180

men's ceague for Women's Suffrage. MONTHLY PAPER.

OFFICE: 159, ST. STEPHEN'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER.

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MAY, 1911.

THE SITUATION.

We must first remind members of the Dinner to be given next Thursday, the 4th, by the League, in honour of Miss Vida Goldstein, at Pagani's, 7.30 p.m. Mrs. Fawcett, and Miss Christabel Pankhurst have consented to speak, as representing two of the most powerful women's societies, and Mr. Laurence Housman will speak on behalf of the League. Mr. Pember Reeves will preside. At the time of writing there are still a few tickets to be obtained from the offices of the League, price 4s. each, for member or guest.

Concentrate on the Bill is now our motto. It is no good discussing other subjects or urging other demands. "Strike with all your force at one point. Upset the enemy's equilibrium and all is won." Those were Napoleon's maxims of war. "Now let everything go in" General Sheridan used to say at the crisis of battle. Such are the rules we must follow in fighting our antiquated and timorous, but still powerful enemy. Leave side issues alone; drop criticisms and discussions; let traitors and doctrinaires go as they please. Concentrate on the Bill.

The best way to concentrate on the Bill is to call on your member in the House. Tell him he must vote straight on Friday. If he is an Anti, call on him just the same. Show him the strength of the movement. A member fears the loss of votes, even if he fears nothing else in the world. If you cannot call, write. But the personal appeal has most weight and impresses all members more.

Unless your member is on the Conciliation Committee, you will probably find him very ignorant about the provisions of the Bill. Show him our post-card that gives at a glance the short and simple terms of the measure, combined with the changes introduced since last year's Bill. Give him a marked copy of the memorandum drawn up by Mr. Brailsford (a member of our Executive) as honorary secretary of the Conciliation Committee. He may say that he has received it already, but insist on explaining to him the chief points, for probably he has not mastered them. Explain that the new title now leaves the Bill open to amendment for widening its scope. It thus meets Mr. Lloyd George's chief objection, and one of the Prime Minister's objections. Remind him that, on the condition of this open title, Mr. Asquith has pledged himself to "proceed effectively" with a Woman's Suffrage Bill in the present Parliament, and that a Bill can be proceeded with effectively only in this Session. Next Session will be overcrowded with Government measures, and the Session after that will be too late to carry the Bill into taw if there is strong opposition to it in the House of Lords.

Remind him that the Bill is necessarily a compromise, since it aims at obtaining the support of all parties in the House, and by its combination of justice and caution it has obtained that support. It does not alarm the Conservatives, because it contains none of the doctrinaire and excessive demands that adultists and other theoretic people put forward in their ignorance of English politics. Nor does it frighten the Liberals, for it is carefully drawn to exclude any possible increase of the ownership and plural vote. Its proposals rest entirely on the household basis, such as was adopted by Liberals and Conservatives alike in the Reform Bill of 1867 and the Municipal Bill (for both men and women) of 1869. Show him further that the household franchise draws no distinction between rich and poor, but will give the vote to a woman holding a tenement of even one room only, provided she has full control over it.

Point out to him that, in order to preclude the very shadow of faggot voting, the £10 occupier's qualification, which appeared in last year's Bill, has now been dropped, so that it will be impossible for any woman to obtain two votes; also that under the new Bill a man cannot create the semblance of a faggot vote because husband and wife may not be registered in the same constituency. Mr. Winston Churchill's objection to the "stable" vote is thus removed. On the other hand, the married woman is not excluded on account of marriage, but can be registered by arrangement with her husband, and this will probably often be done in the case of families in which the husband is much away from home, as a sailor, or for other business.

Inform him that the Bill will admit about one million women householders to the franchise, and that all these will be self-dependent women who already bear the full burdens of citizenship. The Bill, as we showed, imposes no property test and makes no distinction between rich and poor. But it is fair to all classes, and of the women enfranchised between 80 and 90 per cent will be working women, making their own living and keeping no servant. A very large proportion will inhabit only one or two rooms, and the voters as a whole will consist of the least "dependent" women in the country—those who stand alone, and are therefore in most need of representation.

Remind him finally, that at least 65 City and Town Councils have passed resolutions in favour of the Bill, and not a single council has condemned it. Among the 65 are the great cities of Birmingham, Bradford, Cardiff, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Wolverhampton, Dundee, Glasgow, Dublin, Cork, and Limerick. Tell him also that the Lord Mayor of Dublin is coming over soon after the second reading to plead for full facilities at the bar of the House of Commons, and will have such a reception from all the Suffrage Societies as no Lord Mayor ever had before. Tell him that more than 4,000 meetings were held last autumn in support of the Bill, and that not for three generations at least has any measure aroused so much enthusiasm, been maintained with such devoted industry, or made such rapid

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progress in popular favour. When you have explained all this to your member, you may reasonably hope to have secured his complete support. But if he still remains obdurate, you must put him down as one of those stony-headed Pharaohs whom the sea of progress and enlightenment will presently submerge to the great advantage of the world.

