

The War Paper for Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

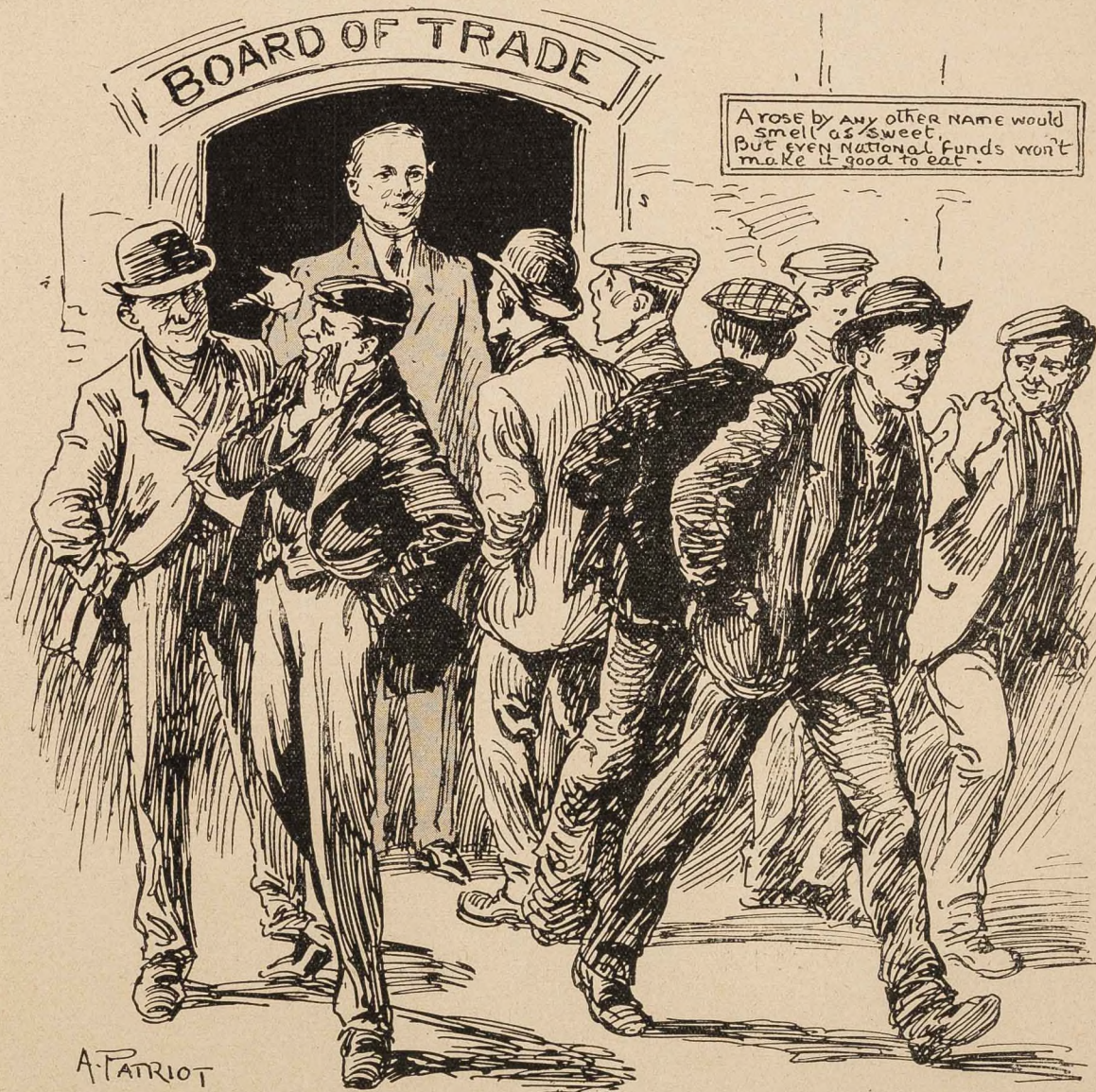
OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

VOL. VIII. (Third Series), No. 344.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1914.

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

"STREW ON HER ROSES, ROSES"



PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (to men applying for jobs in the Relief Works started to aid those thrown out of work through the War): We cannot offer you more than ten bob a week, my lads, but there will be roses in all the workrooms, and the walls will be tinted with blue.

CHORUS OF WORKING MEN: Not much! I *don't* think!

(The maximum wage offered in the new workrooms started by the Central Committee on Women's Employment is ten shillings a week. The "Times" reports: "A visitor to one of the workrooms says, 'The walls are softly tinted with blue, while bowls of roses supply bright colour and fragrance.'")

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

3, Adam Street, Strand, London, W.C. Telephone, Regent 5150 Colours: Purple, White and Orange

The At Home at the Eustace Miles restaurant on Wednesday evening last week was a grand success. A fine crowd of members and friends met together, and great enthusiasm was displayed over the determination of the Committee to keep the Suffrage flag flying through the war. It is hoped to hold more of these friendly gatherings during the winter.

ESSEX HALL MEETING

Readers are reminded that the U.S. will hold a public meeting in the large Essex Hall on Friday, October 16, at 8 p.m. Admission will be free; reserved seats, 1s. each, may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 3, Adam Street. (For speakers, see list of meetings below.)

