

THE VOTE,
JANUARY 14, 1916.
ONE PENNY.

The Empire and More Men (C. S. Bremner).

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, JAN. 14, 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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OUR POINT OF VIEW.

THE POLITICAL LULL.

The House of Lords has made no further progress with the Bill for the Prolongation of this Parliament, and still keeps its whip cracking to make the Prime Minister jump through the Compulsion hoop. It is obvious that if the Military Service Bill can be delayed until the Parliament Bill is law, Mr. Asquith will find the situation much easier. The Lords hold the whip hand for the present; and if the situation were not so fraught with danger and tragedy, it would be entertaining to watch the duel of wits and to wonder what trick may be found, in all the bag of political tricks, to give the advantage once more to the Old Parliamentary Hand who has shown himself such an adept at saving party situations and skating on thin political ice. The public should by now be expecting to hear of another pledge. It is surely time one were forthcoming.

COOKING FOR CAMPS.

The Women's Freedom League, some time in 1914, made an offer to the War Office to be allowed to take over the cooking and dealing with the rations in one camp, so as to show what expert women could do in the way of preventing waste and improving the feeding. The offer was made in detail, and was declined; the War Office appointed inspectors to inquire into "waste," and the L.C.C. was instructed to train men cooks for convalescent camps. Now, we call attention to the extract from *The Times* in another column, which shows that the work we offered to undertake in 1914 was undertaken by Lady Londonderry and the "Women's Legion" towards the end of 1915, and that the saving has been just as we thought. We do not know why our League's offer was refused and Lady Londonderry's smiled on. It could not be because

we were militant; because Lady Londonderry was the leader of the rebel women in Ulster and helped with the gun-running. It cannot be that the Women's Legion could guarantee greater efficiency in organisation. It can only be that social and political influence, despite House of Commons indignation, is still a pronounced feature of official mismanagement. Nevertheless, we join *The Times* in enthusiasm for the new venture, and wonder whether that Penny Dreadful would have waxed so eloquent about our success had we been allowed to do the work.

A WOMAN'S NATIONALITY.

A scandalous story comes from one of our Middlesbrough members, whose husband is a German. Unlike most naturalised Germans, he took the trouble, when he naturalised in this country in 1883, to denaturalise, and to secure from the King of Prussia his expatriation papers. This is a formality which, so far as we know, has not been observed by the gentlemen who have been placed on the King's Privy Council, nor by that other gentleman, an officer in the Army, whose father was Messrs. Krupp's agent in London, and who was allowed to change his name to an English name during the war, and was sent to France to consult with Headquarters about the supplies of munitions to our troops and our Allies. Yet, despite his honourable precautions, the husband of our Middlesbrough member has been hounded out of his business and reduced to dire need, in spite of the friendship and confidence of the other business men in Middlesbrough and elsewhere. But this is not the worst. While his son is serving with the British forces, his daughter was working in the Education Department. The local Education Committee has hounded her out of her job. We want

to know why the son is not also hounded out of his? He, it appears, British son of a naturalised British subject, may risk his life; his services are not rejected. The sister is not to be allowed to serve. What is the difference in nationality between the son and daughter of this unfortunate gentleman; and why is he treated differently from Sir Edgar Speyer and Mr. Reichwald?

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 144, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

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HEADQUARTERS NOTES.

Members' Meeting.

In view of the forthcoming Joint Conference of Suffragists, it is hoped that we shall have a good rally of members this (Friday) evening at our offices, when the attitude to be taken by our delegates will be discussed. The chair will be taken by Mrs. Mustard at 7 o'clock, and light refreshments can be obtained beforehand in our club-room.

Lecture on Poland.

The lantern lecture to be held at the Ashburton Club, 28, Red Lion-square, W.C., on Monday evening, January 24, will be of special interest, and we hope our readers will support us well by coming to hear Mdlle. Czaplicka speak on "Poland, Past and Present." The chair will be taken by Mrs. Despard at 7 o'clock. Tickets are now on sale at our offices at 1s. (numbered and reserved) and 6d.

Wednesday Afternoon Meetings.

Wednesday afternoon, January 26, at 3.30, we shall begin again our weekly meetings at Caxton Hall, the speakers being Mrs. Despard and Miss Nina Boyle, with Mrs. Tanner in the chair; Wednesday, February 2, Mrs. Aldridge will speak on "Our Retreat from Serbia," the chair being taken by Miss A. A. Smith; and on Wednesday, February 9, Miss Beatrice Kent, who has recently returned from America, will speak on "My Journeys Across the American Continent, and what I learnt of Suffrage and Suffragists," the chair being taken by Miss Nina Boyle.

Sunday Lectures.

