

THE VOTE,
SEPTEMBER 15, 1916.
ONE PENNY.

For the Better Governing of the Country

C. S. BREMNER.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 15, 1916.

Edited by C. DESPARD.

OBJECTS: 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.

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THE PRIME MINISTER AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

"Give the Women Votes!" say his Constituents.

It was in the Prime Minister's constituency I held my meeting. Mr. Asquith has made his public recantation in favour of woman suffrage. We are not satisfied; we want the vote now, not vague promises for the future. He also believes in democracy, so he says, but he fails to practice it, so we think his constituency a favourable spot for us to raise our voices, and expose his fallacious teaching. The right honourable gentleman's constituents are almost as cautious as the Prime Minister himself. They are afraid of committing themselves rashly, and, like him, they believe in the policy of "Wait and see." They keep the speaker at arm's length, allowing the breadth of the street to intervene! So as I mounted my platform I found them by no means enthusiastic, but inclined to be critically friendly.

"Give the suffragette a fair hearin'," was an expression I overheard while waiting to begin. As the meeting progressed the friendliness increased; they drew nearer, and by the end they were pressing round my none too steady platform. They listened at first passively, but gradually with interest, as I told them what democratic government should be, and what democracy meant, and they agreed that

the country suffered to-day because of the voteless condition of women. They even got the length of a cheer when I said that we would strenuously oppose any alteration in the franchise until women were admitted upon the same terms as men. The women, at any rate, nodded in approval when I spoke of the awakening amongst women. "You suffragettes deserve to win; your perseverance is extraordinary," spoke a burly-looking farmer. "Yes, you never know what a 'no' means! That's the strength of the suffragist," said another; while yet a third remarked, "Asquith is fair beaten by the women. He'll hae to gie in." "Not him," interposed a pale youth who had stopped to listen; "you over-value the importance of the vote, but in any case it doesn't matter. Asquith will get the better of you yet!" "Never!" said a young girl, determination in her voice, and "Never!" chorussed out the women beside her. "I never was a suffragette till now," went on the young girl "not that I ever had any patience with Mr. Asquith's attitude either. He never had an argument, just a few old prejudices. Still, I lived at home, and didn't worry over conditions of women's life and

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work. I had money and leisure, and other people's lack of these things did not concern me; but since the war I've been a toiler, and the result is I understand as I never did before what is at the bottom of the Women's Movement!"

The awakening of women all over the country is remarkable. In Scotland they are no longer passively in favour of Votes for Women; they have become fellow-workers in a great Movement. A few doubtless (and they are a few) desire the vote as a reward for service, but most desire it because it is just to have it, unjust not to have it, and large numbers want it because they realise that economic prosperity goes hand in hand with political power. To protect their own interests women are drawing together more and more. The industrial worker realises that the suffragist is her best friend. They begin to see that co-operation is necessary if we are to succeed. Success depends now not upon wobbly pledges, but upon our own efforts, our own will and determination. The struggle for democracy is an ideal, an ideal that has become a religion, a religion that is worth acquiring. It is well that our voices should be raised in Mr. Asquith's own stronghold, East Fife. It will be well if his electors tell him in no uncertain way that upon this occasion they expect him to fulfil his pledge. The hour has come when women must have the vote. We have an aim before us—we aim to abolish all the injustices heaped upon our sex. There is nothing sacred or divine in the male dominance from which we have so long suffered. There is nothing so firmly established, not even male supremacy, that it cannot be changed. The day has passed when political, social or industrial institutions are supposed to be unalterable. Let Mr. Asquith note that his electors passed with acclamation the resolution that "We demand the vote now, upon the same terms as it is or may be granted to men." To deny this act of justice to women is a serious loss to the nation. The Prime Minister might adopt a new motto instead of "Wait and See"—"Note and Act!"

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

MEN DEMAND VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Sir Herbert Tree a Convert.

Sir Herbert Tree has returned from America a convert to woman suffrage. "The vote," he said to an interviewer a few days ago, "will be one of the great factors in the elimination of war. Those who give life will see that it is not taken away. America and the war have converted me."

Not to be Defeated.

Mr. Hughes, the Republican candidate for the Presidency of the United States at the election next November, declares that opposition to woman suffrage may delay but cannot defeat the movement. "Continued hostility would only mean a constantly intensified effort, a feminist agitation involving the subversion of normal political issues, and a growing bitterness of public life."

The One Obstacle.

"The cause of women's suffrage has been blessed in the House of Commons by the most formidable of its opponents, and its triumph in the near future may now be taken as assured. But for the steady opposition of Mr. Asquith, women would have had the vote years ago, and now the Prime Minister has publicly admitted that their claims cannot be resisted."—*Tablet*.

Jury Women in the United States.