A CHRISTMAS FAIR

A Christmas Fair with Suffrage speeches will be held by the U.S. early in December, the proceeds of which will be devoted to some fund for the alleviation of distress caused through the war. Further particulars will be announced next week. Meanwhile, will all those prepared to help communicate with Miss Brewster, Christmas Fair Secretary, at 3, Adam Street, who has kindly consented, in co-operation with Miss Putnam and Miss Benson, to organise the Fair?

NEW BOLTON BRANCH

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Crompton, 68, Shildon Street, Bolton

Formed only a week or so ago, the Bolton United Suffragists have already embarked upon active work, and, in addition to running different paper-selling pitches throughout the week, are now working up a big meeting for October 28, at which Miss Evelyn Sharp and Mr. H. D. Harben are to speak. This meeting is to be held in the Spinners' Hall, Bolton, and an urgent appeal is made to all sympathisers to make the meeting as successful as possible. This will be the first big suffrage meeting in Bolton since the outbreak of the war, and the proceeds will be given to propaganda work in the district.

The local members feel that co-operation between men and women is greatly needed in the suffrage fight there, and believe that this fact will commend the United Suffragists to the sympathy of Bolton suffragists.

AMERSHAM BRANCH

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Drinkwater, Fieldtop, Amersham-on-the-Hill

Mrs. B. Francks was in the chair at the members' meeting on Saturday, October 3, when it was decided that no public propaganda should be undertaken at present, but that funds should be raised so that this branch should be equipped and ready to start directly it is found expedient. For this purpose several members offered to give social evenings once a fortnight, at which a small charge will be made to each one attending, whether member or non-member. The first card party will be held by kind request at Mrs. Jackson's, St. Stephen's Hill Avenue, on Friday evening, October 9. Mrs. Frank Exell, of Beulah, suggested a gift competition, to take place before Christmas, particulars of which will be sent to members as early as possible. Will all members now taking our paper, VOTES FOR WOMEN, please send in their names to the Literature Secretary at once at above address?

U.S. MEETINGS

Indoor

October 16.—Large Essex Hall, London. Speakers: Mrs. Ben Webster, Mr. Laurence Housman, Miss Kitty Ennis, Rev. J. M. Maitland; Chair, Miss Evelyn Sharp. 8 p.m.

October 28.—Spinners' Hall, Bolton. Speakers: Mr. H. D. Harben, Miss Evelyn Sharp. 8 p.m.

Open-air

October 8.—Reformer's Tree, Marble Arch. Mr. C. Gray and others. 5 p.m.

Liverpool Street, Walworth Road. Miss B. Putnam, Miss E. Hickey, Mr. A. Mackinlay. 8.15 p.m.

October 12.—Heygate Street, Walworth Road. Miss A. Somers and Mrs. Walker. 8.15 p.m.

October 13th.—St. George's Circus, Walworth. Miss B. Putnam, Miss Kitty Ennis, Mr. P. C. Darby. 8.15 p.m.

October 14.—Kensington High Street. Mrs. Ayrton Gould. 11.30 a.m.

October 15.—Liverpool Street, Walworth. Miss S. Dransfield, Mr. E. R. Ranson. 8.15 p.m.

Badges

United Suffragist badges in the colours can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary in three sizes: Large enamel shields, 6d. each; small enamel shields, 9d. each; button badges, 2d. each.

"VOTES FOR WOMEN"

Paper-selling

The circulation of our paper is going up, largely, we believe, owing to the spirited endeavours of our paper-sellers, who are daily educating the public to see that, while a terrible war rages abroad, the greater and the older war against sweating and poverty and injustice has still to be fought at home by Suffragists. More paper-sellers are urgently needed for this good work, either to start new pitches of their own, or to work through one of the following Pitch Captains:—

LONDON

Oxford Street: Mrs. Masters, 28, Oakington Road, Maida Vale.

Oxford Circus: Mrs. Ibbotson Hutt, 12, Wharfedale Street, Redcliffe Square, S.W.

Corner of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road: Miss B. Putnam, 66, Walm Lane, Cricklewood.

Kensington High Street Station: Miss Morrison, 11, Addison Mansions, Blythe Road, W.

Wood Green High Street: Miss E. Beagley, 14, Windsor Road, Palmer's Green.

Ealing Broadway: Miss V. Crocker, 28, Woodfield Avenue, Ealing.

Strand: Hon. Sec., U.S., 3, Adam Street, Strand.

COUNTRY

Bolton: Mrs. Almond, Park View, Farnworth, Bolton.

Posters

The display of posters is being enthusiastically taken up by our readers and members. Will all those kind enough to undertake (1) to pay or arrange for the display of a poster at a railway bookstall or newsagent; (2) to inspect posters already displayed, either in London or the provinces, kindly communicate with the Publisher, VOTES FOR WOMEN, 4-7, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, E.C.4?

THE FUND

Most encouraging letters accompany the donations we have received towards the fund for the maintenance of VOTES FOR WOMEN and its staff. Mr. W. L. George, the well-known novelist and a Vice-President of the U.S., writes:—

"Last year when I became a Vice-President of the United Suffragists I sent you a small subscription. In the present circumstances I should like to increase it so far as I can afford, and have much pleasure in enclosing you a cheque for three times the amount. I leave it to you to decide whether this money goes to the Society or to VOTES FOR WOMEN, which I very strongly feel should be kept up, and for which I am going to do everything I can."

