

The War Paper for Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

VOL. VIII. (Third Series), No. 375.

FRIDAY, MAY 14, 1915.

Price 1d. Weekly (Post Free 1 1/2d.)

WANTED!



A telegram from Malta brought the news one day last week that the Scottish Women's Hospital unit, organised by the N.U.W.S.S., and bound for Serbia, was stopped at Malta and requisitioned for immediate service to nurse our own British troops. This is the second time during the war that a hospital unit, staffed entirely by women, has been requisitioned by the British military authorities, the first being Dr. Louisa Garrett Anderson's at Wimereux.

Articles and News contributed for insertion in VOTES FOR WOMEN should be sent to The Editors, VOTES FOR WOMEN, 4-7, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, E.C., at the earliest possible date, and in no case later than first post Monday morning prior to the publication of the paper.

The Editors cannot hold themselves in any way responsible for the return of unused manuscripts, though they will endeavour as far as possible to return them when requested if stamps for postage are enclosed. MSS. should, if possible, be typewritten.

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(Postponed from Thursday, May 13. See page 267)

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FRIDAY, MAY 14, 1915.

MR. ASQUITH'S FIRST SUFFRAGE SPEECH

It is often claimed for war that it opens the eyes of mankind to realities, destroys illusions and pretences, brings home and emphasizes elemental facts. Certainly this war has opened the eyes of many who were previously blind to the essential nature of women's services in the life of the community. The Suffrage case never has been, and never can be, anything but the argument from facts: women, like men, do their part: like men, they are indispensable: like men, they have everything at stake in the fortunes and activities of the State which they help to compose—hence, like men, they should have a voice in the utilisation of their indispensable work and in the government of the State. Not only is there no answer to this, but there is no answer even conceivable by the mind of a rational being. To deny it is merely to deny that two and two make four. We apologise for re-stating it; but even the result of adding two and two would be worth re-stating, if that result had just been newly discovered by the most powerful person in English public life. And this is precisely what has happened with the recognition of woman's public services. Mr. Asquith has recognised that women have the power and the will to serve the community, not merely by bearing and rearing the entire population, but also in those specific industrial occupations on which the entire population depends for its prosperity in peace and its efficiency in war. It is as if the country had for long been in deadly peril because its destinies were in the hands of one to whom niggard nature had denied the capacity of seeing that two and two make four—and as if at last there had flashed on the mind of that responsible person the vital, the essential truth, that four is what two and two do really make.

Nothing could be more explicit than Mr. Asquith's words at Newcastle. He spoke of an armament factory in which, out of some 13,000 hands, 3,000 or 4,000 were women; and he went on:—

"Now, *prima facie*, one would think the manufacture of shells was not the kind of work which is fit for the special aptitude of women. It is a great mistake. In the making of the fuse, which is in some ways the most important part of a shell, female labour is just as good, and I am not sure that it is not a little better, than the labour of men."

Further, he declared that there was in female labour a very large reserve which would soon be able to be drawn upon "to perform the services which the men at the front had previously discharged and which were essential to the well-being and comfort of the community." Lastly, he wound up his speech with this appeal, to which we add only the emphasis of italics:—

"Let there not be a man or woman among us who will not be able to say: 'I was not idle. I took such part as I could

in the greatest task which, in all the storied annals of our country, has ever fallen to the lot of Great Britain to achieve.'"

We welcome this clear, frank, and full admission of the value of women's work. We go further. We couple it with what the Prime Minister has himself said about work in armament factories being no less vital, no less direct and necessary and patriotic, than work in the trenches. Over and over it has been insisted, by public men from the Prime Minister downwards, that the man in the armament factory is serving the country as nobly as the man at the front. Add to that this new insistence that the woman in the armament factory is serving the country as nobly as the man in the armament factory, and it follows, with all the logical necessity of the syllogism and all the inevitable brilliance of the sunrise, that the woman in the armament factory is serving the country as nobly as the man at the front; and, be we pacifist or militarist or anything in between, we all know what nobility of sacrifice and effort that implies. Women, in short, are admitted by the Prime Minister to have earned their share in the nation's fortunes; they are admitted to stand on the same footing as men. Two and two are admitted to make four.