In *The Women's Journal*, of Boston, just to hand, appears a photograph of the first woman jury to sit in a felony case in the United States. The twelve good women and true, Californians, in a Superior Court in San Diego, convicted four Mexicans of highway robbery. "As far as the court can observe," declared Judge Lewis, "a jury entirely of women is quite as satisfactory as though men formed the whole or a portion of the panel."

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, September 15.—CROYDON, 32, The Arcade, High-street, Sewing Meeting, 3-5 p.m.

Sunday, September 17.—OPEN-AIR MEETING, Brockwell Park, 3.30. Speaker: Mrs. Aldridge. Chair: Miss Spriggs.

Thursday, September 21.—SOCIALS COM MITTEE MEETING, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 2.30 p.m.

Friday, September 22.—CAXTON HALL. Mrs. Despard's Return Party, from 7 to 9.30 p.m. Invitation cards from W.F.L. Office. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Eunice G. Murray and Miss Evelyn Sharp.

Tuesday, September 26.—L.B.C. SEWING MEETING, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3-7 p.m.

Saturday, September 30.—DESPARD ARMS, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W., Jumble Sale, 2 p.m.

Sunday, October 1.—HASLUCK'S ACADEMY, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, Miss Clara Reed, Recital "Becket," 4 p.m. Teas will be served in the Theatre from 3.15-3.50 at 6d. each.

Wednesday, October 4.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Mr. Laurence Housman, "Hate's Coming of Age," and Mrs. Despard. Chair: Mrs. E. M. Moore. Tea 4.30 (6d.).

Thursday, October 5.—LONDON BRANCHES COUNCIL MEETING, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 6 p.m.

Wednesday, October 11.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Aldridge, "The Responsibility of Serbian Women," and Mrs. Mustard. Chair: Miss A. A. Smith. Tea 4.30 (6d.).

Thursday, October 12.—CLAPHAM BRANCH MEETING, at 46, Lynette-avenue (by kind permission of Mrs. Samuel), 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 18.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Mr. H. G. Chancellor, M.P., "The Right of the Soldier," and Miss Eunice Murray. Chair: Mrs. Corner. Tea 4.30 (6d.).

Friday, October 20.—CAXTON HALL, Political Meeting. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Murray and others.

Wednesday, October 25.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Nevins, "The Future of Women," and Miss F. A. Underwood. Tea 4.30 (6d.).

Thursday, October 26.—L.B.C. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 144, High Holborn, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, November 1.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Zangwill, "Picking up the Pieces," and Mrs. Corner. Tea 4.30 (6d.).

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W. 1d. and 4d. meals, weekdays at noon. Children's Guest House and Milk Depot for Nursing Mothers.

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PROVINCES.

Tuesday, September 19.—PORTSMOUTH. Annual Branch Meeting, 17, Lombard-street, 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 20.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Public Meeting, at the Suffrage Club, 231A, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road, 7.30. Speaker: Miss Eunice Murray.

Wednesday, September 27.—PORTSMOUTH. Work Party for November Fair, 17, Lombard-street, 3-7 p.m.

The President's Return Party.

All members of the League and readers of THE VOTE will be cordially welcomed at Mrs. Despard's Return Party at the Caxton Hall next Friday, September 22, 7 to 9.30 p.m., and cards of invitation can be obtained at the Women's Freedom League office, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Mrs. Despard will receive the visitors from 7 to 7.45; afterwards there will be a short musical programme, arranged by Mrs. A. E. Corner, and speeches by Mrs. Despard, Miss Evelyn Sharp, and Miss Eunice E. Murray. Refreshments can be obtained at the buffet.

WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

Bravery and Devotion Recognised.

Lady Dorothea Fielding was personally decorated by the King at Windsor Castle with the Military Medal for bravery and devotion awarded to her for war service. Five nurses were awarded the medal: Miss Mabel M. Tunley, Miss Ethel Hutchinson, Miss Jean Strachan Whyte, Miss Nora Easeby, and Miss Beatrice A. Allsop, four of whom have been wounded, but are still at duty. This is the first announcement of the award of the Military Medal to women.

At the Trade Union Congress.

At the Trade Union Congress at Birmingham last week, a resolution calling upon the Government to protect women in war service by fixing minimum wages and securing that where the woman does the same work as a man she should receive the same rate of pay, and further demanding the re-enforcement of the Factory Acts and the enactment of an eight-hour working day, was adopted on the motion of the National Federation of Women Workers.

Miss Mary Macarthur, in proposing the resolution, said that Mr. Lloyd George had stated that a minimum wage of £1 a week was paid to all women under the Ministry of Munitions. That was not true. If it were it would be nothing to crow about, with prices at their present level; but the fact was that in one controlled establishment women over eighteen were working at a wage for a full week as low as 11s., and countless other instances of the same kind could be given.