The Flag of All the Nations

Mrs. Mansell-Moulins sends us much encouragement, saying: "Good luck for the paper in the New Year! It does indeed deserve support, for it is always ready to try to right a wrong, and is full of noble thoughts from cover to cover. Never has there been a time when

it was so necessary to keep the suffrage flag (which is the flag of all nations) flying as to-day. Congratulations and best wishes."

Mrs. D. A. Thomas, also a Vice-President and known to all suffragists for her many services to the cause, has generously promised us £2 a month towards the "Votes for Women" Fund. This is a real service, as it enables us to count upon our resources beforehand.

"VOTES FOR WOMEN" FUND

Table with 4 columns: Name, £ s. d., Name, £ s. d. Includes entries for Miss E., Newcombe, Harriet, etc., totaling £214 7 7 1/2.



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CONTENTS

Table with 2 columns: Item, PAGE. Includes Our Cartoon, United Suffragists, The Outlook, Mr. Asquith's Conversion, etc.

DEDICATION

To the brave women who to-day are fighting for freedom: to the noble women who all down the ages kept the flag flying and looked forward to this day without seeing it: to all women all over the world, of whatever race, or creed, or calling, whether they be with us or against us in this fight, we dedicate this paper.

THE OUTLOOK

The toll of sorrow and economic distress mounts up as the European calamity grows in intensity. Every day the casualty lists grow longer and more homes are desolated; every day a larger crowd of women wait at the War Office for news of the "missing," from whom news may never come again. The nation is stirred to its depths, and if this terrible conflict has produced any good thing at all, it is that out of those depths has come a profound acknowledgment of the sufferings of women in war time and a glimmering of an understanding of their sufferings at all times.

The Atrocities in Belgium

We have always held that allowance must be made for exaggeration in the accounts that reach us of atrocities committed by soldiers abroad. But it is impossible to ignore the horrors contained in the moderate and reasoned account given by Mr. Whitehouse, M.P., of his visit of inquiry to Belgium. In it he speaks of "an entire nation in a state of famine," and of inhabitants of sacked villages "wandering about the country panic-stricken and starving." One sentence of his report, which appeared in the Times last Saturday, is especially poignant. "In the villages," he says, all ordinary life was arrested, the women and children standing or sitting dumb and patient by the roadside.

Even politicians must soon cease to wonder that women demand the right to seek a better solution of international differences than the stupid and brutal one of war.

Suffrage in the New Session

Several straws show that the wind is blowing in the right direction so far as the speedy enfranchisement of women in the new Session is concerned. The Herald is of our opinion in this matter. "By the way," it observes, Parliament has decided that in the present crisis it cannot deal with party questions. We have always been told that the Suffrage is a non-party question. Why not then, in these times of agreement, pass this non-party measure when the House comes together again?

Cabinet Ministers, to judge by their utterances during the past week, are ready to follow this advice. With Mr. Asquith's expressed desire to make this country "the worthy home of the best traditions of British liberty" we deal in our leading article. Mr. Lloyd George at Cardiff as frankly took up the Suffrage standpoint when he gave, as one of the things to be warred against, the barbarous, brutal doctrine that the strong can only be expected to concede justice when it is to their interest to do so.

We look to both these gentlemen to put their words into practice as soon as Parliament re-assembles.

Keeping the Flag Flying in Ireland

In spite of precautions taken to secure the exclusion of political opponents from the Prime Minister's Dublin meeting (no women were admitted at all except those intimately connected

with the speakers) a Suffragist managed to obtain admittance to the overflow meeting, where he bravely heckled Mr. Birrell on the question of votes for Irishwomen. Outside the meeting, Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington and Mrs. Connery, after distributing Suffrage leaflets, attempted to address the crowd, and were immediately arrested, though subsequently released without being charged. Two large meetings were held on and near the same spot by Labour men, none of whom was arrested. This is another proof, for those who need it, that Home Rule has been granted to Irish men alone.

The Chaos of "Relief"

The Manchester Town Councillor who complained recently that the public saw how the national funds were increasing, but they did not see how much was being spent in relief, expressed the views of most people who are in touch with the distress now resulting from the war. We publish on page 14 a further communication from a member of a relief committee in one of the poorer districts of London, which is a revelation of the official failure to administer the Funds with adequacy or generosity. Similar accounts reach us from other districts of the niggardly amount allotted from the Prince of Wales's Fund, of the delay in granting relief and in starting relief works, of impertinent and unnecessary investigation into the private affairs of those who are helped. The latest proposal, to treat donations from the Fund as Poor Law relief and to strike off the children of parents thus assisted from the free dinners list, is, if it be true, a veritable scandal.

What is a Fair Wage?

It is sincerely to be hoped that steps may be taken to secure a living wage for the women employed in the workshops started in connection with Queen Mary's Work for Women Fund. A maximum of ten shillings a week, from which at least threepence a day is deducted for dinner and tea, is not a living wage for a single woman, and for a woman with children is tragically inadequate. To set such a standard in the Queen's workrooms has, besides, the disastrous effect of keeping down women's wages elsewhere, and we cannot believe that this is the wish of Her Majesty, who has shown herself throughout the friend of working women, anxious to help them with intelligence as well as human kindness. The East London Federation of the Suffragettes has, we are informed, written to ask the Queen to receive a deputation of working women on the subject.

