

THE VOTE.  
JULY 13, 1917.  
ONE PENNY.

# The Enemy Within the Gate.

C. DESPARD.

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. XVI. No. 403.

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FRIDAY, JULY 13, 1917

Edited by C. DESPARD.

**OBJECT:** To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

### OUR POINT OF VIEW.

#### A Message.

The International Woman Suffrage Alliance has forwarded us the following message of hope from the Suffrage Women of Hungary to the Suffrage Women of Great Britain. It is signed, on behalf of the Hungarian women, by Miss Paula Pogany, of Budapest:—"Though unfortunately still divided by the fearful combat in which our sons are destroying each other, we hope this expression of congratulation will reach you through the kindness of our neutral colleagues. We wish to congratulate you to the introduction of the Parliamentary Bill extending the franchise to you, women of Great Britain, who have been working more than the women of any other country in Europe for the rights of women. We trust that we, too, will soon be able to conquer our rights. Humanity never needed women's full strength more than to-day, when we face the greatest task, the construction of our poor destroyed world. We congratulate you most heartily to the achievement which will allow you to devote your entire strength to the upbuilding of a new, securer world. A world in which we, too, hope to do our part armed with our political rights."

#### Health and Homes.

When Lord Rhondda left the Local Government Board he was assured that his scheme for a Ministry of Health would go forward. We trust there is no truth in the report that the scheme has been shelved. Eight years ago the Report of the Poor Law Commission was issued. That most human of documents, the Minority Report, said to be almost entirely the work of one of the women members of the Commission, Mrs. Sidney Webb, showed how wasteful and ineffectual was the system, or lack of system, which endeavoured to deal with the ill-health of the nation. It showed that the responsibility was divided between overlapping authorities—the Poor Law, the Education Authorities, the Local Health Authorities, hospitals and dispensaries, provident clubs, etc.—and since the Report was issued a new health authority, the National Insurance Commissioners, has been added to the list. The need for a unified medical

service, co-ordinating the scattered efforts now being expended, has been clearly made out, but whole armies of doctors and nurses and health visitors cannot succeed in making a healthy people unless they live in homes in which a healthy, self-respecting life is possible. As Professor Geddes has said, the working man "has never had an adequate house, seldom more than half of what might make a decent one."

#### Our Daily Bread.

The official statement issued by the Food Controller on the subject of war bread is not pleasant reading. The use of admixtures is, no doubt, unavoidable, and we are told next year, "when the real pinch comes," we shall have a loaf containing still less flour than at present. Nor is it considered possible to standardise the flour, and apparently it is left to private enterprise to put in what may be convenient at the particular time and place, while the consumer awaits results. The process bears an analogy to what Huxley declared to be the method of Nature—not a warning first and a blow to follow, but a box on the ears without warning. It is for the one whose ears have been boxed to find out the reason why. But mothers of families ought to know what constituents go to make up their children's daily bread, and a point must come when a really effective control must be exercised over the millers and bakers. Every housewife knows that there is a great difference in the bread bought at different shops. Why is it not all as good as the best? We commend the consideration of this question to Lord Rhondda, from whom the following letter has been received:—

Ministry of Food, Grosvenor House, W.

June 28, 1917.

DEAR MADAME,—I am desired by Lord Rhondda to thank you for your letter of June 20, and to say that the representations you make on behalf of the Women's Freedom League will receive his careful consideration.

Lord Rhondda is very anxious to keep in touch with the needs of the workers, and he hopes to make use of the assistance of women in the work of Food Control.—Yours faithfully,

Mrs. C. Despard.

A. P. HUGHES GIBB,  
Private Secretary.

**Criminal Law Amendment Bill.**

In view of the pressure being brought to bear on the Home Secretary to pass the above measure, the following correspondence will be of interest to our readers.

**Copy of Letter sent to Sir George Cave.**

The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P.,  
Home Office, S.W.1. July 6, 1917.