Let us not cavil at the lateness of the admission. Those of us who had never forgotten the fact that women are mothers, that women are housekeepers, that women are wage-earners and public servants, may be inclined to wonder at any new stress being laid upon what is so obvious. But we must not forget the possibility of a scoffer arising to say: "Surely you are premature. The facts may be obvious, but their corollary is not. The Prime Minister has indeed said that women deserve as well of their country as men; but he has not suggested that they should get their deserts. He has admitted their equality of service; he has not admitted any equality of rights." To such a scoffer we would make the following reply:—

"Do you realise the nature of the charge you are bringing against the Prime Minister? Remember that he has declared the object of this war to be the preservation to small nations of self-government, and to England of her honour. Self-government means voting; no other meaning of self-government has ever been devised by the human mind. So you are implying that what Mr. Asquith thinks so all-important for English men, he thinks utterly unimportant for English women; that he is so unpatriotic, so cynically and brutally un-English, as to refuse two days of Parliamentary time for conferring on his own countrywomen a boon that he is willing to preserve for Belgian men at the expense of the young and brave and happy manhood of England, at the cost of suffering and grief and privation beyond thought or speech. But you are implying something worse still. Not only for Belgium's right to self-government, but for our own honour, are we said to be fighting. Yet you imply that Mr. Asquith is so base as to rank England's honour—an honour which demands these unthinkable sacrifices—at nothing at all; so base as to accept for England a service for which he will refuse to pay the just price. You imply that he desires to see his country saving itself in time of danger by the work of its women—and then denying to its saviours their status and their reward. You imply that he is a knave so gross and nauseating as to involve even his country in that last depth of knavery and trickery and cowardice."

We do not say for a moment that the scoffer's implications are justified. But either they are true or Mr. Asquith is a Suffragist, and must enfranchise women. There is no third possibility.

HOW WOMEN HELP

At the Women's Emergency Corps

The Corps was giving a party when I looked in at the Old Bedford College in York Place, one day last week; but it was distinctly a war-party, with no appearance of irresponsible frivolity about it. You felt you had not been asked for your own amusement, in fact, but in order to help something or somebody—and that is as it should be in days like these. The W.E.C., ever since its conception in the brains of one or two notable Suffragists (Miss Decima Moore, Miss



THE CANTEEN AT WORK

Lena Ashwell, the Hon. Mrs. Haverfield, to name no more) early last August, has been trying to make things a little more tolerable for those innumerable sufferers through the war that legislation and public funds seem unable to help. Readers of VOTES FOR WOMEN know already of many of its activities, of what it did for the Belgian refugees before official arrangements got under way; of its workrooms, where army shirts and sandbags and respirators are turned out by hundreds, and where over forty women are still employed weekly at a minimum (not maximum) wage of ten shillings, being in many cases trained as well and enabled to find skilled employment elsewhere; of its toy factory, where delightfully original toys are turned out for the toy market; of its Social Relief Department (under the auspices of the Women's Imperial Health Association), from which over 2,500 voluntary workers have been sent out to different organisations, some to be trained as social workers, some to be used in that capacity; of its Kitchen Department, where hundreds of twopenny dinners are cooked and served daily; of its Knitting Department, where a kind of futurist effect is now to be seen in the many-coloured tangles of odds and ends of wool, which are unravelled as soon as received, knitted into twelve-inch squares, and made into blankets for Serbian soldiers.

But Suffragists will be more interested, perhaps, in the twenty tons of clothing which have

been received by the Corps for distribution from the British Dominions Woman Suffrage Union, which owes its origin to the enterprise of those two gallant Suffragists, Miss Newcomb and Miss Hodge. The recent contributions from the Overseas children are among the most picturesque as yet received, consisting of numbers of garments, with a message attached to each in round childlike writing, such as "To a Young Belgium from a New Zealandia" (*sic*), and little coloured bags full of childish treasures—nuts, beads, and so on, with sometimes a penny sewed into the corner. And the day I wandered into the Overseas Department at the W.E.C. a fascinating consignment of sixty Babies' Kits had just come from Sydney, one branch of the "Babies' Kit Society," newly-formed in New South Wales and Queensland. Each little white bag was labelled "For the Babies of the Allies," and contained a complete baby's outfit—charming frocks and bonnets and socks and undergarments and "woolies," and even a little bag containing cottons and safety-pins. Certainly women do know how to mind the baby in countries where they vote!