Sunday afternoon, February 13, at the Bijou Theatre, Miss Clara Reed will give a dramatic recital on Ibsen's masterpiece, "The Pretenders," at 4 o'clock, and Sunday, February 27, Mdlle. Zabelle Boyajian will lecture on "Armenian Art and Literature." Tickets for these lectures can be obtained from our office.

F. A. UNDERWOOD.

THE OFFICE BURGLARS.

Two men, Smith, a shoemaker, and Mays, a carman, were brought up at Marlborough-street Police-court on January 5, charged upon their own confession with breaking and entering the first floor at 144, High Holborn on the evening of December 17. Miss Underwood and Dr. Knight prosecuted. The prisoners were sent to the London Sessions.

On January 11, at Clerkenwell, both men pleaded guilty. Previous convictions and desertions from the Army stood against them. Mays received sentence of 18 months' hard labour; Smith, being claimed by the War Office, was bound over and removed by a military escort.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

STAND FIRM.

"The Secret of Success is Constancy in Purpose."

Macmillan, scholar and theologian, sitting in his study one night, was disturbed by a young lady of birth and beauty, who had come to consult him as to how she should attain success, and how she could best ensure victory for the Cause in which she was interested. His answer was worthy of note: "Perseverance, madam, and steadfastness of purpose are the only guides I can offer you. To achieve success depends upon yourself; turn neither to the right nor the left; keep your object in sight and march forward along the narrow path, however steep it may be." In Scotland we have a proverb: "Pit a stoot hairt tae a stey brae." That is what he meant. Do not give in, and do not turn aside, no matter how steep and difficult the road may be, or how tempting the bye-ways.

This is the hour when we require steadfastness of purpose. Nothing is more painful than to see people abandon their principles and forsake their ideals the moment some fresh excitement is to be found. To ensure victory for the nation we require constancy of purpose; to ensure success for our own movement we require equal steadfastness. Victory lies within our grasp if we are strong enough to seize it. As we look around we are astonished at the constant desire for change of work and occupation which so many people evince. They want to be in touch with the war, "feel life" is what they say. The matron of any hospital will tell you of the difficulty she has in getting nurses; so many want to nurse wounded soldiers, who seem more interesting than the sick civilian. Women of leisure who for years have regularly visited institutions for the sick and suffering are no longer able to pay such visits; all their time is devoted to canteens, soldiers' rest houses, and visiting in military hospitals. I have just heard how disappointed were the inmates of a hospital for incurables because the lady who had given them an annual treat for many years has not done so since the war began—she is "too busy to attend to them." Had she realised their disappointment I feel sure she would have found time to arrange for the festivity. Not for one minute do I suggest that soldiers and sailors should be neglected, but their treats should be extras; old charities should not suffer because something new has to be done.

In the political world one sees the same restlessness. People who have fought in good Causes have grown weary or discouraged and are off to pastimes new. How often have we heard women say, "Ah, yes, we believe in Votes for Women, but this is not the time to urge it; we must concentrate on war work." Never was any statement more fallacious; let us do any work we like, but let us also urge our claims to justice. It is vital that we keep faith with our own ideals and principles; let us be wholly loyal to the truth we know.

In this New Year let those suffragists who have set aside their principles once more take fresh courage, and stand firm in their demands. Whatever happens, do not let us alter or abate our demands for votes for women upon the same terms as they are or may be granted to men. Let us each do our part, and we must be prepared to have courage, if need be, to make enemies, to break with old friends who have abandoned our movement. Steadfastness of purpose is what we require; we must not deflect from our path, no matter how tempting the bait held out or how great the difficulties that beset us. The joy of victory consists largely in the successful overcoming of difficulties.

I was recently speaking to a small boy whose father is at the war. Alister had intended to win a prize at school to show his father how well he could

THEY SUPPORT US!

do in his absence. I asked him how he was getting on, and he replied: "I hae given up tryin'; it was ow're muckle fash. Mind you, a year's a lang time." Before I had time to reply his little sister Ellen cried: "Ye'll win naething if yer that easy tired. I wudna hae stoppit, yince I had begun, till I had wan the prize." Nor shall we.

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

Bargain Sales Forbidden in Germany.

The winter sales which began in Berlin, as in London, last week were summarily stopped on the second day by a military order which is apparently to be applied to the empire. The reason given is that unnecessary buying and selling of cotton and woollen goods is to be discouraged; the public must not be tempted to buy more clothes than they need; changes in fashion are to be reduced to a minimum.

Women Cooks for the Army.