SIR,—We notice in the Press that you are to-day receiving a deputation, the object of which is to urge the Government to proceed with the Criminal Law Amendment Bill at the earliest possible moment. Before May 15 the Women's Freedom League organised three big meetings at the Central Hall, Westminster, and two local meetings, one at Kingston-on-Thames, and the other in St. Pancras, in direct opposition to the Bill, the societies co-operating with us being: Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, Free Church League for Women's Suffrage, Independent Women's Social and Political Union, London Women's Council of the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Manchester, Salford and District Women's Trades and Labour Council, National Industrial and Professional Women's Suffrage Society, and the United Suffragists.

On behalf of these organised women's societies we wrote the Lord Advocate (who then had charge of the Bill) on May 7, asking him to receive a deputation before the Bill was proceeded with, and his reply ended with the following paragraph:

"I am to add that his lordship will keep in view your desire that a deputation should be received before the Bill is further proceeded with."

Now that you have received an influential deputation from philanthropic societies in favour of this Bill, may we ask you to concede the same favour to us, who represent many thousands of organised women, before the Bill again comes before Parliament.

Awaiting the courtesy of your reply.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,  
(Signed) FLORENCE A. UNDERWOOD.

**Copy of Sir George Cave's Reply.**

Home Office, July 9.

MADAME,—I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th inst., and to say that the same shall receive due attention.—I am, Madam, your obedient servant,

EDWARD TROUP.

**Copy of Telegram sent to Rt. Hon. Sir George Cave, July 9th.**

"Women's Freedom League strongly urge you not proceed with Criminal Law Amendment Bill before receiving deputation from organised women's societies."

**Unsatisfactory.**

In answer to Colonel Cavendish Bentinck, who enquired of the First Commissioner of Works why, in carrying out the repairs to the houses affected by the explosion in the East End last January, his Department had renewed floors over mud foundations, instead of concrete. Sir A. Mond disingenuously replied: "The object of the work undertaken by my Department on behalf of the Ministry of Munitions was the most rapid possible re-instatement of the damaged property, and that object was undoubtedly achieved. (A child's house of cards can be constructed with extreme rapidity.) I made enquiries as to the possibility of compelling owners to contribute to the expense of effecting certain desirable alterations to the property, but the powers were limited, and it was not the duty of my Department to reconstruct or alter the character of private property at the public expense. Concrete underfloors were, therefore, not put in these houses where they did not exist before." We have seldom come across a more flagrant instance of male irresponsibility. Did this Government Department agree with the owners of the property and the local Health Authority to defeat the spirit, if not the letter, of the law. Sir Alfred Mond denies that action on the part of his Department has endangered the health of the occupants of the house or has involved any waste of public money.

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But, if the wise man does not build his house upon sand, neither does he build it upon mud, and the day when the rain falls, and the floods come, and the winds blow are likely to be followed by rheumatism and pneumonia and funerals. Action or inaction which tends to incapacitate a worker is clearly a loss to the State, and equivalent to a waste of public money. The sense of health and well-being is the soul of the activities of life. The First Commissioner of Works has, he says, visited the property, and finds that it has been "very materially improved in many respects." A coat of paint may materially improve the appearance of a mortuary, but does not render it a wholesome dwelling for the living. It is not surprising that Colonel Cavendish Bentinck found the answer to his question "unsatisfactory."