Women Sweated by the Government

If the facts which have been communicated to the London Management Committee of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors and Tailoresses are accurate, women are making Army vests in one Woolwich factory at 1s. 10 1/2 d. a dozen; and at Plymouth it is reported that khaki uniforms are being made complete for 1s. 6d. and breeches for 7 1/2 d. What humbug it is to flaunt National Funds in our faces for relieving the distress which would be to a large extent unnecessary if the Government paid its women workers a decent wage! If women could back their trade unions with political power—but no, we will try not to say it too often.

Pensions for the Heroes' Widows

Suffragists have repeatedly pointed out the need for widows' pensions such as exist in most

of the countries where women are enfranchised. The war comes with its devastating results and finds the Government quite unprepared to deal with this problem now presented in a doubly acute form. Since Mr. Asquith's non-committal announcement in the House at the end of the Session nothing definite has been decided as to the amount of the pensions to be paid to the widows of soldiers and sailors, though the war, in which these women had no voice, is making widows every hour of the day. Mr. Barnes, M.P., in a communication to the Daily Citizen, says in reference to this crying scandal:

"The Government will do just as much and no more than they are forced to do."

If the war succeeds in convincing even one Labour member of a political truth that we have been trying to din into the ears of the Labour Party for years, perhaps it will not have been wholly fought in vain.

New Occupations for Women

The announcement that women are being employed, by one West End firm at least, as lift attendants, points at last to the weakening of the prejudice in this country against employing women to do the work of men who have gone to the front. The Women's Emergency Corps, who held a remarkably successful meeting in the Kingsway Hall last week, have been fighting this prejudice since they began at the first outbreak of war to mobilise women for the purpose of carrying on the work of the country, and very slowly and grudgingly the State is beginning to acknowledge their services. Miss Beatrice Harraden gives on another page of this issue an account of one branch of their activities afterwards taken over by the Government. The Waste-Food Department started by Miss Carey has now become the National Food Association. A third scheme—making by women for the Christmas market—is being taken up in other parts of the country. The absurdity of it all is that women should have to fight merely for the right to show what they can do!

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence

On Saturday, October 17, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, who only recently resigned the joint editorship of this paper, will sail in the Campania for New York, where, by the express invitation of the women of that city, she is to address a meeting in the Carnegie Hall on October 30, with Mrs. Perkins Gilman. This meeting is being held in connection with a special campaign to show the vital relationship between women and war, and to put forward the woman's point of view about war, which hitherto the protagonists both of peace and war have entirely failed to do. The two practical results aimed at are the right to send women's representatives to the Hague Peace Conference and the assurance that, when terms of peace are drawn up at the end of the present war, women's interests shall not be ignored. Our readers will agree with us that no better emissary from British Suffragists could have been chosen for such a purpose than Mrs. Lawrence, a special interview with whom will appear in next week's VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Women and Peace

It is, of course, easier for a neutral country than for one of the belligerent nations to organise a peace movement while the war is going on. But all suffragists who, like the U.S., are keeping the suffrage flag flying, are also keeping alive the ideals that make for peace and not for war. In this connection we are interested to learn that the Free Church League for Woman Suffrage has issued a declaration in which the signatories affirm their refusal "to believe evil reports of our enemy unless substantiated after reliable investigation," their consideration of "a settlement that will prevent war again," and their belief that "a great safeguard in peace would be the influence of women in the councils of the State." Any one may sign the declaration, which is published at the offices of the Society, 13, Bream's Buildings, Chancery Lane.

DON'T FORGET to write and tell us if you have any difficulty in obtaining "VOTES FOR WOMEN"

Subscriptions to the paper should be sent to The Publisher, VOTES FOR WOMEN, 4-7, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, E.C.

The terms are, post free, 6s. 6d. annual subscription, 3s. 3d. for six months inside the United Kingdom, 8s. 8d. (2dols. 25cents) and 4s. 4d. (1dol. 15cents) abroad, payable in advance.

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS PUBLIC MEETING IN THE LARGE ESSEX HALL

ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, at 8 p.m.
(Doors open 7.30)

Chair:
Miss EVELYN SHARP

Speakers:
Mrs. BEN WEBSTER
Mr. LAURENCE HOUSMAN
Rev. JOHN M. MAILLARD
Miss KITTY ENNIS

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Telephone:—Holborn 5880 (2 lines).

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1914.

MR. ASQUITH'S CONVERSION

It is sweet to overcome the enemy by force. Every soldier's heart leaps when he feels, as though by instinct, that the opposing lines are beginning to shake. "They run! They run!" To how many a soldier have the words brought inexpressible joy! But for the general and for his country there is a sweeter moment still. It comes when a party is seen approaching, headed by a white flag. They bear a message from the enemy's headquarters. It states that the opposing general and his Government recognise the uselessness of further resistance. At the beginning of the conflict they believed their cause to be just, and they have maintained it to the utmost of their power. But now they are compelled to yield, not merely to superior forces, but to fresh knowledge which proves that they can now abandon their original claim without loss of reputation for reason or courage. "For the sake of humanity, therefore," the message proceeds, "and to avoid useless bloodshed, we are willing to accept an armistice with a view to ultimate peace."