The Times returns again to the demand for women cooks for the Army, and praises the determination of women to bring about economy and efficiency by employing women, thus serving the country in setting men free for military duties. It declares that the cooking in Army hospitals and camps is notoriously bad, and economy, as the word is understood by women, does not appear to exist. The women believe that they can save the nation half a million pounds sterling per annum. "The central fact must be kept in mind that we are at this moment holding back from active service a body of men not very much smaller than the Expeditionary Force with which Sir John French faced the German advance at Mons," observed a correspondent in The Times last Saturday. On Tuesday the matter was further discussed and the following facts given:—

In August of last year a scheme started by Lady Londonderry was authorised by the War Office and put into operation in several convalescent camps, the employment of 100 women cooks being sanctioned. Miss Barker, who was appointed as commandant by Lady Londonderry, made a beginning in the convalescent hospital at Dartford Camp. Here the whole of the kitchens were taken over and 20 cooks were installed. In carrying out the experiment the Women's Legion had the hearty cooperation of the commanding officer and the quartermaster, and success was at once assured.

On August 10, 18 women were sent to the camp at Epsom, and on August 25 another 50 started at Eastbourne. In the camps where the women cooks have been installed they have undertaken the whole of the work, with the exception of the duties of butcher, and remarkable economies have been effected. They have been most successful in the prevention of waste. The swill-tub, the scandal of so many military kitchens, has been reformed, and bones, dripping, and such things have been sold. The food, too, has been more palatable and more varied in character, and the men have enthusiastically welcomed the change.

On November 8 the scheme was extended to the hospital at Alnwick, and arrangements are being made for the supply of 160 women cooks at the Blackpool convalescent camp. The women employed at Eastbourne now number 66, and the staff at Epsom will shortly be increased to 50. Requests for the help of the Women's Legion are also being received from other centres. Arising indirectly from the scheme for using women in the camps, 30 cooks have recently been sent to the Y.M.C.A. canteen at Woolwich.

Men cooks will be required to feed their comrades

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at the front, so they must learn their duties at home while their units are being trained. Useful work is being done by the Women's Legion in giving instruction in cookery to the soldiers. Three women instructors, holding diplomas, began to give courses of lessons in the Army Schools of Cookery at Dartford on October 8, and 13 are now engaged at different places in the South of England. An instructor can deal at one time with a class of 30 to 40 men. The value of the lessons is proving so great that the number of instructors is to be increased. It is to be regretted that the importance of the instruction was not earlier realised by the authorities. In hundreds of instances regimental cooks have been lamentably inefficient, with the result that almost incredible waste has obtained.

Women at German Universities.

At the twenty-two German Universities there were last summer 4,575 women students, an increase on the 4,130 of the previous year. Two hundred of them are on leave serving in the sanitary department of the Army.—*Jus Suffragii.*

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THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, January 14th, 1916.

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

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THE EMPIRE AND MORE MEN.

There never yet has been a great empire but it reached a day when it cried for more men. Great Britain has reached that day; never has the cry been louder or more insistent. She is flinging aside her most cherished principle of liberty (*i.e.*, freedom for men) for compulsory military service.

During the week January 3-8 inclusive several remarkable educational conferences have been held. Twenty-two educational societies took part in the Conference at the London University, amongst them the Child Study Association. Its one great meeting was addressed by Dr. Saleeby on "Saving the Future." The Chairman, Sir John Cockburn, M.D., in introducing the lecturer, observed that our lives are entailed, that we must do nothing to depreciate the stock. Dr. Saleeby then delivered a stirring address. His chief points were the loss of 90,000 of the male population in the flower of life; a lowered birth-rate; an increased infant mortality-rate; increased civilian death-rate; a rise in the marriage-rate; the increasing disproportion in the numbers of the sexes, since at the beginning of the war women outnumbered men to the extent of a million and a third, a condition which is of itself a menace to morality; 1915 is a year without parallel in our history; there is nothing equal to it in the records of our race; it is the most disgenic year we have ever known. The lecturer then elaborated his panacea for this state of things. Every child born must be saved by every possible means, including child clinics; we have 500 of these, we need 2,000. This is the post-natal saving of the children. But we must go further. There is the pre-natal saving of the children: every child, since we have an enormous number of stillborn children, must be regarded as a possible citizen during the pre-natal period, and every effort must be made to save it for life. It is a pretty good proof of the complete disregard of women's interests that till recently neither the State nor the local authority bothered itself to count or register stillbirths. Of these fourteen are males as against ten females, so that by care, by the saving of life, we may either diminish the disproportion between the sexes as time goes on, or at least prevent it increasing, for the reason stated, and for other obvious reasons.