**TAX RESISTANCE.****Mrs. Darent Harrison's at St. Leonards-on-Sea.**

When the Tax Collector called on Friday morning he was met with Mrs. Darent Harrison's formula for tax collectors since she was made the victim of an organised riot in 1913—"Not at home." On this occasion the maid returned to say he had come with a warrant and a bailiff to leave in possession, and must be admitted. Mrs. Harrison then gave instructions for the tradesmen's entrance and windows to be locked and bolted, and herself opened the inner front door, closing it behind her and keeping her hand on the handle. The Tax Collector, who was standing with the bailiff inside the outer front door, asked if he was addressing Mrs. Darent Harrison, and hoped she would allow him to execute his trying task and produced his paper. Mrs. Harrison asked and was told the names of the local magistrates who had signed the warrant, and explained that her house could only be entered by force. She had been looking forward to paying her taxes within a very short time, and had been on the point of writing to Somerset House to say so; but as they had not scrupled in war time, and when the measure of justice for which she was fighting was almost certain to be on the Statute Book within a month or two; to come with warrants, bailiffs and all the old hateful methods of coercion, they could only be met by the same old spirit of revolt against tyranny and injustice. The Tax Collector protested that he could not employ force against a woman—that was quite out of the question. Mrs. Harrison then suggested that if he did not intend to stand there till he or she collapsed he must either employ force or call in the police to do so. He scoffed at the idea of sending for the police, but finally sent the bailiff to see if he could find any. But no police were to be found. The bailiff was next sent to get his dinner, and when he returned he reported "still no police anywhere to be found." It was a complete *impasse*. They had been facing one another for three hours, and the Tax Collector seemed equally determined to "do his duty" and not to be guilty of even a technical assault on an elderly woman. It was only after being taunted with cowardice—with fear of the consequences of meeting moral with physical force—that he finally made an effort to get control of the handle of the door, and so with the assistance of the bailiff to force his way in. Mrs. Harrison at once told the maids, who had been watching for some time through the glass door, that she was quite ready for luncheon, while the men disappeared into the drawing-room, which the bailiff has occupied ever since. Mrs. Harrison has not seen him again, but she hears the Tax Collector has left a paper on the piano on which is written something about 5s. per day.

THEY SUPPORT US.

**Miss Raleigh at Uxbridge.**

Because of her refusal to pay Inhabited House Duty, Miss Raleigh's goods were sold by public auction at Uxbridge last Thursday afternoon. Miss Underwood protested in the sale-room against these goods being sold to pay the tax while women were still disfranchised. Miss Raleigh had no objection to paying taxes, but the protest was made because justice was being delayed to women. Women had not yet got the Parliamentary vote. There had been no delay in the collection of taxes from women, the warrant in this particular case having been issued with unusual punctuality, but although the clause for the enfranchisement of women had passed through the House of Commons with such a huge majority, there had been no attempt on the part of the Government to give speedy effect to that clause. We were told that votes for women might be on the Statute Book within a few weeks. Why, then, could not the authorities delay this sale? By taxing women who believed that taxation without representation was tyranny, the Government was breaking its truce with women, and by delaying justice to women it was breaking one of the provisions of Magna Charta, which enacted that justice should not be sold, delayed or denied to anyone.

**Miss Evelyn Sharp.**

On Tuesday, July 10, the adjourned public examination of Miss Evelyn Sharp before the Registrar was again adjourned, until July 24. When asked why she had refused to make a statement of her affairs she replied that it was for the same reason that she had resisted the payment of the taxes which the Government claimed from her.

**WHERE AND WHY?**

[We have not seen the film "Where are my children?" which has been so largely advertised. But from the Press notices we have read, we very heartily endorse the protest which we print below.—Ed.]

14, Great Smith-street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

July 5, 1917.

SIR,—We wish strongly to protest against the morbid, sensational and untrue film "Where are my Children?" which is now being forced upon London in the name of the National Council of Public Morals, in spite of its withdrawal under protest in Birmingham.

The film is false in implication and untrue to the known facts of life in this country. It is perfectly well known to all who are conversant with the matter that the limitation of families and the decline of the birth-rate cannot be said to be due to any extent to the practice with which this particular film deals.

The facts are that the reduction of the birth-rate is due to many causes such as drink, venereal disease, poverty, bad housing, the tendency to late marriages and the deliberate limitation of families by innocuous preventive methods and with the mutual consent of both parents, which practice is in many cases urged by the increased sense of parental responsibility towards children already born.

None of these contributory causes to the decline of the birth-rate are indicated in the film story.

No one will deny that there are cases of the kind pictured in the film, but they are few, indeed, in comparison with the bulk of British mothers, and the suppression of the mention of other causes produces in the spectator such a sense of disproportion as to entirely destroy any good the film might do. Further, any such small good is far outweighed by the suggestion to the minds of many who were before unaware of it of the possibility of such a crime.

We believe the continued exhibition of this film to be injurious to the work of the National Council of Public Morals, and earnestly hope that it may be at once and permanently withdrawn.

(Signed) MARY H. L. BUNTING.  
LOUISE CREIGHTON.  
GERTRUDE S. GOW.  
DOROTHEA IRVING.  
FLORENCE F. BOOTH.  
MARY OGLIVIE GORDON.  
C. C. OSLER.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 283.