For all who have the highest interests of their country at heart, that is the noblest moment of victory. It is an offer they gladly accept. They will not carp at the enemy, nor sneer at his so-called "reputation for reason or courage." They will not be for ever dwelling on the past and pointing to the obtuseness which remained blind to common knowledge before the conflict began, and now seeks to excuse itself by calling the knowledge fresh. They will draw a merciful oblivion over the enemy's old perversity, over his obstinate unreason, and the cruel violence from which they have suffered so long. Like heaven itself, they will rejoice over the sinner that repents, and accept with thankfulness the renewed evidence that right reason, supported by indomitable will, ultimately prevails.

Mr. Asquith's speech at Cardiff last Friday appears to us a parallel to the party bearing a white flag. As such we gladly accept it. It seems to us impossible that after that speech the Prime Minister can maintain the obdurate hostility with which he has hitherto conducted the campaign against us. In that speech he laid down general principles which overwhelm the arguments of our bitterest opponents, and he pictured ideals of righteousness which can never be realised without the triumph of our cause. We say nothing of treacherous friends and most intimate enemies in the Cabinet or other parties. Mr. Asquith has always stood forward as our open and professed opponent—almost the only opponent who counted. And yet his speech supplies us with an armoury of arguments. If it is not an offer of peace, it is a surrender at discretion. If it is not a conversion, it is a proof that prejudice and not reason keeps him an infidel.

We will but recall one passage from the address which Cardiff found so inspiring:—

"Let us gladly acknowledge," said Mr. Asquith, "that the world is just as ready as ever it was, and no part of it readier than the British Empire, to understand and to respond to moral issues. The new school of German thought has been teaching for a generation past that in the affairs of nations there is no code of ethics. According to their doctrine force, and nothing but force, is the test and the measure of right."

Upon that doctrine he went on to pour indignation scorn. With all our hearts we join in his scorn and indignation. That doctrine has from the first been the chosen argument of all Mr. Asquith's strongest supporters in his enmity towards women's claim to political freedom. Mr. MacCallum Scott, Professor Dicey, the editor of the *Spectator*, Mrs. Humphry Ward, and a gang of other enemies—it is upon the doctrine that force, and nothing but force, is the test and measure of right that they have all relied. What a blow for them now that their leader throws them over! He cuts their argument from beneath their feet. He pours indignant scorn upon their German theorising. He says it may be good enough for Germany's home consumption, but there is no market for it within the boundaries of the British Empire. He believes, as we have steadily maintained, that the British Empire responds to moral issues, and we have never doubted that the chief contribution to the moral issues of to-day is the political emancipation of women. He says that we in England, "old-fashioned people as we are," believe that the weak have rights, and that freedom for its own sake is as well worth fighting for to-day as it ever was in the past. If those beliefs are old-fashioned, we are old-fashioned, too. We also believe in the rights of that half of the population which, for its supposed weakness, Mr. Asquith's followers have excluded from the general rights. We also believe that freedom for its own sake is as well worth fighting for to-day as it ever was in the past. The women who have fought for it to-day have now the inspiring assurance that the Prime Minister of the kingdom stands upon their side.

Thus to have overthrown the German doctrine of force, so eagerly inculcated by Germanising anti-suffragists among us, would alone have made the speech memorable, and proved a contribution to our cause worthy of so distinguished a convert. In our support he also produced other arguments which we will retain for future use. Now we have only space to welcome as our own Mr. Asquith's ideal of freedom and his vision of our people's future destiny. He admits there have been blunders in the past, and that present conditions are far short of the ideal which he contemplates in common with ourselves. We sadly admit it, too, but are willing to forget his Government's blunders in the past. All the more readily we join with him in his definition of our aim: "To raise," as he said, "within the Empire the level of common opportunity, to draw closer the bond of affection and confidence between its parts, and to make our dominion everywhere the worthy home of the best traditions of British liberty."

We also desire "a great world-wide, peace-loving partnership"—"a dominion buttressed by the pillars of Liberty and Law." Does Mr. Asquith consider that women are to be excluded from that level of common opportunity, from that closer bond of affection and confidence, and from the best traditions of British liberty? Does he consider that women are to have no share in that world-wide, peace-loving partnership, to give no help in buttressing the dominion by the pillars of Liberty and Law? After his speech it is impossible for us to believe so. It only remains now for him to supplement his words by the noble deed of ending a long and embittered conflict by the one possible measure of peace.

WITH THE REFUGEES

The Station Work of the Women's Emergency Corps

By Beatrice Harraden

An interesting branch of the Women's Emergency Corps is the Interpreting Department, which, under the able guidance of Miss Decima Moore and Miss Vulliamy, has done and is doing admirable work. Immediately on the formation of the Corps a large number of women volunteered their services, most of them conversant with several languages—French, German, Italian, Russian, Dutch, Hungarian, Danish, Swedish, and Flemish. It is always marvellous how the right people rise up, as though by magic, to the right call. One of the most pressing necessities at the moment is, for instance, a familiarity with the Flemish language. You would not have thought that Flemish scholars could be readily found. But out they came from their sequestered corners in this wonderful London, and all of these women hurried to the rescue of despairing peasants and equally despairing helpers. For the Flemish tongue is an elusive and baffling vehicle of conversation. You think because you catch a German word which is familiar to you, or a Dutch expression, or a French phrase, that you have landed your fish. But you haven't at all. Your career of cleverness comes to an untimely end, and all that is left to you is to sigh with relief at the approach of the Flemish interpreter.