The Canteens in France

Miss Hackett's account of the W.E.C. canteen for French soldiers in France, whence she had just returned, was one of the most interesting events at the war tea-party last week. Originally the idea of the canteen was that it should supply soldiers en route for the trenches; but

in the end it was found more useful as a means of dealing with what are called "les isolés," men who have got separated from their regiments, and are on their way to rejoin them, or to form new detachments. Sometimes these men have been wandering about for days at a time without a hot meal or drink, and to them the canteen at the railway station is a real god-send. The women of the Corps get their cooking started about five in the afternoon, and the rush begins later and lasts into the early hours of the morning. Sometimes two or three hundred men have to be served at once. Each man has hot soup, or chocolate, or coffee, a stick of chocolate, and a biscuit, and sometimes, when supplies are adequate, a little parcel containing cigarettes, writing-paper, pencil, envelope, and a piece of soap. The men show their gratitude in little ways that are none the less genuine for being a little curious sometimes. They will sing a few bars of the National Anthem—or "Tipperary"; or, to show how much (or how little) English they know, will address the canteen lady quite seriously as "Mees darling." And the picturesqueness of the scene in the station yard, where the lighted van presents a hospitable front to the men who come wandering in from the darkness outside, gains pathos from the reflection that it will be long, perhaps, before they get another cup of coffee—and in some cases they will never have another.

X.

THE WOMEN'S CONGRESS

By F. W. Pethick Lawrence

Everyone knows that the main body of the British delegates were prevented from attending the Congress. Nevertheless, Great Britain was represented. Both Miss Chrystal MacMillan and Miss Courtney, who had done so much to make the Congress possible, had come to Holland some ten days previously, and were therefore able to be present and take an active part in the proceedings. Mrs. Pethick Lawrence was also there, having travelled to Holland direct from the United States. For the rest, there were a thousand women, members of the Congress, come together to the Hague from the different countries, as well as many hundreds of visitors. Such a concourse could not find room to meet in the Palace of Peace, and a far greater hall had to be provided.

As I sat in the gallery and looked down on the vast International throng, one thought possessed me. How like they were! Face, bearing, dress gave no indication of distinctions of nationality. They were in fact all women of one and the same civilization—the European-American civilization of the twentieth century.

To Settle the Problem of the Ages

And the likeness did not end with their appearance. They were all animated with a common purpose. "And that purpose was," you suggest, "to end the war as soon as possible?" Yes, and No. Rather it was to find a new solution to the problem of the ages—the problem how to settle the differences between the peoples of the earth. The ancient and modern method has been *by war*. The women want it done *by justice*. It was to this end that the resolutions were constructed, and in this spirit that they were carried. One of the fundamental resolutions related to the transference of territory. Not conquest nor military success, the Congress agreed, should decide the fate of any territory, but the will of the people (men and women) within it. A further resolution

urged upon the Powers the construction (in addition to Courts of Arbitration) of a permanent Council for settling differences not arising "out of the violation of treaty rights nor the failure to perform duties imposed by the law of nations, but out of conflicting interests or ideals of an economic, commercial, industrial, social, or political character."

The Congress further decided to ask (1) That all secret treaties should be void; (2) That nationally and internationally women should share all civil and political rights and responsibilities on the same terms as men; (3) That the construction of munitions of war by private firms should be stopped.

With regard to the present war, the Congress put forward a constructive proposal. It urged the neutral countries to call a Conference and invite suggestions from each of the belligerent nations of "reasonable proposals as a basis of peace."

Harmony of the Congress

International Congresses, with their diversity of languages, are above all things difficult to manage, and many a one composed of men has broken up in disorder or been disgraced by scenes of violent abuse. A pleasing contrast was provided by this International Congress of Women, which from first to last showed good temper and friendliness, even where real differences of opinion prevailed. Much of this harmony must be attributed to the unflinching patience and courtesy of the Chairman, Miss Jane Addams, of America; but much also to the fact that women are less pugacious than men.

May we hope that this harmony among women at such a time may be a good augury of the effect that women will have upon International relationships when they take their place with men as partakers in the democracies of the world?

"VOTES FOR WOMEN" Treasurer's Note

The progress of the war and all that it means in increase of taxation, rise of the cost of living and appeals for relief funds of all kinds, renders the propagation of ideas, though a hundredfold more important because it deals with the future, very much more difficult to carry on and to finance.

If "Votes for Women" is of value to you during the war, show that you think so by promising us a quarterly donation until the war is over.

This week Miss May Sinclair has promised us one guinea quarterly for the duration of the war; Mrs. Sadd-Brown, £5 quarterly. Among others are Mrs. Morrison, £1 1s. quarterly; Miss Anna Martin, £1 quarterly; Mrs. Ashford Green, £1 1s. quarterly.