**FELLOW WORKERS FOR FREEDOM!**

Members of the Edinburgh Branch of the Women's Freedom League have taken a lively interest in the strike of the dressmakers in that city. While admitting that one Society—our own League—had shown sympathy with the women in their struggle for the right of combination and a living wage, our contemporary, *The Shop Assistant*, regrets that the suffrage movement in Edinburgh had not more clearly identified itself with the strike of the women workers for "a principle which affects the whole economic position of women." Feeling that the Women's Freedom League had been misrepresented, Miss Jacks sent the following letter to the Editor:—

SIR,—The Suffrage Society referred to in the article entitled "Dressmakers and Suffragists" in your issue of June 30 is the Edinburgh Branch of the Women's Freedom League, and as Hon. Secretary of that Society I crave space for a reply in order to contravert the inaccurate statements and gross misrepresentations made evidently in complete ignorance of the facts. The enclosed cutting [referring to a public meeting held at Edinburgh under the auspices of the Women's Freedom League, at which Miss Alexia B. Jacks urged that the employers should submit the case of the girls to the arbitration of Sir George Askwith] from the *Edinburgh Evening News*, of June 26, is proof that officially the Women's Freedom League did more than pass a "pious resolution."

Our members have withheld custom from the firms standing out against the Unions, and have stated their reasons for so doing, newspaper correspondence has been carried on to bring public attention to the matter, and in more intimate ways, which if made public would lose their value, influential pressure has been brought to bear on the recalcitrant firms. Our members, though willing to speak on behalf of the strikers, have not as yet been asked by the officials of the Union to do so. For proof of these statements I refer you to the local secretary, Mr. Neil S. Beaton.

Suffragists demand the vote now, as always, in order to better conditions of every kind for women, and especially economic conditions, and suffragists now, as always, are convinced that without that political power and political status no permanent betterment for women can be. Can anyone imagine a body of men-workers—voters—being refused the right of combination, or being kept so long at bay in these days waiting for arbitration three times offered? Can anyone believe that men—voters—would be offered the sweated wages paid to women?

We believe with the writer in unity of action in the industrial and political field, but we disagree with him entirely when he says that "organisation is the sole remedy for those terrible conditions."

Combination for women workers as for men workers is essential for economic betterment—we have always encouraged it and we rejoice to see it develop—and Trade Unions exist for that end; political power is as essential, and suffragists have specialised on that point, believing that if women were politically powerful, their whole standard of life would be raised and employers would not dare insult them by offering them slave wages or by flouting their Trade Unions.

In support of this argument it is interesting to quote from a speech made by Mary Macarthur in Kingsway Hall, London, on February 10, 1917, when she said: "I am one of those who have always said that the industrial organisation of women was even more important than their political organisation from the point of view of improving their economic position, but I am bound to say—since this is the time for recanting old faiths—I am bound to say I feel that even the better industrial organisation of the men is not sufficient to count entirely for the difference in their power. Though I have been slow to come to this conclusion I must admit that their status as voters helps very materially to weigh down the scales."

We wish the dressmakers full and complete victory, and further, we hope that this will be only the first step on a progressive road to stronger combination, a better organised trade and higher wages. We rejoice that men Trade Unionists and the Trades Council have, at last, deemed it wise to take up the cudgels to help the women to combine, and lastly, I should like to state that the Women's Freedom League has only one motive in writing this letter—defence against misrepresentation.—I am, yours faithfully,

ALEXIA B. JACK.

## THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, July 13th, 1917.

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To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.  
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Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."  
EDITORIAL.

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

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## THE ENEMY WITHIN THE GATE.

Many to-day are talking of revolution. The word is in the air. Everyone, indeed, who has thought at all deeply believes that changes of a vital character lie ahead. "This war is going to end dramatically," said a soldier the other day. Asked to explain himself, he answered quite definitely that he did not mean victory on either side. He meant something else. The word revolution was not used, but it was implied. "There's going to be a big change everywhere soon," is a form of words we have heard repeatedly both from military and civilian workers. The question of questions is, What direction will these revolutionary changes take?