The first thing is to secure a big majority for the second reading on Friday. Then will come the demand for full facilities in the committee stage. Then the dangers of amendments that may alienate supporters. But for the present we concentrate on the second reading and facilities. The full text of the Bill will be found on our back page.

The Press boycott upon the subject of the franchise has given way during the last month to some extent. Many of the London daily papers admitted a fairly complete summary of the Conciliation Committee's Memorandum, and even The Daily News Parliamentary correspondent has waked up to the meaning and importance of the situation. Nevertheless, we regret to record a particularly shameful piece of trickery by which certain papers have attempted to discredit our cause. One of the defendants now being charged at Worcester with horrible cruelty has been placarded by them as a "Suffragette," though her name was not in the least identified with the movement. The Westminster Gazette, for instance, printed a conspicuous headline, Alleged Slave Girl kept by Suffragette.' If the two men involved in the charge happened to be Liberals, and a Conservative paper had written 'Alleged Slave Girl kept by Liberals' we can imagine the pious wrath of The Westminster Gazette. But there are some papers, not conspicuous for courage themselves, that seem to think no weapon too base to be used against gallant and devoted women engaged in the contest for political liberty.

There was no need to elect new members for the Executive Committee at the League's Annual Meeting last Friday, because the nominations did not go beyond the Committee's numbers. Seventeen of the former members offered to continue their services, and the League is to be congratulated upon the additional appointment of Dr. William Boulting, an ardent Suffragist, well known in literary and philosophic circles, especially for his admirable series of works on the Renaissance period; Mr. Kennedy, who has become famous in the movement as a most diligent and attractive speaker; and Mr. J. Arthur Price, whose profound knowledge of law, history, and Parliamentary procedure will be of the highest advantage.

We wish, at the same time, to impress upon all members the eloquent appeal for funds made at the Annual Meeting by our Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Reginald Pott, who is himself such a liberal supporter of the League. Many contribute generously for particular objects, but the unavoidable and regular expenses of a society like ours must be met by steady subscriptions regularly paid. Those expenses are roughly estimated at about £1 a day, and, among the numerous members of the League, it should not be difficult for our Hon. Treasurer to reckon upon that amount of annual subscription without anxiety.

In reference to the Cheltenham new election, we record with pleasure that one of our members turned nine votes against the Government, solely on the ground of the Cabinet's treatment of the Women's Franchise question. As the Government candidate was defeated by only four votes, the importance of our anti-Government policy is evident. This is the kind of thing that carries profound conviction to the hearts of Ministers.

H W N

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Owing probably to the absence of controversial business there was a comparatively small attendance at the Inns of Court Hotel on the occasion of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the League on April 28th. Among those present were, however, many of those who have been most prominently associated with the League's work, and the appearance of Mr. H. G. Chancellor, M.P.; was greeted with enthusiastic applause.

MR. HERBERT JACOBS moved the Committee's report from the chair, and referred to the exceedingly hopeful position of the movement as regards the prospects of Sir George Kemp's Bill. The report was taken as read, and adopted without discussion. The Chairman then expressed his regret that, owing to the loss of a number of receipts during the transit of the League's goods to Westminster, the auditor was not yet able to present a statement of accounts. Duplicate receipts were necessary, and copies of the balance sheet would be obtainable on application as soon as this process was completed.

The meeting then proceeded to the election of a new Committee. Seventeen of the old Committee stood for re-election, and there were three additional nominations: Dr. William Boulting (Mr. H. W. Nevinson), Mr. J. Y. Kennedy (Mr. J. M. Mitchell), Mr. J. A. Price (Mr. R. H. Pott). These three gentlemen, together with the following old members, will form the Committee for 1911–12: Messrs. Goldfinch Bate, T. Mortimer Budgett, H. N. Brailsford, Sir Wm. Chance, Bart., Messrs. Cecil Chapman, J.P., Joseph Clayton, R. F. Cholmeley, E. Duval, Capt. C. M. Gonne, Messrs. Laurence Housman, Herbert Jacobs, J. M. Mitchell, H. W. Nevinson, Reginald H. Pott, and W. R. Snow

Mr. Jacobs then moved, on behalf of the Committee, the adoption of a new rule empowering the Committee to appoint a President, and not more than twenty-five Vice-Presidents.

As a result of amendments by Dr. Bather and Mr. Nevinson, it was finally resolved:—

"That there be a President and not more than twenty-five Vice-Presidents of the League, and that such officers be elected for the year at each Annual General Meeting, and be eligible for re-election."

"Resolved further that the Executive Committee be authorized to appoint such officers for the year 1911-12."