Mrs. Wilkinson, who seconded the resolution, said that in Birmingham there were women working alongside men and doing exactly the same work at a piece-rate of 2½d., while the rate for the men was 7d. Many such cases were put before the Ministry of Munitions, but it took months to put them right.

On the motion of Mr. H. Smith (Licensed Vehicle Workers, London), the Congress resolved that all licences for women to act as conductors on omnibuses or trams should be for the war only. Mr. Smith declared that this work was entirely unsuitable for women, both on moral and on physical grounds.

From 3½d. to 4d.

Female workers in the tailoring trade are to have their minimum rates of pay raised from 3½d. to 4d. an hour. The workers claimed to have the minimum rate advanced owing to the increased cost of living, and the Tailoring Trade Board agreed to a rise of a halfpenny. The statutory notice of the variation required under the Trade Boards Act will be sent to all employers in the trade on September 16.

The Unexpected.

A "high official" of the Ministry of Munitions gave the following information to the Press:—"The women have revealed hidden sources of strength, skill, and tenacity never before realised. They are an even greater asset than was imagined. I will give you an instance. We had a learner, a woman over forty years of age, in some works near London. During her second week some machines were temporarily out of order. The foreman, not knowing she was a learner, asked her to put great pressure on to her machine to increase its output. The average was 160 shells. On the day in question she reached 405, all of which passed the gauge."

Roadworkers.

Fifty women, employed by the Birmingham Corporation as road workers, are mainly engaged in preparing roads for tar-spraying.

The Church and The Woman's Movement.

In a vigorous letter to *The Times*, Canon Streeter, of Hereford, declares that the attitude of the Church to the Woman's Movement is a momentous question.

"If the women of the country are to throw over Christianity, or if the Church is to lose the women to the same extent as she has already lost the men, both country and the Church will, indeed, be in a bad way." "Are they to stand on the font?" he asks with regard to the "ridiculous provisions" of the Bishop of London's pronouncement on "women preachers," and adds: "The Bishop of Chelmsford hopes that the women will submit. Women will submit where they respect. But a Church which trembles—not once or twice, but always—at the frown of Mr. Athelstan Riley is a Church which will neither command nor deserve respect."

Justice to Medical Students.

Since Sir Alfred Ewing became Principal of the University of Edinburgh the women medical students are finding conditions improved. They are now to be admitted to the University instead of being compelled, as hitherto, to obtain their instruction outside. The sum of £4,000 has been offered to the University Court by the women medical students and their friends to defray the necessary outlay.

WHAT OTHER WOMEN ARE DOING.

Every month *Jus Suffragii* is now proving its importance as a link between women of many nations, and should be read by all who desire to keep in touch with the progress women are making. Last month's issue was devoted largely to Scandinavia; this month's takes within its wide sweep India, where an Indian women's university is being organised by Indians; Canada, where woman suffrage is to go to the voters of British Columbia this month; Norway, where a woman, Miss Nanna Meyer, Doctor of Law, has recently been appointed permanent paid head of a Government department (one of the branches of the Department of Justice); Uruguay, where woman suffrage is to be submitted to Congress; as well as the United States, Australia, and European countries, belligerent and neutral. In Germany the National Council of Women held a War Congress at Weimar at the end of June, at which the Presidents of the Austrian and Hungarian National Councils were present. Women's work after the war and population policy were among the important subjects discussed in many aspects. Testimony was given to the efficiency of women in skilled work and to their physical power and endurance. The women munition workers at Krupp's show the following notable increase: On the outbreak of war 1,241 were employed, principally as charwomen or attendants in tuck shops; on Dec. 31, 1914, the total was 1,666; on Dec. 31, 1915, 10,928; on April 1, 1916, 13,023. Dr. Hugo Lindemann, an authority on local government, writing in the *Kommunale Praxis*, demands votes for women. He says:—

Women's war work will have to continue as women's peace work. We shall, however, not be able to demand the great and valuable co-operation of women without giving them equal political and commercial rights with men. Germany is far behind other Germanic peoples with regard to women's political rights. The war will probably have opened everyone's eyes to the fact that this was more than a political evil—it was political foolishness.

The nationality of married women is ably dealt with by a French woman advocate; the subject is being discussed in Germany, Holland, and other countries. In Switzerland women are praised for their excellent work in industries hitherto regarded as the monopoly of men. In the United States a woman lecturer has been appointed for the first time at Yale; she is to lecture to men on biology, and two women have been appointed to the faculty of the College of Physicians at Columbia University. Copies of *Jus Suffragii* may be obtained at the Women's Freedom League office, 144, High Holborn, 4d. each.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 1180.

THE VOTE.

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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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AT THE CROSS ROADS.