At such moments when problems, momentous beyond expression, are facing us, it is the better part of wisdom to look back as well as forwards. Nearly a hundred and fifty years ago there was another era of revolution. Destined to change the face of the country and play havoc with the life-habits of myriads of human beings, it was at its initiation barely noticed. Some indeed would have persuaded its victims that it had come to them as a boon from the gods. Machines were to do for them more, and much more, than their hands and tools had ever been able to achieve. Those of the hand-workers who, in miserable prescience of what this new industrialism would mean for their class, struck out blindly against the inhuman thing that was destined to crush them and their little ones were regarded by the historians of that cruel age as brainless idiots. And the terrible thing went on. Ugly, dismal, insanitary districts spread like a fungus-growth round small towns and villages; the smoke of furnace-chimneys poisoned the air; little children were taken away from their parents and carted in numbers to factory towns, there to work for twelve hours or more a day. Masters, growing richer and richer, captured the State and the Church, and even the Universities. Education of the workers, save by a very few, was discouraged. "It" (education), wrote a learned President of the Royal Society, "would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants—it would render them fractious and refractory, as was evident in the manufacturing counties." By Parliaments of Employers the Combination Acts, which made of Trade Unionism a crime, were passed; and when the workers grew restive bodies of soldiers were moved from place to place to overawe them. This is a point which should be carefully noted to-day. It is interesting also now, when no less than seventy-four

men and women are in prison without trial, to remember that in 1817 the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended for one year, and that this was followed by rigorous limitations in printing, free speech and even private meetings. Only by slow and painful degrees, fighting every inch of the way, did the workers of the country struggle to their feet; only very slowly did they gain some faint conception of their own powers and possibilities. But at least there was movement. The idea of democracy was in the air. From the practical point of view, however, one great mistake was made by the proletariat. Rising out of subjection themselves, they did not take their women along with them. Study their legislation—industrial laws, marriage laws, and those regulating the relations between parents and children—everywhere you will find male domination accepted as an axiom. We are glad to feel that out of this folly the workers are rising. They do not see things clearly yet, but a beginning has been made. Driven, no doubt, by strong feeling outside, the House of Commons has taken the first step towards a true democracy; and it is well, for the nation is nearing a crisis, which will need all the energy, wisdom, and goodwill it can command to meet worthily. We are not thinking only of the enemy outside. It is more than natural that the war and its horrors—coasts bombarded, food and transport ships sunk, cities in daily peril from bombshells—should fill our minds; but, if we refuse to take thought for ourselves, we may find presently within our own gates more insidious, and therefore more dangerous foes, than even bombs and submarines. They creep in so quietly—not altogether, but one by one, and such excellent reasons are put forward to explain them. We must, we are told, be patriotic; we must remember what is due to our country in her need. We must put confidence in those who are leading us to victory. The measures we so justly deprecate—the growth of bureaucracy, the enslavement of industry, the persecution of conscience, the blindfolding of the people—are but temporary. When victory is achieved and peace returns things will fall into their usual channel, and the war will be a painful though heroic memory.

In heaven's name let us read, mark and learn, the lessons of the past. They trusted—the men and women of the past, with the exception of a few turbulent spirits who suffered for their audacity; they were patient, and what happened? There grew up the conditions which we all see and deplore. The wicked game of profiteering, which is only now being exposed, went on unchecked from generation to generation. As a result, insane luxury on the one hand, abject poverty on the other; mothers too weak to bear and rear healthy children; babes dying in their thousands from bad living conditions.

Is it to be so again? Are the forces revealed by the present appalling situation to bring about reaction—a triumphant militarism, a tightening of the cords with which the workers are bound—or is the nation prepared to face and fight the enemy within the gates, as it has fought the enemy without? These are the questions which this generation is called upon to answer.

Meanwhile, there is no need to despair. To women, to many now unenfranchised workers, and to men who have fought and who have refrained from fighting for conscience sake, political power will presently be given. It will be for them through their representatives to fight on the floor of the House of Commons the profiteer, the warmonger and the baby-killer, who is not always a German—witness the awful infant mortality in such wealth-producing towns as Middlesbrough.

