Snowden, M.P., William Roche, M.P., E. Yoxall,



Mr. H. W. Nevinson, War Correspondent, Chairman.

Women's Enfranchisement Bill through the House of Commons this Session."

Mr. Nevinson, in the course of his chairman's address, observed that during the last five years this movement has progressed with most astonishing rapidity. "I have never known," he said, "one that has shown such speed, such enthusiasm, devotion, and such wisdom. We have conquered the silly ridicule with which this movement used to be met in the early days; we have conquered indifference, always a terrible enemy, conquered custom, to which a new idea comes as dynamite or bomb, and the last enemy of all, brutality. We have against us a certain number of people of sluggish imagination who are afraid of any new movement until it becomes fashionable, and we have against us also stupidity, against which the gods themselves are said to fight in vain. But we shall not, whatever the gods may do. We know who are against us and know where we stand, and stand face to face with the enemy. We are determined to wipe out the intolerable stigma of excluding from citizenship at least one-half of the population of this country merely because they are women."

#### Sir Joseph Walton, M.P., on the New Bill.

Sir Joseph Walton, in moving the resolution, said: I have the greatest possible pleasure in moving this resolution because I, as a Liberal Member of Parliament, am in hearty agreement with it and I would gladly see the present Session of Parliament extended, made longer than it otherwise would be, in order to pass the Bill to be introduced right through into law before the end of this Session. In one sense it is not unsuitable, perhaps, that I should be taking part in a meeting promoted by the Men's League for Women's Suffrage, inasmuch as in the election of January of last year a petition from my constituency in favour of the enfranchisement of women was signed by no fewer than 7,898 electors. It was, I understand, the most numerous signed petition sent up to the House of Commons in the United Kingdom. I balloted for the Bill at the beginning of this Session, but was not successful; yet it is a matter of great satisfaction to us to know that we have secured the introduction of the Bill on the second Friday after Easter, and that it is in such good hands as those of my honourable friend, Sir George Kemp. Personally, I consider this reform is long overdue. (Hear, hear.)

I think that a wise course has been followed by limiting the scope of the Bill you are going to introduce in giving the vote on the household qualification, for such a Bill will probably get the best chance of becoming law.

#### Lord Lytton on the Progress of Emancipation.

Lord Lytton spoke as follows: I have no declaration of faith to make to you: I have made that long ago. Since the Men's League met here a year ago a great deal has happened in this movement. Outside this country two important things have happened—(1) the Parliamentary Suffrage has been granted to women in the State of Washington, and (2) a unanimous

resolution passed by the Australian Senate in which is embodied the recognition of those who have had experience of it of the value to their country of the participation of women with men in political life, which, as you know, they decided to forward to the Prime Minister of this country, urging him to follow the example of Australia. When I learn of such advances in other countries, I cannot help feeling pangs of regret that progress has gone on beyond our shores, a feeling of almost dismay because I see year by year opportunities slipping away from this country. I am not satisfied to be merely following the example of one of our Colonies; I want to set the way and show the direction for the civilised nations of the world.

#### A Retrospect.

In dealing with matters at home since the last Men's League demonstration, I hope I shall not be convicted of egotism if I put in the forefront of that history the formation of the Conciliation Committee, and I do that not because the members of the Conciliation Committee are in any way satisfied with what they have done, but the formation of this Committee was, I think, an important step in the Suffrage movement because it implied for the first time the formation of a Woman Suffrage Society within the walls of the House of Commons. This step was followed by the production of what has come to be known as the Conciliation Bill. This was a Bill to grant the Parliamentary franchise to women upon the basis of house suffrage. It was a compromise; had the merits and demerits of a compromise. It did not meet the full demands made by the women's franchise societies; but was accepted by them and by all the Suffrage societies for the one reason that they believed it was a practical measure, meant to be passed into law. This was the first consequence of the formation of the Conciliation Committee.