But does Dr. Saleeby really think that the right care, the feeding, the housing, the proper education of the women of this country should only begin with motherhood? To formulate the question is to

formulate an absurdity. The right environment for the child begins with the position of the girl child in the home, in the town, in the State. Do men gather grapes of thorns? At least the Women's Freedom League from its inception has cleared itself of the charge of acquiescing in the theory, and with certain people the practice, that woman is only of value as a mother. It is a theory and a practice that produce inferior women—and men; the million rejections from the Army, Dr. Saleeby's own figures, attest it.

A member of the Freedom League who happened to be present at the lecture pointed out in the discussion that a high infant mortality and a high general mortality are invariably concurrent, and that where efforts are made to pull down the general death-rate the infant mortality also falls. The conditions that safeguard the position of women in the home, such as equality of opportunity in education, the learning of a trade or a profession by every healthy girl, just marriage laws (of these England has the most infamous in Europe), will help to produce better children with viable lives. Woman's existence must be recognised by the State, not only on the day (August 15, 1915) when able-bodied citizens are counted for work and fighting, but on election day. A low birth-rate and a low death-rate together usually show a greater increase of population than a high birth-rate and a high death-rate. This is the experience of Holland, New Zealand, and other countries. Wimbledon has one of the lowest death-rates in the country, 7.3 per mille; and one of the lowest infant mortality-rates, 100 per mille, though it is high enough in all conscience. But in the congested portion of South Wimbledon the Medical Officer of Health pointed out in his report that the respective figures rose to 36.7 and 315. Wherever high figures occur we find tubercle yielding its maximum, for overcrowding is the prolific parent of innumerable evils.

The Women's Freedom League is not out to form a Herod Society for the slaughter of innocents. The Nine Elms Settlement, with its Guest House for children whose mothers are ill, its restaurant for good and cheap meals, its milk depot, and other valuable work, is "life saving" in its aims and results. But the League goes further than all these palliative measures, and holds as an article of the faith that the position of women must be raised all along the line; it claims equality in the home and in the State; it knows that more millions of men will be rejected as unfit for service if the present methods of misrule continue; and that the existence of the Empire depends on its will and capacity to reform itself.

An immense fillip to this idea was given by the Conference of the Historical Association at the meeting at University College on January 8, under the presidency of Mrs. J. R. Green. An interesting discussion followed the able address of Sir Charles Lucas on "The Teaching of Imperial History." One might have imagined, judging by the words that fell from the lips of a galaxy of British historians, that Great Britain is an ideal country for the rearing and continuance of an imperial race, with the sole exception of Dr. G. R. Parkin. His words were a trumpet-call for Britain to reform herself: *We must turn our eyes on internal questions if we are to bear the gigantic responsibilities of this Empire.* Alluding to our expenditure of five millions daily, the speaker said that if we had begun to clear away our slums twenty years ago at a monthly expenditure of five millions, no nation would have dreamt of attacking us. We must now proceed to federate the Empire, said Dr. Parkin; the Colonies must have something to say about such

a necessary measure as Home Rule. Women maintain that the enfranchisement of their sex must be added to the program. It reminds one of children being called into family councils when parents have grown confused, partial (to males), too inert and prejudiced to handle their own affairs.

There is a most appropriate joke in Punch's Almanack for 1916:—

TOMMY, *note-book in hand, to new arrival at prisoners' camp:* "What was your occupation?"

GERMAN: "Army butcher."

TOMMY: "Cattle or babies?"

We are certainly more refined in our methods of baby slaughter. They include exaggerated rent, high prices, low wages, adulterated food, dirty milk, child labour, half-time system, unswept streets, and a hundred other proofs of the fact that good government is not now the forte of Great Britain, whatever it has been in the past.

C. S. BREMNER.

[A consideration of the position of labour with regard to capital—of infinite importance and closely connected with the welfare of every country—with the position of women, and with the "saving of the future," is reserved for treatment at a later date.]

"OUR MARTHA."

I'd a letter from our Martha a while back. 'Er wanted me to go an' spend Christmas with 'er in Lunnon. Sed as 'ow 'er 'usband was doin' so well in 'is business—a Harmy Contract, or summat o' that—'er could pay all mi expenses easy, an' not be out o' pocket.

Did yer ever 'ear the like? Me as 'ave never spent a night from 'ome but once, since the day as I was wed. Ses 'er's too busy to come 'ere, so I mun go there! Never a thought o' what might 'appen to me when I gets there!

Fancy me a-dodgin' o' they Zepp'lins! I never was over quick at gettin' about, bein' rayther stout-like; an' when all's sed an' done, I reckon it's not the kind o' place for the likes o' me.

To 'ear Martha talk—'er come to see me in the fall—yer'd be surprised at the kind o' things as goes on there.