Those who, standing apart, with sufficient aloofness from themselves—their ancient or hereditary points of view, their class and the special interests of their particular calling—are able to hear and see without prejudice will not fail to have observed the indecisive and conflicting nature of the undercurrents of our social and political life at the present moment. The nations, breathless, almost spent, conscious of impending crisis and not knowing how to meet it are like travellers at cross-roads where there are no sign-posts to mark the way. In every direction the roads branch out: from lanes and woods and windows of crumbling houses come voices of instruction and warning: "Go straight forward! Turn right! Turn left! Go back! Neglect our advice at your peril!" No wonder the bewildered travellers answer: "Let us alone. We will remain where we are."

That has often been the cry of the human, and as often, it has been found impossible. Life cannot exist in stagnation. Communities must either act or die. The real danger is that finding in the multitude of counsellors, not help, but confusion, the peoples may allow themselves to drift and then there can be but one immediate result: the old channels are open to receive them—domination by the strong, which includes one-sex rule and must have militarism for its arm; and the proved deterioration in life and material brought about by the competitive system. Into this, as offering the least resistance, they will plunge—and for generations there will be no putting back.

Heaven forefend such a calamity! If, however, it is to be averted the nation must be alert and watchful. In the course of last week two conferences were held, from both of which come instruction and warning. One—the British Association—represents Science; the other—the Trade Union Congress—constitutes the Workers' Parliament. Always important, there never was a time when they were of more vital importance than they are now. The world, we all feel it, needs reorganisation. "Taken in the bulk," says A. G. G. in the *Daily News*, "humanity was never more humble than it is to-day. It is prepared to learn from anybody. . . . We have got a job of world-planning before us that makes the brain reel to contemplate."

Undoubtedly many forces will go to the formation of this new world; but none will loom so large as Science—the mind, the discoverer, the vision-builder; and Labour—the hand, the skilled

and unskilled executant. Indeed, these will be used by all; emotion, will, self, other-self, pacifist, militarist, to effect their purpose, must appeal to human intellect to plan and to human industry to achieve.

It is significant that Sir Arthur Evans's presidential address at Newcastle had for its subject "Archæology." His brilliant and important discoveries in Crete are well known. In co-ordination with other investigators, he has been able to prove that 10,000 years before the civilisation of Egypt palæolithic cave-dwellers practised elaborate art; and that the torchlight of civilisation was carried on without a break through the Cretans to the Hellenes. He maintains that at a time of crisis like this when hell is let loose the study of the past is salutary. One of its chief lessons is that while "the unity of civilisation is real and permanent, the cracks and gaps in it, wide as they seem, are artificial and temporary." He laments over the intellectual apathy of our people, more difficult to overcome, he says, than ignorance, and he concludes with a warning. Alluding to the fact that the British Museum has been closed to the public, he says:—

The worst economy to which we are to-day reduced by our lack of preparedness is the Economy of Truth. Vital facts that concern our well-being, that may even affect the cause of a lasting peace, are constantly suppressed by official action. We live in a murky atmosphere amidst the suggestion of the false, and there seems to be real danger that the recognition of truth as itself a source of power may suffer an eclipse. It is for us to see to it that the lighted torch handed down to us from the ages shall be passed on with a still brighter flame.

That is a fine appeal which the men and women of our nation would do well to lay to heart. We are "At the Cross-roads." In order to steer our course wisely there must be the discrimination that comes of knowledge. At the end of one road is a hell, deeper even than that of to-day. At the end of the other—not heaven, we do not look for any sudden millennium—but the silver dawn of a happier and worthier national life.

We come to the Trades Union Congress; and here we find justification for Sir Arthur Evans's warning. That the majority of workers, who have won their education in the bitter school of sorrow, are sound at heart is evidenced by the fact that throughout Mr. Gosling's fine and temperate presidential address no passage touched the delegates so deeply as that in which he repudiated the idea of making material profit for the nation out of the war. "Surely," he said, "we are not going to let it be supposed that we countenanced our entry into this terrible war for the purpose of capturing German trade?"

The spontaneous response to these noble words recalls the enthusiasm of our people when summoned two years ago to fight for an outraged nation. But as the Congress settled down to business the other spirit showed itself. No doubt there was and is bewilderment. The forces of Labour have not yet realised themselves. Nevertheless it is sad to note that the two resolutions which were so fiercely maintained as to be practically undebatable, were the one refusing representation at a proposed International Labour Congress to be held at the time of settlement because German and Austrian delegates would be invited, and the other, put forward by Mr. Smith, of the Vehicle Workers' Union, and carried unanimously, that—for moral reasons chiefly!—the licences granted to women as omnibus and tram-conductors shall be withdrawn after the war. Are we to gather from this decision that the morals of men and women are of such small significance that they may be played with by the nation? "Give morals to the winds; the work of these

women is wanted," on the one hand; "Consider the moral aspect! They are no longer required," on the other.