Practical and Humane Work

A company of the Corps interpreters, with their messengers, attended from the beginning of the war at the various stations—Liverpool Street, Charing Cross, and Victoria—helping to see after the refugees, English as well as Continental, changing their money for them, if they had any, advising them about hotels, boarding houses, or lodgings, from an approved list; offering to many of them homes and rooms provided by the Corps, and taking many of them to their actual destinations in motor-cars provided by the Corps, either through the kindness of members or through the generosity of one or two motor companies. Or, in many other cases, they have been seen safely across London to any other station if they were en route for other parts of England. In this practical and humane work, in the early days before the Government had taken over the task, the Women's Emergency Corps collaborated with the Belgian Refugees Committee and the National Vigilance Society; while the American Women's Committee attended to the Americans, and the Roman Catholic Committee and the Women's Freedom League also did splendid service.

Amazing and Bewildering Scenes

This station work, now a stupendous labour, increasing in its proportion as the devastation of Belgium deepens and widens, was from the very first a bigger and more valuable undertaking than anyone could realise except from actual experience. The scenes at the stations were amazing and bewildering. Outside the barriers of the platforms and on the pavements in the street hundreds of spectators herded together in expectancy and sympathy. On the platforms, awaiting the arrival of a train, the authorised committees, their interpreters and messengers, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, constables, detectives (some of whom one recognised!), Red Cross nurses, and certainly a spy here and there hanging around. Imagine to yourself the arrival of a train, full to overflowing of people of all countries and all classes, some of them with no money at all, others with a very little, most

of them not knowing where they are going to for the night, or any night—indeed, numbers of them with no knowledge whatsoever of English, but possessed of one idea only, that at least in England they would be safe, and that the lives of their dear little ones would be secure from the ruthlessness of the Germans. So they have started out with their children and their hand luggage, and the peasants with their children and their bundles and a few possessions hastily gathered together, a saucepan sticking out here, or a doll, disreputable but dear, emerging there—an international signal for sympathy to which the most hardened of us would hasten to respond. These sorrowful people, many of them with nerves racked by the noise of the bombardment of their towns, and worn out with the vicissitudes of the long journey, have been received and taken charge of in a most kind and helpful manner; and I shall always remember their faces, grief-stricken it is true, but lit up with an expression of relief and gratitude, mingled with wonder, at the kindness.

"Marian"

One old Belgian lady, over eighty years of age, specially took my fancy. She and her two daughters had very little money, not enough to pay their way for more than a day or two at the very cheapest boarding house, and they had not the barest idea what to do or where to go. "Marian" had not been out of her home for years—I was going to say millions of years, so old did she look. But she was very brave and patient, and sat in the waiting-room, which was a seething mass of refugees, with tears streaming down her cheeks, and her hands raised from time to time in eloquent though silent apprecia-

tion of the tragedy of the scene, and with no sign of selfish insistence that she should be attended to before the others. When her turn came to go to some haven for the night, she was almost carried along by some brick of an American man, who sprang from nowhere to help her; and with further aid (which was necessary, for Marian was by no means emaciated) she was hoisted into a char-à-banc en route for the Crystal Palace, where many hundreds of beds had been prepared for refugees. There she sat, a dignified but pleased heroine, bowing to the cheering of that immense and sympathetic crowd, and saying at intervals, "Vive l'Angleterre."

The Children

I could fill many pages with descriptions of the harrowing pictures and details of the separate incidents of domestic disaster. The little children, so tired and yet so happy in their merciful unconsciousness of sorrow, appealed most strongly to everyone on duty there. In the midst of all the claims on his caution, his time and his close attention, I saw the National Vigilance Secretary brandishing a banana for this child, a biscuit for that little one, and it is safe to say that Belgian dolls were taken as much care of as Belgian children, and that Boy Scouts competed most successfully with the women of the Emergency Corps and other societies in carrying the babies with a tenderness worthy of the gentlest mother. All these personal touches are of necessity gone since the Government accepted the duty of meeting the refugees and providing for their housing and welfare; but it is good to think that in those first days of fear and panic, when hundreds were fleeing from Malines, Liège, Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp, the Women's Emergency Corps instantly took a giant's share of the formidable responsibility of dealing with one of the tragic outcomes of this awful war.

NEW BOOKS

"CHOICE"

This is a curiously unequal book. The humour in it is delicious, as readers of *VOTES FOR WOMEN* who remember Miss Daniel's delightful contributions to its pages do not need to be reminded; so are the character studies of the heroine's father and mother, and, indeed, of all the very human people who come into the story. The idea, too, is good—that of the struggle in the mind and soul of a girl with brains who has found her own faith unsatisfying, is attracted enormously by Roman Catholicism, yet held back by the racial prejudices of centuries. The book merely fails as a book—as a novel, we should rather say—because it has no particular beginning or ending. It is a chapter out of somebody's development; and as such presents many attractions to the student of men and women. And there are sympathetic little allusions to the suffrage movement which are made cleverly without conveying the impression of having been dragged in.