Remembering this, and relying on the power of united action, we look forward with confidence and hope.

C. DESPARD.

## PRESIDENT'S VICTORY BIRTHDAY PARTY.

The annual Birthday Party was held for the sixth year in succession at Caxton Hall, on July 6.

The reception was timed from 7 to 7.45 p.m., but long before seven o'clock members and friends had arrived to offer their compliments and greetings to our President. Lovely bouquets were presented by Mrs. Lindus's little girl for the Women's Freedom League, by Miss Lillian Pierotti for the Minerva Café, by Mrs. Price and other friends, and the President wore a spray of yellow and white roses, the gift of the headquarters staff.

A delightful short musical interlude, kindly arranged by Madame Carola, was much appreciated. Enjoyable piano solos were contributed by Mrs. Sylvester Sparrow, and "Beyond the Dawn" and "With the Daisies Pied" were delightfully sung by Madame Carola. Mr. Ernest C. Farley gave great pleasure by his inspiring cornet rendering of "The Lost Chord" and "The Better Land," with "Il Bacio" as an encore.

From the chair, Miss EUNICE MURRAY urged that women could never claim a genuine victory until the first women had registered their votes. Men had betrayed us before, but as long as the Women's Freedom League and other suffrage societies did their bit it would be very difficult indeed for any government to withhold women's enfranchisement. When reading the papers women were struck with the extraordinary need of the presence of women in the House of Commons. Why should special arrangements be made for the supply of beer to men workers when women workers in munition factories had been deprived of all sugar for their tea for the last nine months? Women had no control over the waste going on in the country through the incompetence or negligence of Government servants; but they were frequently appealed to save a little more, to eat a little less bread, and other things, and the Government forcibly collected taxes from them to pay for the upkeep of the country and all the official muddles.

Miss EVELYN SHARP, by special request, gave her experiences as a tax-resister. She had for the last six years resisted her income-tax. When war broke out she was served with an assessment paper, and because she refused to make a statement of her affairs she had been made a bankrupt by the authorities. For three weeks a bailiff had stayed in her house, after which all her furniture, together with her carpets, typewriter, books, hay-box, and crockery had been taken, but up to the present no sale had taken place. All her correspondence was intercepted, opened, read and returned to her just when the authorities thought fit, and of course costs were being piled up after each adjournment. Miss Sharp reminded her audience that she had not chosen this moment to resist her taxes, but the Government had seized it to penalise her for her principles. Women certainly had now a better chance than before of getting their enfranchisement, but all the same they were still voteless women.

Immediately after Miss Sharp's speech a presentation of money and purses was made by members and friends to Mrs. Despard, the total amount of which was £248 15s. Dr. Knight then appealed for a liberal collection from the audience.

Mrs. DESPARD, who was received with enthusiastic and prolonged applause, warmly thanked all who had given donations to her Birthday Fund, and all those who had contributed to the success of the Party. She said she felt sure we should soon have the vote; the Reform Bill was a very necessary Bill, and the Votes for Women Clause in it much too popular a clause to be deleted from it. As soon as this measure of woman suffrage was on the Statute

Book enfranchised women must make it their first business to get younger women on to the register. With fine vision Mrs. Despard depicted some of the future work of women when they had political power. It was her great hope that the Women's Freedom League would keep together to do this work, and that when they met again in the autumn they should meet each other as full and free citizens.

Mrs. HOLMAN expressed her great pleasure in being able to come to congratulate Mrs. Despard and the Women's Freedom League at any rate on a partial victory. It was so very English not to carry through a necessary and inevitable reform generously and at once. Women all over the world were taking an immense part in public affairs, and our legislators knew it. Still, these legislators could not act gracefully and concede a full measure of justice to women, but were content to nibble at reform.

Mrs. SCHOFIELD COATES, in referring to the high infant mortality rate in Middlesbrough, said that men had tried to blame women for that. It was said that women were drinking too much, but the curious thing was that no figures on drinking amongst women had been published. The conditions under which women and their children had to live in Middlesbrough, the insanitary dwellings, and the fact that while the mothers were in the factories these children could get nothing better than bread and margarine for their regular mid-day meal—these were the things that suffragists were out to alter, and when once women had the Parliamentary vote they would find it very much easier to make that alteration than at present.