All this is disappointing. It is distressing, moreover, to find that, although the alarming and growing price of foodstuffs could move the Congress to indignation, and although a strong resolution was passed, yet the men's leaders could not see what further pressure could be brought to bear upon the Government. Must not that mean that politically there is something wrong? The naked truth is that neither the House of Commons nor the Cabinet can be said now to represent the people, and that they have therefore no means to apply such pressure as can be felt.

In politics, no less than in science, in industry, and education, we are at the cross-roads. That the position is recognised—and that a Committee nominated by the Speaker and including women, is being formed to consider it, is undoubtedly a step in the right direction—gives us reason to hope that when, relieved from the present horror, the nation sets forward on the road to reconstruction, all her resources in knowledge, wisdom, and experience will be used; and if so—we cannot doubt it—the road to light and liberty will be found.

C. DESPARD.

FOR THE BETTER GOVERNING OF THE COUNTRY.

Suggestions to the Cabinet Committee (concluded).

Nationalisation of Services.

Certain great services, such as the railways and mines, require nationalisation. Railway companies have the audacity to charge more for bringing agricultural produce from Kent to London than from the Continent to London. Such companies, before railways were built, had to obtain powers from Parliament to acquire land. Why should that august institution now abdicate its rights over the railways and permit them to foster foreign agriculture at the expense of British? If the railways were nationalised, as the Post Office has been, the Government could undertake a service connected with both: the collection and delivery of all luggage and parcels from one end of the country to the other. The recent combination of four great companies for this purpose has simply resulted in higher prices. The iron roads and the turnpike roads are in a special way the property of the nation and should be administered for the national benefit. In the United Kingdom, private encroachment on riversides, the banks of lakes, firths, and estuaries is permitted to individuals at the expense of the public; a charge of a shilling is levied on all persons who desire to view Fountain's Abbey and other old monasteries of Britain. Such sums should go to enrich the public exchequer, not the pockets of the wealthy. It is well to remember that in olden days the monasteries were the great vehicles of charity, that they provided education, and that the monks were generous and indulgent landlords. At the Revolution the French annexed the lands of the nobility and church; they created a peasant proprietary of five millions, men who are the backbone of France, whose thrift and excellent husbandry are known all the world over. Large aggregations of land should be taxed in a very special manner. After a term of years it might be made illegal for one man to hold more than a certain amount of land.

The Wrong Men Elected.

One of the causes of neglected British interests is the election of the wrong men to Parliament, of financiers and other goldbugs instead

of men who live in the constituencies, are members of the community devoted to its interests. Now that Members of Parliament are paid for their services, constituencies should demand attention to their interests, and see that they receive it. In a North Scotch constituency well known to the writer the voters, men entirely taken up with agriculture and fishing, have for many years elected London financiers to represent them! If the pay of Members of Parliament were thrown on the local authorities, as it used to be up to the time of Queen Mary, it might stimulate local interest in the right spending of the public money, and not improbably lead to a better choice of representatives. Finance and "the Trade" are the best represented interests in Parliament. They are also those that least require such assiduous nursing.

Education.

The whole field of education requires overhauling. That education which throws children of fourteen loose on the world without any trade or profession is a grim failure, however excellent it may be up to that age. The school-leaving age should be immediately raised to fifteen, and in a short time to sixteen, the age established by several Swiss cantons. The interests of children, the nation's greatest asset, are not well represented in Parliament and in the Board of Education by men only, save in the few inferior positions assigned by the latter body to women. The mothers of the nation are more concerned for effective education than the financiers and employers of labour. This is a phase of the legal fiction that a child has only one parent, the father. There are excellent technical classes and trade schools doing good work at the moment. This work demands expansion, until every young person has a trade. Germany teaches waiters, charwomen, hairdressers, chimney-sweeps their business, and this country must do the same.

University Reform.

It was recently pointed out in the Press that Scotland, with 4,000,000 of population, has 7,000 men and women attending her Universities, three of which were founded in the fifteenth century, and one in the sixteenth. England has 18,000 students in her Universities; if she preserved the same ratio between Universities and population as obtains in Scotland, she would have 60,000 students. The Scotch owe the position they enjoy in the world of business and government largely to their education. They have enjoyed something like a national system of education for more than three centuries. By Mr. Andrew Carnegie's generosity, the University fees are remitted to all students who may require help. They may also repay to the University chest, at a later period out of their earnings, all sums thus remitted. Every year larger sums are being repaid to the Universities by students who have benefited by this timely help. In England we urgently require the democratisation of the Universities; the word includes both sexes. There is much talk of the open path from the elementary school to the University. But it is only open to a very limited extent. Many years ago General William Booth observed that in England intelligence is more frequently lacking to direct than obedience to follow direction. Part of that lack of intelligence is due to untrained brains. The difference between cultivated and uncultivated brains is the same as between cultivated and uncultivated land. We must cast the net wider; we cannot afford to overlook talent in any class of life or in either sex.