#### Household Suffrage.

You will remember that the household Suffrage was first of all granted to men as the gift of all political parties because though introduced by one party, it was carried into law by the co-operation of the other; it was a free gift of both political parties in the House of Commons. May we not hope it may be granted to women as the free gift of all parties in the House of Commons?

#### Town Council's Resolutions.

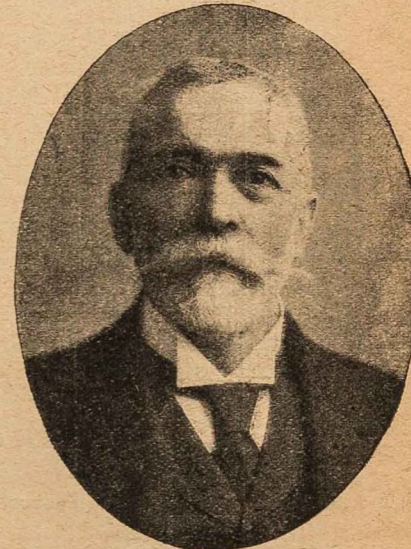
A very important new feature in the Suffrage agitation has been the passing of resolutions by Town Councils in this country in favour of the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women, passed by bodies which have themselves been elected by women's votes as well as men's votes.

Then we had a two days' debate on the Bill, which ended in a majority in its favour of 110. Further, let me remind you of what we are not likely to forget in the next few weeks, the speeches of some of the Cabinet Ministers (our friends in the Cabinet). They said, "We cannot give you facilities this Session; but we do think you ought to have facilities next Session." Then we have the pledge of the Prime Minister himself, that if returned with a majority to Parliament after the Election, he would be prepared to give facilities for a Suffrage Bill in the next Parliament.

#### Men Militants.

In the Suffrage movement outside the House of Commons we must note that men have begun to take part in the militant agitation of the women. This Suffrage movement is not confined to women; but men are waiting to co-operate with their sisters throughout the country. My great object and desire has been to put an end to militancy by making it unnecessary. It is with that object in view that I think every member of the Conciliation Committee works, feeling that a great responsibility rests on this committee to make militancy unnecessary.

Mr. George Lansbury, L.C.C., M.P., dealt with the disabilities of the working woman; Rev. J. Ivory Cripps, B.A., the well-



Sir Joseph Walton, M.P.



known Baptist minister, made an able and witty speech, dealing with Anti-Suffrage arguments. Mr. Cecil Chapman, J.P., and Mr. Goldfinch Bale made powerful speeches, and an excellent collection resulted.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS. LONDON.



**DARE TO BE FREE.**

- Thurs., Feb. 23.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches 3.30 p.m. Miss Decima Moore and Miss A. A. Smith.
- Fri., Feb. 24.**—1, Robert-street, 2 p.m., National Executive Committee.
- Sat., Feb. 25.**—1, Robert-street, 11 a.m., National Executive Committee.
- Sun., Feb. 26.**—1, Robert-street. Members' meeting, 4 p.m. Mrs. Vulliamy, Miss Manning, B.A., and Miss E. Murray.
- Tues., Feb. 28.**—Parkinson Hall, High-street, Hornsey, 8 p.m. Census Meeting. Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Vulliamy.
- 8 p.m., Chandos Hall, 21A, Maiden-lane, Bedford-street, Strand, a public meeting organised by the Central London Branch. *Speakers*: Lady Stout and Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett. *Chair*: Mrs. Cope. *Hostess*: Mrs. de Vismes. "The Awakening" will be sung by Miss Marta Cunningham.
- 7 p.m., at same place, Central London Branch members' meeting.
- Mrs. Brend, 6, Argyll-road, Kensington, 7.30 p.m. Miss Alison Neilans.
- Mrs. Labrousse, 64, Northampton-road, Croydon, 3 p.m. Miss Alison Neilans.
- Wed., Mar. 1.**—Mrs. Ferguson, 20, Beech House-road, Croydon. 3.30 p.m. Mrs. How Martyn, B.Sc.
- Thurs., Mar. 2.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches 3.30 p.m. Mr. G. E. O'Dell.
- Mrs. Pickering, 23, Albert-road, Peckham, 7.30 p.m. Miss Alison Neilans.
- Fri., Mar. 3.**—Census meeting, 8 p.m. Lecture Room, Public Library, Battersea.
- Sat., Mar. 4.**—At the "Old Rump," Uxbridge, six meetings have been arranged for consecutive Saturdays at 8 p.m., beginning on Saturday, March 4. Speakers of various societies have promised co-operation.
- Tues., Mar. 7.**—Stamford Hill Branch "At Home" at 6, Fairholt-road, by kind invitation of Mrs. Griffiths, 3.30 p.m.
- Miss Davies, 161, Croxted-road, Dulwich, 3 p.m. Mrs. Despard.
- At P.S.A., Selhurst-road, 8 p.m. Debate. Miss Ethel Fenning.
- Wed., Mar. 8.**—8 p.m., Croydon League of Young Liberals. Debate. Miss Ethel Fenning.
- Mon., Mar. 13.**—Census Meeting, Harrow.
- Wed., Mar. 15.**—8 p.m., at Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, a public meeting organised by Central London Branch.
- Fri., Mar. 17.**—Census Meeting, Finchley.