A large number of members of the League and of suffragists of other societies and personal friends of the President were present. The evening was most successful, and all were loath to go home.

Our best thanks are due to the Socials Committee who made the arrangements, to all the artistes who so kindly contributed to our gaiety, to the Minerva Café for the refreshment department, to Mrs. Mockford, Mrs. Lindus and all the friends who sent flowers for the beautiful flower stall, to Miss Alix M. Clark, and the Montgomery Boroughs Branch who provided the appetising goods on the Welsh Pioneer Stall, a thrilling sight in these hungry days, and which were quickly sold out, to Miss Tooke, who presided over the refreshing strawberry and cream stall, to the stewards and to all who combined to make the Victory Birthday Party worthy of a great occasion.

Our old friend, Mr. Harrison Hill, who was unable to be in time for the interlude, hurried round after his evening's engagement, and gave us the following Birthday Ode of Victory, specially composed for the occasion:—

NEW LANG SYNE.

Air: "Auld Lang Syne."  
If Mrs. Despard looks so young  
When she is seventy-three,  
How young she'll look in those good days,  
The days so soon to be,  
When woman has the right to vote,  
And she will use it, too;  
So here's to Mrs. Despard,  
Our ever young and true.  
For Auld Lang Syne, my trusty friends,  
Will soon have passed away;  
And New Lang Syne will soon be here,  
The Dawning of the Day.  
And if the House of Lords shall dare  
To stop the light of day,  
Why! bless your heart, the House of Lords  
Shall clean be swept away.  
And in its stead a nobler House,  
A House of Ladies, see!  
With Lady Despard President,  
And every woman free!  
For Auld Lang Syne, my trusty friends,  
Will soon have passed away;  
And New Lang Syne will soon be here,  
The Dawning of the Day.

Women's Freedom League.

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DARE TO BE FREE.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.
Friday, July 13.—Croydon. Sewing Party, 3.30 p.m., at 32a, The Arcade, High-street. Discussion on "Food Rations."

BRANCH NOTES.

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

Will members please read these notes to save the Secretary's time, and to avoid expense in postage? Subscriptions.—Those members who have not yet paid their annual subscriptions are reminded that the Treasurer will be pleased to receive them. Birthday Fund.—Only a few members have, so far, sent in subscriptions; please send as soon as possible for the second instalment. Jumble Goods are wanted. The Secretary thanks the member who sent a box of goods last week. There was no name attached. Sewing Party.—Friday, July 13, at the Office, 3.30 p.m. Discussion on the future policy of the League.

North-Eastern District.

Organiser, Miss Dorothy Evans, Stoneyhurst-road, Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Miss Murray's tour has been a great success. Large meetings have been held in Newcastle, Scotswood, Jarrow, S. Shields, Stockton and Redcar. We have collected an average of over 10s. a meeting, and more at the two indoor meetings. We have been able to send up £6 to the Birthday Fund. Two hundred copies of THE VOTE have been sold and 132 pamphlets. Newcastle members are asked to keep Monday evenings free to attend our regular meeting in Bigg Market. We intend to hold a meeting along Scotswood-road every Tuesday in the dinner-hour. During the first two weeks in August a coast and mining village campaign will be held. Members taking their holidays on this part of the coast are asked to write to the organiser at the above address, stating when and where they are visiting, and offering help of various kinds.

Women's Freedom League Settlement, 93, Nine Elms Lane, S.W. 8.