Legal Reform.

Because they rarely compare their country with others, and because they are usually ignorant of the

principles of legislation, Englishmen are obsessed with the idea that justice reigns in England, and that the scales are held even. On the contrary, civil law is so expensive in England that only the rich enjoy the luxury. Judges are much too highly paid for the services they render. The Latin countries obtain able and impartial judges at a third of the money, and they work harder than English judges. The law is not equal as between men and women; the laws of divorce are adduced in proof. It is an injustice that women are not admitted to the bar and bench, an injustice that Parliament should immediately rectify, overriding the decision of the legal trade union, interested and irrational as it generally reveals itself.

The Need for Women's Service Everywhere.

Women are urgently required in all departments of the public service, city and town councils and other local authorities, as well as the departments of the activities of such bodies. If it be objected that they have the right to elect the local authorities and to sit as members it must be remembered that the attitude of Parliament towards women, its continued denial of enfranchisement and eligibility to Parliament depresses their position all along the line, both in the consideration of their fellow-citizens and in the enjoyment of opportunities of useful and disinterested service. Frederick the Great styled himself the procurator of the poor, the British Parliament up to the Great War could with equal truth call itself the procurator of the rich and of men.

The Object of Legislation.

Until well on in the nineteenth century the object of legislation was the aggrandisement and advancement of the classes, of the wealthy. Jeremy Bentham laid down the great principle of legislation: *The public good ought to be object of legislation.* It may be that out of the bitter of the present world-war will come the sweet of legislation for the public good, and that Britain may yet achieve a bloodless revolution on the bloody fields of France and Flanders. Her people are law-abiding; they have tamely submitted in the past to grievous wrongs, such as the Enclosure Acts, when Parliament deprived them of their rights on the land and enclosed the commons. We must see to it that the laws are purged of class and sex privilege; new laws must be tried by Bentham's great principle; old laws must be abrogated if they fail to pass the standard. In conclusion, Government, both local and imperial, urgently requires to extend its powers, to systematise and organise them on the basis of the public good. But women will view with dismay any further extension and organisation of the powers of government so long as they are unenfranchised. They have reason to fear that their position would be still further depressed.

C. S. BREMNER.

Women's Freedom League Settlement, 1, Everett Street, Nine Elms, S.W.

We are grateful to Mrs. Clark for chintz curtains and covers for the Guest House, also a cake, bread, and cream; Mrs. Giles, two dolls; Miss Wilder, 1s. and roses; Miss Isobel Harvey, beans, cabbages, and marrows; Mrs. Presbury, bread; Miss Triplett, sago; Mrs. Delbanco and Miss A. Tollemache, flowers; and Mr. Delbanco, a large box of macaroni, which makes a new and very popular soup. Bath-towels are needed for the Guest House, also left-off boots, shoes, and slippers of all children's sizes. Has any reader a spare piece of linoleum that would cover the stone floor of our bathroom, and make it more comfortable for winter? Apples and other garden produce always most welcome.

KATHLEEN HOLMES.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

** 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 that we do not necessarily identify ourselves with the opinions expressed.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE PROGRAMME.

DEAR EDITOR,—May I beg further space in which to reply to my critics of last week? Let me say, first, that in their distrust of politicians I am wholeheartedly with them, nor is there anything in which these gentry need closer watching than in their handling of adult suffrage. But a misinterpretation of our own principles is no necessary part of such watchfulness.

Mr. Coates considers that the organised political parties are more concerned about votes for men at the Front than for women at home, and therefore concludes, "Let the W.F.L. stick to its claim for the equal recognition of women." This equality is exactly what we are insisting on and he is objecting to, on the curious ground of human service being vague and emotional. It is difficult to imagine anything simpler or clearer than the claim that if soldiers and sailors are to be enfranchised for service, woman suffrage should be similarly based, and admittedly the Government can bring this about by granting the vote on a three-months' residential qualification. If the basis of the franchise for men is altered from property to service, the principles laid down in the W.F.L. "Objects" demand that women keep pace.

I would point out to Miss Neal that I said: "The demand [for a service franchise] carries with it the equivalent demand for women. This is simply the up-to-date form of asking for the vote 'as it is or may be granted to men.'" Miss Neal appears to be interested only "in the removal of the sex-barrier," which she says is the first necessity, and would presumably be satisfied if a Bill to enfranchise duchesses were carried simultaneously with manhood suffrage! I am as fully aware as Miss Neal of the dangers we run in the labour world from jealous trade unionists, but that is a reason for, not against, insisting that if a service franchise is given to men it must also be given to women. Sir John Simon, in linking our claim with that of the soldiers and sailors, is simply applying the principles embodied in our own "Objects," and it is one of the minor surprises of the day that opposition to his doing so should proceed from within the League. But to my mind their quarrel is wholly artificial and unnecessary, and I trust sincerely that the League as a whole will quickly fall into line with the general forward movement.