Among other members of the U.S. who have generously sent us donations this week (not quarterly) are Miss Norbury, £25; Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck, £10; Mr. W. L. George, £1 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. Zangwill, £5; Mr. Paul Hobhouse (Sec. Lieutenant), £5; A Tasmanian Gentleman, £5.; Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett, £5.

Some Encouraging Tributes

A very pleasant accompaniment to donations of money is an encouraging letter, and of these we have had many during the last few days. It is impossible to mention all, but here are a few specimens:-

"I have this comfort, that the U.S. gets the utmost value out of every penny, and that my 'mite' in your hands will do infinitely more good than ten times the amount spent in many other directions."—(Miss Holden, Bolton, enclosing 10s. quarterly instalment.)

"These are indeed anxious times for our dear paper, so good and true to the great cause. I enclose a guinea with a thousand wishes for its multiplication, and with grateful appreciation of your devotion to the movement."—(Mrs. Saul Solomon.)

"I more than appreciate the splendid work of the committee in keeping the Suffrage Flag flying during the war, and their efforts to keep our paper going, and trust that they will soon meet with their due reward."—(Miss Ternouth.)

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, R.I.P.

Wednesday in this week being the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birthday, an interesting little ceremony, arranged by the Women's Freedom League, will take place that afternoon, after we go to press. Some ten or twelve Suffrage Societies are sending representatives, including Mrs. Ayrton Gould from the United Suffragists, to lay wreaths on the newly-unveiled Florence Nightingale statue in Waterloo Place. Owing to the somewhat incomprehensible opposition of the authorities to any demonstration in memory of a woman whose name should be revered in every British family just now (which led to the secret unveiling of her statue by a workman at 6 a.m. on a wet winter's morning!), no speeches or procession will be allowed. But perhaps this silent tribute to her memory will rot be out of keeping with what we know of this great woman's hatred of publicity; and the speeches will be made afterwards in the Essex Hall at 8 p.m., where a meeting will be held, also under the auspices of the W.F.L., who are to be congratulated on having arranged this commemoration at so appropriate a moment in our history.

LECTURES BY MR. JOHN SCURR

An interesting series of three lectures on "The Theory and Practice of Politics in England To-day," will be given by Mr. John Scurr, under the auspices of the United Suffragists, at the Suffrage Club, 3, York Street, St. James's, S.W., on three successive Fridays, beginning on Friday, June 4, at 3.30 p.m. Admission will be free, and tea can be obtained afterwards. Many of our readers will doubtless be glad to attend these lectures, which, judging by the prospectus and what we know of Mr. Scurr as a speaker, should prove both instructive and thought-inspiring. The first lecture will deal with the definition of politics, the theory of rights, the right to live, to rebel, to strike, the supreme end of politics. The second will discuss the distinction between State and Society, the meaning of democracy, why the franchise is given or withheld, "gerrymandering" and suggested remedies. In the third lecture, Mr. Scurr will talk on the creation of the caucus, crushing out the Private Party, and the problem for the citizen to solve.

U.S. members and others will be welcomed at all three lectures, the full syllabus of which can be obtained from the U.S. offices (3, Adam Street, W.C.).

"VOTES FOR WOMEN" FUND

Donations Received up to May 8

Table with columns for donor names, amounts in £ s. d., and cumulative totals. Includes names like Miss A. Martin, Mrs. C. H., Marshall, Matthews, Miss Mears, Mrs. M. Miller, Miss Moser, Miss N.E., MacMunn, Dr. J.M. Murray, Mrs. Napier, Miss H.C., Newcomb, Mrs. Norbury, Mrs. S. G., Parkyn, Arthur Phillips, Esq., Dr. W. Fleming, Phillips, Meeting Red Cross Hall, Miss Mary Phillips, Mrs. N. Podmore, Mrs. E. Renny, Mrs. F., Robertson, Mrs. E.M., Ryman, Mrs. Sandham, Mrs. Arncliffe, Sennett, Miss F. Smalley, Mrs. Saul, Solomon, Miss A. Somers, Dr. Marie Stopes, Miss Ethel Sykes, Miss E.M. Sykes, F. G. Threadgold, Esq., P. B. Tudor, Esq., Mrs. Vesel, Miss J. Wade, Miss K. Walford, Mrs. Baillie, Weaver, Miss M., Wertheim, Mrs. A. West, Mrs. E. M., White, Miss W. Wulff, Miss E. Yarwood, Miss E. Robson, Mr. and Mrs. Zangwill.

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COMPARISON OF PUNISHMENTS

LIGHT SENTENCES HEAVY SENTENCES

Assaults on a Girl The News of the World (May 9) reports case of a soldier charged at York Assizes with an offence against a fifteen-year-old girl, on various dates. He pleaded guilty. Sentence: One month's imprisonment.