Nine Elms children were in luck last week, when 130 of them celebrated the opening of the new premises by a Fairy Tale and Strawberry Tea, given by Miss Katherine Raleigh and a couple of others, who thought the children, too, should have their house-warming party. The tea and strawberries, so little known in big families hereabouts that some children called them "sweets," were followed by Miss Raleigh's beautiful stories, all touched in the telling by her charming personality, and then came a wonderful game invented by Mr. Delbanco for the occasion. Mr. F. E. Pearce completed our happiness by bringing, a few days later, a surprise present of apples for the dinner-hour, and altogether our restaurant seems on the way to becoming one of the most popular in London! Other welcome gifts are 7s. 6d. collected by Miss Betty Scott towards a trip to the Zoo, tickets for which have been given by Capt. Gregory, clothing from Miss Collis and Mrs. Harrison, £2 10s. from Mrs. Hoy (per Mrs. Despard), fruit, vegetables and flowers from Mrs. Thomas, Miss Stutchbury, Miss M. Holmes, Mrs. Harrison; toys from Mrs. Bancroft's children. Parcels for Jumble Sale are still wanted to make Mrs. Tippet's sale the success it was last year, and should be sent to the Settlement before July 20. The Treasurer desires it to be known that "the couple of others" referred to in the above paragraph includes the Hon. Secretary of the Settlement, Miss Kathleen Holmes, to whose initiative and generosity the children owe their house-warming party.

The Despard Arms, 125, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1.

After a week's holiday and rest for the staff, the Despard Arms last Monday reopened its hospitable door to its old customers, some of whom declared that they had spent a wretched week in exile. We have a new manageress in Mrs. Gurney, and hope she will make the place even more popular than in the past. We are now able to let beds to young women engaged in work of any kind, as the soldiers are away for good.

The Home Workers League.

Miss Eunice Murray delighted the members of this League last Monday evening by her address on women's work in munitions. She insisted that women should think more of themselves, and be prepared to urge with firmness the redress of their grievances. Miss Murray was cordially invited to come again in the autumn.

Mothers' Pensions.

At a meeting held on Thursday, July 5, at the Central Hall, Westminster, Judge Henry Neil, of Chicago, advocated the granting of Mothers' Pensions to widowed and deserted mothers, who would otherwise be too poor to feed, clothe and house their children adequately. Since 1911 these pensions have been granted in thirty out of the forty-eight States of the U.S.A. As the cost of supporting a child in a Poor law school or other institution is considerably more than the amount of the grant sufficient to bring up the child amid the human surroundings of its own home, we can only suppose that the reform is too obvious a one to have as yet been adopted in this country.

An Englishwoman in India.

DEAR EDITOR,—All progressive Indians are jubilant over the coming triumph of the woman's cause. We feel that the final victory is guaranteed now and is almost in sight. Whatever the opponents of women's suffrage may say to the contrary, enlightened Indians will hail with delight the enfranchisement of English women, and see in their intelligent co-operation with men improved prospects of success in the reconstruction that is to be.

It is for this reason that we express great abhorrence and disgust at the way the Government of Madras are treating that noble champion of Woman Suffrage, Mrs. Annie Besant. So far as we know, her sole crime consists in her demanding by peaceful methods for India what the democracies of Europe and America are asking for Belgium. Her persecutors are the muddlers of the Mesopotamia tragedy.

Can Englishwomen tolerate such indignities being heaped on a high-minded enthusiast by an irresponsible bureaucracy? Could Lord Curzon or Mr. McCallum Scott please explain how such an exasperating treatment would increase the prestige of the Empire they so much plume themselves upon?

Mrs. Besant and her colleagues have been cut off from all political, religious and educational activities, and have further been doomed to internment, without any reasons being specified for such treatment. D. N. BANNERJEA.

Miss C. Nina Boyle.

Members of the Women's Freedom League and her many friends will be glad to hear that Miss Boyle is on her way home.

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

THE ENEMY WITHIN THE GATE - - By C. Despard.
FELLOW WORKERS FOR FREEDOM - By Alexia B. Jacks.
THE PRESIDENT'S BIRTHDAY PARTY.
TAX RESISTANCE:—
MRS. DARENTH HARRISON AT ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA.
MISS RALEIGH AT UXBRIDGE.
MISS EVELYN SHARP IN LONDON.
OUR POINT OF VIEW. OUR TREASURY.
CORRESPONDENCE. BRANCH NOTES.

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First List of Contributions.

Table listing contributions for the President's Birthday Fund, Sixth Year. Columns include Branches, Name, and Amount in £ s. d.

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SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 288.

FRIDAY,  
JULY 13,  
1917.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

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The articles enumerated below can be seen at "The Vote" Office, 10 to 5 daily, Saturdays 10 to 1.

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