WINIFRED HOLIDAY.

Green, White, and Gold Fair.

It is hoped that now the holiday season is over members are working steadily for the Fair. They are reminded that the London Branches Council is holding fortnightly sewing meetings at the office under the direction of Mrs. Holmes. Particulars of these appear in THE VOTE.

Miss Ellen Terry has very kindly promised to open the Fair on November 24 if she is in England. The following are among the stalls already decided on, and the stall-holders will shortly be announced:—White, General, Toy, Home-made Provisions, Old Curiosity, VOTE (in memory of Mrs. Snow). The Nine Elms Settlement and various other societies have also taken stalls. Arrangements for the entertainments are in the capable hands of Mrs. Corner. Inquiries and offers of help should be addressed to Miss Mitchell (Hon. Sec., Fair Committee), at 144, High Holborn.

THEY SUPPORT US!

THE ELECTORAL CONFERENCE.

The following correspondence has passed between the Women's Freedom League and the Speaker:

The Right Hon. J. W. Lowther, M.P.,
Speaker's House, Palace of Westminster, S.W.
September 5, 1916.

SIR,—My League understands that you have the nomination of the delegates who will attend the Conference on September 26 to discuss the basis of electoral reform. My League desires to claim representation on that Conference as one of the large non-party suffrage organisations, and will be glad to hear from you whether such a delegate will be invited.—I have the honour to be, your obedient Servant,
(Signed) C. NINA BOYLE.

Campsea Ashe High House,
Wickham Market.

September 7, 1916.

MADAM,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, which shall be duly considered when the time comes for me to make the nominations and when the particular topics to be dealt with at the Conference are decided upon.—Yours faithfully,
(Signed) JAMES W. LOWTHER.

To Miss Nina Boyle.

September 11, 1916.

The Right Hon. J. W. Lowther, M.P.,
Campsea Ashe High House,
Wickham Market, Suffolk.

SIR,—Thank you for your answer to our communication of September 5.

I note you say that you will give our request for representation on the approaching Conference consideration "when the topics to be discussed have been decided on." I was under the impression that the idea of this Conference was accepted for the express purpose of discussing the basis of a new franchise and registration scheme, which does not seem to me to have much scope for other "topics." I trust that your statement does not foreshadow the possibility of a change of programme at the eleventh hour, which may have the result of ruling out the matter in which my League is solely interested—viz., the enfranchisement of women, the justice and desirability of which has so recently and cogently been set forth.

I should be greatly obliged if you would kindly allay the fear which the expression in your letter has given rise to—that the women's cause is to be subjected to yet another delay and deception.—I have the honour to be, your obedient Servant,
C. NINA BOYLE.

"Women in the Church."

"Women in the Church" was the subject of a powerful and illuminating sermon delivered in the George-street Congregational Church, Croydon, last Sunday evening by the Rev. Major Scott, M.A. Speaking from the words, "There is neither male nor female in Christ," the preacher pointed out how Christ had raised the dignity of womanhood, and how His teaching and intercourse with women was opposed to the curtailment of their liberty and influence in any sphere of life. Dealing with the difficulty of St. Paul's exhortation to women to keep silence in church, Mr. Scott explained that these words were addressed directly to the Christian Church at Corinth—a city with an evil reputation, and in which education among women very often implied immorality. Making a strong plea for the application of "uncommon common sense" in the study of the Bible, Mr. Scott protested against the idea that an instruction with regard to special circumstances should bind future generations under entirely different conditions. He spoke with warm appreciation of the great feminist movement, of women's advance in education and entrance into new spheres of labour, and insisted that it was folly on the part of the Church to deny them full scope for the exercise of their spiritual gifts. He acknowledged the valuable "spade work" done by women in every department of church work, and frankly admitted that he knew of no barrier which could reasonably hinder them from holding any positions they were individually qualified to occupy. He expressed the earnest hope that the Churches would utilise to the full the rich and varied gifts with which women are endowed. M. B. D.

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ABERYSTWITH CAMPAIGN.

The good work that the Women's Freedom League has done in Aberystwith during the past weeks is daily recognised both by residents and visitors, and there is every hope of a strong branch of the League being formed here in the near future. We must mention our good friend, Mrs. Tom James, 26, North Parade, one of the oldest residents in Aberystwith. Although her health prevented her attending the meetings, yet with her indomitable spirit, full of faith and courage, she wished to hear daily of our progress. Mrs. James has been the pioneer of many public movements in Aberystwith, and was for many years the personal friend of the late Sir John Gibson, one of the earliest advocates for Woman Suffrage in this part of Wales. At her final meeting Miss Anna Munro made a most eloquent appeal on behalf of the Woman's Movement, which was received with great applause and cheers. "Keep the flag flying" will be the motto of the Women's Freedom League until victory is ours.