The women, too! The things as they does now, an' the way they carries on! Not that our Martha does more nor 'elp 'er 'usband in 'is business—'er's quite the lady now, is Martha; our Vicar's wife ain't 'arf so smart—but 'er's got notions. Ses 'er's joined the Women's Movement! Tho' what they wants to move, or what call they've got to move anything, passes me. Talks about Votes! Votes for Women! Ses the laws ain't just—especial to married women—an' 'er went on ever so about 'em! It fair took mi breath away, it did. I was afeard the neighbours might 'ear 'er! As I ses to 'er, it wouldn't never do to bring them notions down 'ere. Why, it ud be flying in the face of Providence—let alone the Squire—that it would. But Martha, 'er ses, "Squire or no Squire, it's true, mother." An' I ses "Don't you come a-hargifying wi' me. You was never brought up to do it, an' it ain't right as you should begin now." I ses that to 'er, I did, an' I'd 'ave said it again if need be, for all she's a married woman, the mother o' four, an' 'er 'usband in the 'am an' bacon line.

But there! I couldn't but feel that a good deal of what 'er sed was true enough. It seems there's one law for the men an' another for the women—the same as it is with the rich an' the poor, or used to be. I do 'ear tell as things is better now nor they were afore the workin' man got 'is vote; tho' I never could see 'ow that come to be. It never made no diff'rence to my ole man. Not but what 'e allus gave 'is vote reg'lar, an' it didn't matter who come

after 'im, 'e allus told 'em the same. 'E ses, ses 'e, "I allus votes true blue, an' allus shall. Mi fayther, an' 'is fayther, did afore me, an' what was good enough for them is good enough for me."

An' that minds me, our Martha 'ad 'er colours too, cos I ses to 'er, "Why don't yer 'ave blue, instead o' green?" But 'er ses, "It ain't only green, mother"; an' I ses, "Oh, well," I ses, "I see it ain't much else—a little bit o' yaller an' some white, which ain't no colour at all."

But whether it's "true blue" or "true green," I reckon it's all one. I didn't 'ave no votes to 'elp me bring up mi twelve childer, nor mi mother 'er fifteen neither. An' what did my John get for 'issen? Nought but a ride in some gen'leman's motor-car; an' that wouldn't 'ave done for me, I'd as lief go up in a hairy-plane. It's true there was more to be 'ad in my old fayther's time, but that 'e'd 'ave been better without. I mind me, one morning, as tho' it might 'ave been yesterday. I was upstairs, arter breakfast, a-helpin' mi mother wi' the beds, an' I ses, "Mother," I ses, "ain't it the week for clean sheets?" But 'er ses, "Nay, lass, we'll let em bide a bit. Don't yer know, it's 'lections to-morrer, an' bad weather an' all. When they brings yer fayther 'ome at night, an' carries 'im straight up to 'is bed, 'is boots won't be that clean!" An' that was all as ever 'er said about it. It all come in the day's work to mi mother; but as for wanting Votes for 'ersel'—'e'd 'ave give 'er Votes!

Aye, it's wonnerful what a woman 'as to put up wi' sometimes, one way or another. What wi' the drink an' the childer, the pigs an' the poultry, 'er's never done—mornin', noon, nor night. An' arter it all, as Martha says, to be reckoned up wi' criminals, lunatics, an' such like, an' not even be allowed to be the parent of 'er own child. If them as made the laws was to take 'er place for a bit, it 'ud learn 'em summat. Or, give 'em lunatics to keep 'ouse for 'em a while, an' see 'ow they gets on then. They'd soon find the diff'rence. If they 'ad to stop at 'ome allus an' mind the 'ouse an' the childer an' what-not; an' if they did get a little extra brass when their wives went off—I canna say "to the war," for if women 'ad their way there'd be no fightin'—an' left 'em, wouldn't they—a-many on 'em—be ready eno' to drown their cares?

Them Aliens, too, as they calls 'em. Martha ses, "Mother," 'er ses, "it's somethin' cruel what a pore woman as 'appens to 'ave a German 'usband 'as to go thro', let 'er be ever so English 'ersel'! A Briton born an' bred, what's never been outside England, an' can't speak no word o' German! It don't make no diff'rence. 'Er's an Alien, cos 'er 'usband is. 'Er's flouted 'ere and flouted there, till 'er can't call 'er soul 'er own! 'Er's looked askance at by all an' none 'ull employ 'er. Bad as it all is, tho', it was made a bit more fair-like when the German woman was reckoned British along wi' 'er 'usband, but they do say there's a new law now what keeps 'er Alien too; so yer see, the woman gets it all roads, an' might as well be dead an' buried for all the existence 'er 'as in the eyes o' the law; tho' that wouldn't suit 'em neither, for yer can't get rates an' taxes out o' the dead."