WAR AND THE KITCHEN†

We cannot really find very much in Miss Laurie's excellent little compilation of recipes that would not be useful in time of peace, though it has a red cross on the cover, and is called "A War Cookery Book for the Sick and Wounded." Without being sick or wounded

*"Choice." By Mary Samuel Daniel. (London: Burns and Oates, Price 2s. 6d. net.)
†"A War Cookery Book for the Sick and Wounded." Compiled by Jessie M. Laurie. (London: T. Werner Laurie, Price 6d. net.)

BOOKS RECEIVED

"The Flute of Arcady." By Kate Horn. (London: Stanley Paul, Price 6s.)
"The Secrets of the German War Office." By Armgaard Karl Graves, late Spy to the German Government. (London: T. Werner Laurie, Price 2s. net.)
"The Englishwoman." October. (London: Evans Bros. Price 1s. net.)
"The Metamorphoses of Sex." By Frances Swiney. (London: League of Isis, Price 7d. net.)
"National Food Reform Association, 6th Annual Report." (178, St. Stephen's House, S.W. Price 6d.)
"Wars and Capitalism." Reprinted from *Freedom*. By Peter Kropotkin. (London: Freedom Press, Price 1d.)
"The War." By Christabel Pankhurst. A Speech delivered at the London Opera House on September 7, 1914. (W.S.P.U., Lincoln's Inn House, Kingsway, W.C. Price 1d.)

CORRESPONDENCE

OUR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS

A Public Scandal

To the Editors of VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Dear Editors,—As one who by working through the Trade Union movement, has for many years endeavoured to serve the cause of the nation's children, and especially as one who has by experience learned that the right of the children to a childhood will never be recognised until the women of the nation have won their right to serve the children of the nation, I should be grateful if you would kindly allow me to bring to the notice of your readers a question of vital importance to tens of thousands of London children, and also to the large number of workers who are suffering from unemployment at the present time.

When, as was to be expected, unemployment is largely on the increase, as a consequence of the war, it is gratifying to note that there is a general consensus of opinion that work is better than charity, and that local authorities should at once put in hand works of public utility.

Now in London at the present time there are 124 denominational schools which have been condemned by the Board of Education, and for which the L.C.C. is responsible. The total accommodation of those schools is 54,545. The facts of the case cover some forty pages of an L.C.C. Report for May 26 (No. 33), and reveal a condition of things highly discreditable to the richest city in the world. In thirteen London schools there are no playgrounds whatever, while in quite a number "the children play in the tiny yards containing the offices." In one school known as "The Holy Family," the boys spend the recreation time in the street, the girls in the corridor or in the offices, "which are very near the school, and at times an unpleasant smell pervades the corridor." In one case the number of closets work out at one for forty children, in another at one for sixty. In one school a "boys' urinal is five feet from a class-room window"; in another, an infant school, "the offices open from a class."

Darkness owing to the close proximity of high buildings is quite common. Even in an infants' school we find: "The room facing the church is very dark." Indeed, the infants' schools in the Report show a most pitiable condition of things. Again and again one reads of defective lighting, defective ventilation, and no room for play. In a babies' room "the desks are so near as to prevent the teacher from moving freely among the children"; in another "the cupboard containing the babies' hats and cloaks is not properly ventilated." In yet one more, "the classes go by turns for play into a small yard containing the offices."

Structural defects are common, and altogether

the Report reveals a condition of things which call for strong militant action from all women who have at heart the well-being of the children and the credit of the Empire. In some seventeen months from now we shall have another L.C.C. election. Speaking with a wide knowledge of education politics in London, gained as a member of the late London School Board, and also as an education propagandist in the Trade Union movement—I say deliberately that it is only in the women's movements that I can see any possibility of a strong demand being made that the L.C.C. should take steps to replace the 124 condemned schools by up-to-date school buildings.—Yours, &c.,

M. BRIDGES ADAMS.

Bebel House, Working Women's College.

"VOTES FOR WOMEN"

To the Editors of VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Dear Editors,—From time to time during the past few months of grave national anxiety, I have been desirous of expressing the gratitude, which I know very many Suffragists are feeling, to the United Suffragists for their public-spirited action in maintaining, through these dark and tragic times, VOTES FOR WOMEN as an organ of the cause. This gratitude is spontaneous. I believe, among all those who realise that it would be a greater calamity if, when the war is over, and the pent-up concern for women's enfranchisement has again flooded the land, there should be no VOTES FOR WOMEN to articulate our needs and our demands.

For two things are to my mind obvious. First, that the concern for civic justice to women is not diminished, but merely pent-up during the "present distress," and that, at the end of the war, it will flood society again, and all the more because it will flow with that greater force which pent-up waters always exhibit when finally let loose. Secondly, that the war will not lessen, but will increase and extend the need for the enfranchisement of women. (I forbear to expatiate upon this thought.)