THE VOTE is much appreciated and readily sold; 1,700 copies have been disposed of during the campaign. I gratefully acknowledge:—The Mayor, 5s.; Mr. Lloyd Thomas, 2s.; Mrs. Tear, 2s. Will a few other friends kindly send donations so that I can present a good balance-sheet to our treasurer? Please address: ALIX M. CLARK, The Hut, Newtown, Montgomery Boroughs.

Branch Notes.

Clapham.

A well-attended meeting was held at 15, Clapham Mansions, last Thursday evening. Mrs. Briggs was in the chair, and those present decided to help the Green, White, and Gold Fair in every way possible; to send letters to Cabinet Ministers and local Members of Parliament urging on them the necessity of the immediate enfranchisement of women; to hold a big public meeting in the district early in December; and to arrange a whist drive after Christmas, the profits of which were to be equally shared between the Freedom League Settlement and the Clapham branch. A letter was read from Mrs. E. M. Moore kindly consenting to become President of the Clapham branch, and we are also pleased to record one new member and one new associate. In future branch meetings will be held regularly on the second Thursday evening of each month, the next one being fixed for Thursday, October 12, at 48, Lynette-avenue, by kind permission of Mrs. H. Samuel.

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

On Friday, September 15, the sewing meeting will be held at Mrs. Foster's, Whitehouse, Heathurst-road, Sanderstead, from 3 to 5 p.m. Wanted, material to make up into children's garments, also articles for our autumn jumble sale.

Glasgow Suffrage Shop, 212, Bath-street.

On Monday, Miss Shennan, who can always draw and keep a crowd, addressed a meeting at Peel-street, Partick. On the same evening Miss Murray and Miss Semple spoke to an

Euston Theatre.

DEMONSTRATION

Sunday, October 8th, 6 p.m.

SPEAKERS:

Robert Williams.

Fred Bramley. Mrs. Barton.

Sylvia Pankhurst, and others.

Come and demand a Vote for every man and woman!

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 1180.

FRIDAY,
SEPT. 15,
1916.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

unusually large crowd at Wellington-street. All were unanimous in urging the Government to grant votes to women, as they are now or may be granted to men. All the literature was sold, and a good collection taken. Miss Murray, with Mrs. Smith in the chair, held a meeting at Dumbarton on Thursday. From the unanimous resolution, asking for the immediate enfranchisement of women, it is clear Miss Murray has converted Dumbarton, and now men as well as women are convinced that women must get the vote if they are to look for social improvement. Every copy of "THE VOTE" was sold, also many pamphlets.

Portsmouth.

The annual meeting of members will be held on Tuesday, September 19, at 7.30 p.m., at 17, Lombard-street. A report of the year's work will be read by the hon. secretary, and the hon. treasurer will give the financial report. Members are urged to attend, and are also reminded that annual subscriptions are now due. The work-parties for the November Fair will be resumed on Wednesday, September 27, at 17, Lombard-street, from 3 to 7 p.m.

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SKUNK MUFF, £5, a bargain;
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6 yards Green Alpaca, double width,
10s. 11d.; Blouse Length, Blue Silk,
4s. 11d.; Costume Length of Blue
Moiré, 35s.; Multi-Cooker, nearly new,
13s.; Baby's Matinée Coat and Bonnet,
7s. 6d., and a few other oddments.—
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LENGTH COAT, lined squirrel,
trimmed marmot; Muff and Hat to
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BLACK CLOTH COAT, full length,
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ship-lane, East Dulwich.

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The Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W.

"Mr. Noah's Particular Pets," exhibited in one of our windows, are proving a great attraction, and while the children go off in triumph with their dogs, rabbits, cats, &c., we are glad to know that in selling them we are helping village toy industries and some disabled soldiers. We are still waiting for the names of voluntary helpers who will come one night each week from 6 to 10 p.m., and hope we shall not have to wait much longer. Other special needs this week, in addition to the bedroom equipment mentioned last week, are three doormats, in view of wet and muddy weather, clothes-brushes, tablecloths (white and coloured), two large enamel bowls, large pastry and other boards, small teapots, and saucepans. Our recreation room is available for meetings in the afternoons, and by arrangement in the evenings, at moderate cost. We shall be grateful for more parcels for our jumble sale. Please send at once.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM
LEAGUE will hold Public Meet-
ings at the Caxton Hall, Westminster,
every Wednesday afternoon, at 3 o'clock.
October 4: Laurence Housman, Esq.,
"Hate's Coming of Age"; Mrs.
Despard. Chairman: Mrs. E. M.
Moore. 4.30. Tea, 6d.

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