Assault on a Wife The Morning Advertiser (May 5) reports case of a bricklayer charged at Stratford Police Court with striking his wife on the face with his fist and knocking her about. She stated that he had frequently assaulted her, and two of her children had been born crippled. Sentence: Fined 20s.

Assault on a Wife

Cruelty to a Boy The Manchester Guardian (May 5) reports case of three young miners charged with assaulting a boy of 15. It was stated that they had subjected him to systematic cruelty for some months, putting him on the rails before moving tubs and holding him over the shaft (a 600 foot drop), also sending him down an incline in a tub, tying him up in a sack, and so on. Sentence: Fined 30s. each and 7s. costs.

Cruelty to a Boy

Northern Men The Northern Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage held an open-air meeting in the East Meadows, Edinburgh, last week, at which Mr. J. Wilson M'Laren presided, and other speakers were Councillor Charlton, Councillor Barrie, and Parish Councillor Millar. There was a large audience, who warmly endorsed the contention of all the speakers that women's work in war time had more than justified their right to a voice in the affairs of the State.

NORTHERN MEN

POPULATION IN 1913 The report of the Registrar-General for 1913 gives some significant statistics. Although in that year the population of England and Wales was estimated at 19,062,325 women and 17,857,614 men, the death-rate shows that the "weaker sex" die harder, the number of males who died being 261,687, and of females 243,288. Also there were 52 deaths of centenarians, only 13 of whom were men. A gruesome statistic is that which shows nearly twice as many murders of women, 129 of these being recorded as against 69 males; and the one which records a death-rate of illegitimate children nearly twice as high as that of legitimate children.

POPULATION IN 1913

COMING EVENTS The Forward Cymric Suffrage Union will hold a meeting in Hyde Park (near the Marble Arch) on Sunday, May 16, at 3 p.m. The same Society will also take part in the Victoria Park demonstration on Sunday, May 23. The procession will form up at East India Dock Gates at 3.45 p.m., and the meeting in the park will be at 5 p.m. Speakers: Mr. Sorensen, Mrs. Duval, and Mr. David Roberts. Chair: Mrs. Davies.

FOR HIS OWN PROTECTION

The judge at the Manchester Assizes who gave a sentence of nine months to a man convicted of shooting at his wife, and said that he did so "not so much as a punishment as to protect the prisoner against himself," seems a little illogical even to those of us who are familiar with the idiosyncracies of the Bench, especially where an injured wife is in question. In this case the woman was not actually hurt, but she stated that her husband had several times threatened to take her life. Also, the prison doctor said that the man suffered from delusions, and was likely to be "of danger to others." Really, we should almost have thought, in our plain secular way, that he needed that nine months' imprisonment for the protection of somebody besides himself!

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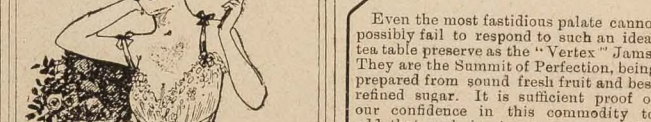
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NEXT SUNDAY'S SERVICES

ST. MARY - AT - HILL. — Church of Army Church, Eastcheap. Sundays, 9 and 6, views, orchestra, band. Prebendary Carlile.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

FORWARD CYMRIC SUFFRAGE UNION will hold a meeting in Hyde Park (near the Marble Arch) on Sunday next at 3. "The Red Dragon leads the way!" "Cymru am byth!"

FORWARD CYMRIC SUFFRAGE UNION will take part in the Demonstration and have a platform in Victoria Park on Sunday, May 23. Members can join the procession at East India Dock Gates at 3.45, and march under the Red Dragon banner. Meeting in park, 5 p.m. Speakers: Mr. Sorensen, Mrs. Duval, Mr. David Roberts. Chair: Mrs. Davies. Rally, Welsh!

HAVE you contributed to the International Suffrage Shop's 1s. Fund? £150 required; £21 already received; £129 urgently needed; every 1s. helps.—Send now to the International Suffrage Shop, 5, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C.

MEMORIAL HALL, Manchester, Monday, May 17, at 7.30 p.m., Recital of Pianoforte Duets and Solos by Hope Squire and Frank Merrick. Tickets, 5s. (reserved), 2s. 6d., and 1s., from Messrs. Forsyth Bros., 126, Deansgate; and at the door.

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