### IPSWICH.

- PROVINCES.**
- Thurs., Mar. 2.**—13, Friars'-street, 8 p.m. Miss Cooke.
- STOWMARKET.**
- Tues., Mar. 7.**—Parish Room, 3 p.m. Miss Andrews, Mrs. Tippett. "At Home."

### EDINBURGH.

- SCOTLAND.**
- Fri., Feb. 24.**—Oddfellows' Hall, Forrest-road, public meeting, 8 p.m. *Speakers*: Mrs. Israel Zangwill, Mr. Charles E. Price, M.P. for Central Edinburgh. *Chair*: Parish Councillor J. Dan Easson, B.L. Tickets, 3d., 6d. and 1s.
- Tues., Feb. 28.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. "At Home," 4 p.m. *Speaker*: Miss Eunice Murray.
- Wed., Mar. 1.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. "At Home," 7.30 p.m. Lantern lecture, "Some Pioneers of Women's Suffrage," Miss G. H. Jacob, B.Sc.

### CALDICOT.

- WALES.**
- Thurs., Feb. 23.**—Census Meeting. Mrs. Cleeves, Miss Anna Munro.
- SWANSEA, CARDIFF, NEWPORT, &c.
- Mon., Feb. 27 to Mar. 6.**—Census Meetings. Mrs. Cleeves, Miss Anna Munro.

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DID Mr. Clynes make it clear that adult suffrage meant men and women when speaking on behalf of the Trade Union Congress? Mr. Asquith's answer makes it difficult to be certain. A man's right to vote depended on his being a citizen, and *prima facie*, a citizen of full age and competent understanding ought to be entitled to a vote and ought not to be entitled to more than one. On that point he was sure they were in thorough agreement. As regarded adult suffrage, he had not heard any allusion—he was glad he had not—to one rather thorny aspect of that question, namely, the distinction of sex. Let them leave that for the moment.

### Conservative Women's Franchise Association, 48, Dover-street, Piccadilly, W.

Owing to the fact that Lord Selborne was unable to fulfil his engagement with the Men's League for Women's Suffrage to speak at their meeting, he has promised to address a large gathering under the auspices of this Association on Thursday evening, March 9, at 8 p.m., at the Grand Hall, Hotel Cecil. Tickets, 5s., 2s. 6d. and 1s., can be obtained from the hon. secretary, Mrs. Gilbert Samuel, 48, Dover-street, Piccadilly, W.

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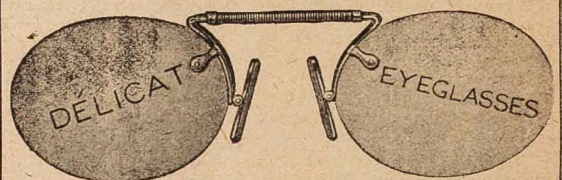
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