But there, I'm lettin' mi tongue run on too fast, an' maybe I've said more now nor I should 'a done. 'Owsomdever, you'll please to remember as all I've told you is only what Martha ses to me, an' munna go no further. I've lived in this 'ere 'ouse five-an'-thirty year come Michaelmas, an' it ud come 'ard if I was turned out in mi old age. The 'ouse bain't what it should be, by a long way, but it's 'ome to me an' mine.

MARIAN OLIVER.

GOODWILL TOWARDS WOMEN.

The war developments of the ill-feeling that undoubtedly inspires men in all their official dealings with women are many and various. It is a curious state of mind, and was well illustrated by the intervention of Mr. Leif Jones in the discussion on the Munitions Act amendments. As a great concession to feminine sentiment, tribunals to deal with women workers, which may include two or more women, have been allowed by the House of Commons; but Mr. Jones was careful to secure guarantees that these tribunals should not be composed entirely of women! And yet for centuries it has been deemed fair and satisfactory that all women should be brought before tribunals composed entirely of men. The sensitiveness of the male legislator responsible to male electors is apt to break out in very remarkable places.

Another hypocritical outbreak of righteousness occurred last Saturday at the Westminster Police-court, when a "soldier's wife"—the Press was careful to emphasise this—was charged with neglecting her three children through habitual drunkenness. The magistrate gave the savage sentence of six months, and the whole week-end Press introduced the "heartbroken letter" from the husband in the trenches, imploring the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to look after his little ones. A letter from the Political and Militant Department has been sent to the magistrate, and to the N.S.P.C.C., asking whether such a sentence has ever been given at that police-court to any man for persistent drunkenness and neglect of his family. It must never be forgotten that, in the eyes of the law, the mother is not the parent of the neglected children. Only the father can be that. The mother is simply the father's agent, or the "person" having charge or custody of the children. When she is punished for neglecting them, therefore, she is in the position of a slave who is punished for not doing enough work! "Heartbroken appeals" from the married victims of drunken husbands are so common in the police-courts that no doubt custom has staled their paths. But the drunken wife receives the full blast of official reprobation—probably because she is not so frequent a feature.

A drunken ruffian who ran about with a carving knife, and stabbed two soldiers, has been given three months in the second division by Mr. Mead. If his ruffianism had been at the expense of a little girl, he would probably have got off with three weeks, on the plea of drunkenness. But a woman who appears to have committed only a technical offence under the Baby Farming enactments—i.e., has provided a home for an illegitimate child, which she kept under her roof for a night or two without giving notice to the L.C.C., being paid a substantial sum for her services—has been sentenced to six months, and has to refund most of the money. The gentlemen who so savagely enforce the law on women imagine they are protecting child life. It is a pity they do not protect it as sternly against their own sex.

Measles has been made, at long last, one of the notifiable diseases. This, says a doctor, will impress on mothers the seriousness of the complaint. It is always the mothers, poor things! What are doctors for, and what have they been doing all these years, if the mothers have not known this before? What means have they of knowing, if doctors have not told them? The mortality from measles is not the fault of mothers, but of doctors and legislators.

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In the same issue of the daily paper in which the measles notification was announced, we read:

HOUSE AND LODGING FAMINE.—The house and lodging famine at Coventry is becoming very acute; £1 a week is often paid for two small rooms in a tiny cottage, and a newly-married couple have offered £5 for the key of a house. Whole families are living in the same rooms in which cooking and washing have to be done.

What would happen if measles broke out here? No notification would prevent high mortality. The landlord would not take a penny less rent, the Town Council would not put up one more cottage; mothers would be just as helpless. By all means notify measles; it should have been the law long ago. But Mr. Walter Long need not think that notification, whether of births or of diseases, is the only specific against death. It is only one item in the long list of needed aids for which the mothers and infants have waited an interminable time.

"One thinks more acutely about the deaths of babies at the present time, when every baby's life is so important to the nation," said the Deputy-Coroner for North-East London at an inquest on a baby a few days ago.

For callous calculation this last extract from the same paper would be hard to beat. It reminds one of the learned gentleman who recently stated at Brighton that an increase in the birth rate was more important than a decrease in the infant mortality rate. It is a pity the coroner and other officials did not have these "acute" feelings at an earlier date, when the financial resources of the nation were not so strained; but babies' lives did not matter then! One is tempted to remember, in this case of measles, that the attention of the Health Authorities was only turned to it because of the havoc it executed among young soldiers in the camps.

C. NINA BOYLE.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.



DARE TO BE
FREE.

Friday, January 14.—POLITICAL MEETING for members. W.F.L. Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 7 p.m. Speakers: Miss Nina Boyle, Mrs. Tanner, and Mrs. Corner. Chairman: Mrs. Mustard.