When that hour comes, and with it the service of hope, both for the nation as a whole and for women in particular, how glad we shall all be that this journal has maintained its living virtues for the truth, and, in the period of darkness, its illuminating faith!

It is for these reasons I venture to congratulate the United Suffragists upon their public spirit in this matter. May VOTES FOR WOMEN flourish!—Yours, &c.,

F. LEWIS DONALDSON.

St. Mark's Vicarage, Leicester.

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THE WAR AND THE HOME

RELIEF?

More Cases of Destitution

(By a Member of a Relief Committee)

The mockery of administering relief in the name of the Prince of Wales's Fund still proceeds. In the district East of London where I live only £100 has been assigned from the Fund, necessitating the shameful maximum of 3s. 6d. per adult, 1s. 6d. per child, or 10s. per family thus "relieved." A duty assigned to me as a member of one of the relief sub-committees was to visit twice a week certain persons in receipt of relief. A merciful chairman reduced this to a weekly visit. Presumably the powers that be consider that 3s. 6d. weekly needs auditing twice a week.

A Sufferer Through the War

The following sad instance of how women are suffering through the war came to light during last week's investigation:—

K. H.—An unmarried woman of 57. In her young days she was a tie-maker, and managed to save a sum sufficient to set up a tiny confectionery shop. Prices of sugar and other materials rose on account of the war, and the spending power of the district shrank almost to nothing. This poor soul had to close her business, and is now living in a single room, for which she pays 3s. a week. Her sight is deficient, which prevents her from sewing; her age is against her for charring, even if she could get it. She is without any resources whatever, and her failure is the direct outcome of the war. The relief committee recommended her case to the executive, and there is a possibility that she will receive 3s. 6d. per week (the maximum

allowed) from the relief funds. When this woman applied for help one of the committee asked her whether she thought she could manage on 3s. 6d. The woman tried to smother her tears, and said it would be a help—but she must eat. Think of it. Sixpence a week to buy food, clothes, light, and coal! This pitiful tale of a woman who has worked hard to support herself all her life and is now stranded and starving is only one of several cases to be found in the district.

A Technical Quibble

F. G.—This woman is suffering from lung trouble. There are three children. One has tuberculosis of the spine, and has to wear instruments; the second child has severe rheumatism; and the third child is delicate. None of the children are being fed at school. The rent is 6s. per week. The husband works at a boot factory, and on account of the war has been put on half-time, and is now earning 12s. 6d. per week. The application for assistance from the Prince of Wales's Fund was refused "because the man is still in work." Evidently 6s. 6d. is considered sufficient to feed, clothe, buy coal and light, and pay insurance for two adults and three sickly children! If the Prince of Wales's Fund was formed to assist distress cases caused by the war this family surely are entitled to assistance.

Mrs. W.—This woman's husband also works in a boot factory, and is now on half-time and earning 15s. per week. There are four children under ten, none of whom are being fed at school. Rent is 8s. An application for relief was refused because the man is "still in work." I suppose it is in-

tended that this little family should wait until the man's work is quite gone and the home sold up; then they may get a maximum of 10s. per week.

A Phantom Workroom

H. J.—A machinist, whose case I have mentioned before, applied on September 7 for work or help from the relief fund. A fortnight later she was recommended to the Queen Mary's Committee. Up to the time of writing the local Queen Mary's Committee has not yet commenced activities. This case also is not an isolated one. Several machinists have applied for relief, and they have, after considerable delay, been recommended to Queen Mary's Committee.

Stretching 8/6

Mrs. P.—A widow and a machinist. She lost her work through the war, and has an old mother and father dependent on her except for the father's Old Age Pension. Previously they have had lodgers, but all have left since the war, and they cannot get others. This woman applied for relief, and after considerable delay was graciously granted 3s. 6d. per week. This sum is hopelessly inadequate, especially when one considers that not only have they to buy food, clothes, light, coal, and pay rent, but if this woman tries to get work she either has to trudge twelve miles to her workshop or spend 4d. a day on fares. A. W.

THE PERFECT PARENT

A correspondent writing to the *Times* states that in cases where the wives of soldiers are known to drink, the relief given by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association is paid in kind and not in cash. We have

nothing to say as to the wisdom of this course except that it demands considerable wisdom on the part of an inspector which is sometimes neither wise nor kind. But it is worth considering what would happen if a man who drinks were to be paid his wages in groceries instead of money. For we must remember that the relief given to the soldier's wife is her wage from the State, and we can never forget that it is only mothers and not fathers who are expected to be perfect parents.

The Man's Sphere

Miss Harraden, in her account (on page 13) of the Belgian refugees, speaks of the Boy Scouts who minded their babies. Surely this should disfranchise them when they reach the age at which they could vote? For have we not been told for half a century that it is woman's business to mind the baby and that is why she cannot vote?

The War Babies

We commented recently on the plight of those mothers who, not being married to the fathers of their children (often for reasons that would not exist in wealthier circles), could not claim separation allowances or seek relief through the ordinary channels when the men went to the front. The War Babies' and Mothers' League, we are glad to learn, works especially among such mothers, looking after the expectant mothers, providing them with work, food, or clothes, and arranging for the babies to be adopted if this is wished. We hope this human comradeship among women will kill the old slander that women are harder than men upon the unmarried mother.