Thursday, January 20.—CROYDON. Branch "At Home," 32A, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss H. Normanton, B.A., on "Freedom."

Monday, January 24.—LANTERN LECTURE on "Poland: Past and Present," by Mademoiselle Marie A. Czaplicka, at the Ashburton Club, 28, Red Lion-square, W.C. (within 3 minutes of Holborn, Southampton-row corner). Chairman, Mrs. Despard. Tickets, 1s. (numbered and reserved) and 6d., from W.F.L. Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

Wednesday, January 26.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Miss Nina Boyle. Chairman: Mrs. Tanner. Admission free.

Saturday, January 29.—"AT HOME," 31, Highbury Place, N. (by kind permission of Dr. Patch), 3 to 5 p.m. Speakers: Miss Boyle and Mrs. Mustard. WHIST DRIVE in aid of Despard Arms, 4.30 to 8 p.m. Particulars next week.

Wednesday, February 2.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3.30 p.m. Mrs. Aldridge on "Our Retreat from Serbia." Chairman: Miss A. A. Smith.

Saturday, February 5.—DESPARD ARMS. Tea 3.30 to 6 p.m. (Tea, 6d.)

Wednesday, February 9.—PUBLIC MEETING, Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3.30 p.m. Miss Beatrice Kent, "My Journeys Across the American Continent and What I Learnt of Suffrage and Suffragists," and Miss Boyle.

Sunday, February 13.—DRAMATIC RECITAL at the Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C. Miss Clara Reed, Ibsen's masterpiece, "The Pretenders." Tea, 3.15 to 3.50 p.m. Recital, 4 p.m. Tickets, 2s. and 1s., from W.F.L. Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W. 1d. and ½d. meals; weekdays at noon. Children's Guest House and Milk Depot for Nursing Mothers.

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PROVINCES.

Monday, January 17.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Public Meeting, W.F.L. Rooms, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Rev. T. C. Gobat. Subject: "A Gauntlet," by Björnsen.

SALE. Social Evening and Whist Drive, the Free Library Lecture Room, 7.30 prompt. Music; short speeches. Refreshments. Tickets 9d.

Thursday, January 27.—READING. Public Meeting. Speaker: Miss Eunice Murray. Chairman: Miss Anna Munro.

SCOTLAND.

Wednesday, January 19.—EDINBURGH. Suffrage Shop, 90, Lothian-road, 8 p.m. Miss Tennant, "Russia."

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wednesday, January 26.—WEST READING. Women's Adult School, Kensington-road, 3 p.m. Lecturer: Miss Eunice Murray.

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THE NEW HOME SECRETARY.

The following letters have been sent to the Prime Minister by the Women's Freedom League and the United Suffragists:—

The Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith, M.P.

January 8th, 1916.

SIR.—We note the resignation of Sir John Simon leaves the office of Home Secretary open to fresh appointment. May we request that in justice and fairness this post may be filled by one of your supporters who is in favour of the enfranchisement of women?

We would point out to you that the interests and responsibilities of women widen day by day now that the country is increasingly dependent on their labour and their ability to fill new posts and new spheres of employment, and that with the steadily developing progress of military and emergency enactments, their means of reaching the ear of the Government, never adequate, are dangerously restricted. The post of Home Secretary, with the administration of many matters of extreme importance to women, is one that we are entitled to ask His Majesty's Government to fill with due regard to the interests of women, who have no representation with which to secure their share in the making of such appointments.

We trust, therefore, that Sir John Simon's successor may be no less sympathetic than that gentleman to the political claims made by vast numbers of unenfranchised, unrepresented, and heavily burdened women.

Very faithfully yours,

C. NINA BOYLE.

Head of Political and Militant Department W.F.L.

January 7, 1916.

To the Right Honourable H. H. Asquith, M.P.

DEAR SIR.—In view of Sir John Simon's resignation and the consequent necessity for appointing a successor to him in the Home Office, I am instructed by my Committee to bring to your notice feeling existing among our members that the Secretary of State for Home Affairs should be a man who is not opposed to the claims of women for a wider environment and a more extended sphere of activity in the State. These requirements, which were satisfied by the late Home Secretary, become even more insistent with regard to his successor, who will have to deal with the ever-increasing strain put upon the working of the Factory Acts by the influx of women into new trades and occupations, and who will therefore require the discrimination and fairness of judgment as between men and women (when the interests of both conflict) that we think are most likely to be found in one who believes in the political and industrial equality of men and women.

Also, in view of the fact that the recent Parliament and Registration Act was introduced by the Home Secretary, we feel that the interests of women, for which we as a Society stand, can only be properly safeguarded in the forthcoming Bill to reform the existing Parliamentary Register by the presence of a Minister at the Home Office who can be trusted to put forward the claims of women and men in their just proportions. An assurance from you that this point of view will be duly considered in the choice of Sir John Simon's successor will do much to establish confidence in the rank and file of our membership at this time of peril and uncertainty.

Your many recent pronouncements in praise of the war service of women must be our excuse for pressing upon you at the present critical moment the claims of that indispensable, yet defenceless, section of the people, who, for lack of political power, depend so much upon the personnel of Government departments for protection in the conditions under which they labour.

Yours faithfully,

BARBARA AYRTON GOULD,

Hon. Secretary, United Suffragists.

The answer to these appeals is the appointment of Mr. Herbert Samuel, anti-suffragist.

ALL good Suffragists will regret to learn that our vigorous contemporary the *Irish Citizen* has decided, through stress of present circumstances, to appear monthly instead of weekly. We recognise the splendid service that the *Irish Citizen* has rendered to the cause of Woman Suffrage, and we know that its championship will continue strong and true.

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THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

FOUNDATIONS OF FREEDOM.

Our readers will be interested to hear that next week we shall begin a series of articles written, by special request, by Miss Helena Normanton, B.A., on the "Foundations of Freedom." She will deal historically, politically, and legally with the way in which freedom has been attained in the course of centuries in this country. We of the Women's Freedom League are demanding that freedom shall apply to women in its fullest sense as to men, and it is well to be armed in the fight with accurate knowledge as to how freedom has been so far won for our nation. The articles will be of permanent value, and we urge readers to make sure of receiving their copies of *The Vote* week by week and of ordering others to send to friends.

Women's Freedom League National Service Organisation.

This department at Headquarters is for the present suspended, although the conditions under which women work will, of course, continue to receive the close attention of the Political and Militant Department. The Women's Freedom League has now severed all official connection with Miss Parker, our late honorary organiser. The excellent work which is being carried out by several of our Branches will be in no way affected by this alteration.

Branch Note.

Edinburgh, 90, Lothian Road.

Those who heard Miss Tennant's excellent and timely paper on "Russia" will be delighted to hear that she has kindly consented to read it again, and we hope that those who did not have the pleasure will take the opportunity of being present on January 19. The paper deals with our great Ally from various points of view, all in-

teresting and instructive. At our last meeting for 1915 a number of matters, mostly in connection with Branch business, were discussed. Miss Wood submitted her half-yearly treasurer's report, which, while showing a satisfactory balance, made it clear that every member must make a special effort if our work is to go on. That this effort will not be wanting was demonstrated by our Christmas sale, which raised the sum of £17 18s. The committee thanks all those who helped to attain this result.

The Despard Arms.

We have been very glad to welcome visitors from a distance during the last week, including Miss Beanland, sister of Mr. J. Beanland, of Manchester, who is on her way to New Zealand. We intend to have luncheon and tea parties at intervals to give opportunities to friends from a distance to visit the public-house and meet those who are helping in the scheme. A tea is being arranged for Saturday, February 5, 3.30-6 p.m., to which all interested are invited (tea, 6d.). A whist drive and concert will be held on Saturday, January 29, at 4.30-8 p.m., to help the scheme. Particulars will be announced next week, but friends are asked to reserve the date and lend us a helping hand by participating in an enjoyable gathering. Madame Anna Carola's singing class will be held on Tuesdays at 8.15 p.m. instead of Fridays.

We shall welcome offers of assistance, especially in the recreation-room in the evenings. We are still very badly in need of chests of drawers and hanging cupboards; gifts of supplies for the restaurant, including a clock for the wall, and for the house, including towels, dusters, kitchen-cloths, table and toilet covers, cushions, etc. The three lavatory basins, most kindly given by Mr. H. Nelson Smith, in addition to beds and bedding, are now fixed in the bathroom. To him we tender most grateful thanks.

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

Mrs. Tippet gratefully acknowledges the following gifts:—Miss Riggall, cheese; the V. and VI. Forms at Tollington High School, six coverlets and overalls for Guest House; Captain and Mrs. Giles, picture-books; Miss Thelwell, scrapbooks; Messrs. Hovis, sack of Hovis flour; Miss Soames, £2; Miss Dunn, 1s.; "A. W.," Wath, Cumberland, 2s. 6d.; A Sympathiser, 2s. 6d.

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p.m. January 26—Speakers: Mrs.
Despard and Miss Nina Boyle.
Admission free.

Also a LANTERN LECTURE on
Poland by Mademoiselle A. Czaplicka
at the Ashburton Club, 28, Red Lion-
square, W.C., on January 24, at 7 p.m.
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