"That the meeting recommend the names of persons to be asked to serve as President."

The Chairman then called upon Mr. Chancellor, M.P., who was most cordially received. After a graceful tribute to Mr. Brailsford's superior knowledge and the excellent work of Mr. MacLaren, Mr. Chancellor gave a most useful summary of the Parliamentary position. He laid stress on the practical importance of the changes introduced into Sir George Kemp's new Bill as compared with that introduced by Mr. Shackleton.

Two dangers beset the Bill: (1) an amendment conferring the franchise upon all women whose husbands have an occupation vote; (2) an adult suffrage amendment. As to the former, he was personally in favour of it, but he would vote against it, because its adoption, implying the addition of 7,000,000 (instead of 1,000,000) to the register, would lose the Bill the support of practically all Unionist sympathizers, and also a number of Whig Liberals. As regards adult suffrage—of which also he was an enthusiastic supporter—he said that the Government would probably introduce such a measure in the course of this Parliament, and that Mr. Asquith would presumably not include women at all. Now it was essential that such an exclusion should be rendered once and for all impossible by the passage of Sir George's Bill—which, though narrow in its operation, was entirely democratic in its effect.

Several important questions having been put to Mr. Chancellor, Mr. H. N. Brailsford further spoke on the Bill, alluding specially to the danger of the married women amendment, and the use which might be made of it to wreck the Bill by dishonest friends and foes. He made a quiet, but characteristically impressive appeal to the audience to do their share in making known the real substance of the new Bill, and humorously compared the elaborate methods of spreading news among barbarian tribes with the extreme difficulty of forcing essential facts upon the apprehension of a member of Parliament.

MR. REGINALD H. POTT then gave what he described as a "stop gap" Treasurer's report. His message, if a grim one, was eminently a word in season, and it is extremely regrettable that so few members were present to benefit by his clear-cut and unanswerable criticisms. The effect was immediate, as some £20 odd was immediately taken as an earnest, be it hoped, of a re-awakened enthusiasm.

THE FREE CHURCH LEAGUE.

The Free Church League, which has only been in existence a few months, is making very good progress, and should do very useful work in winning over many adherents to the Suffrage cause who are not easily reached by the ordinary societies. It has the support of such men as Dr. Clifford, Rev. F. B. Meyer, Dr. Scott Lidgett, and many other influential men of the Free Churches. On May 4, the Rev. Thos. Phillips, B.A., a vice-president, is to preach at Bloomsbury Chapel on "Christ and Womanhood," at 8 P.M., followed by a devotional service, in view of the debate in the Commons on the following day. A number of successful local meetings have been held at various churches, and branches have been formed at Croydon, Penge, Battersea, Bermondsey, Brighton, &c. The methods of the League are religious and educational only, which commends it to some of the people who are in favour of the principle of Woman Suffrage, but will not join a political society. The Organizing Secretary is Rev. E. Clark, 1, Burns Road, Harlesden.

DEBATE WITH MR. CALDERON.

Mr. George Calderon, who in a recent pamphlet held up men Suffragists to gentle ridicule as "lambs," had a very bad time at the hands of Mr. R. F. Cholmeley in debate at Hampstead on April 26th. Mr. Cholmeley is a master of dialectic, and Mr. Calderon was not only defeated in the voting by 2 to 1, but was evidently vaguely conscious that parallels from natural history have a nasty boomerang action.

TREASURER'S NOTE.

WE are greatly indebted to those members who have enabled us to do what we have done. It is, however, much to be regretted that in so crucial a month as May, 1911, although we had a splendid response for one month, the financial resources of the Men's League are so uncertain that any special form of activity our work requires has to be done at the personal expense of some one member prepared to back it.

Such methods are not business-like. If we are to "concentrate on 1911," how much more should we concentrate on the next three months? For this reason promise cards were prepared and distributed at the Annual General Meeting asking particularly for promises of monthly subscriptions. A good response was made by those present, and we hope that all other members will now write, making such promises.

Consider these four obvious needs for which we want money now, to give us courage to carry on the work on bold lines at this important time:—

First, we want not only to keep in the office both our paid officials, whose services have ceased to be those of mere clerks (their pay means just a living wage that enables two active Suffrage workers to give us their entire time), but to give them further clerical help.

Connected with this we want money enough to pay for emergency work. The overtime that has been put in recently without remuneration is not justified in such an organization as ours.

Then there is our monthly paper, and though it is not in any way necessary to run this as a competitor with many existing Suffrage periodicals, even if we confine it to our own members, it is a waste of money if it is not sufficiently attractive to cause them to look through it.

Lastly there is the pressing question of postage. Many of our members who are not on the Executive, or in close touch with the office, appear to have no notion of what I have already referred to, the sudden calls on our funds for postage. Ours is not a business where we merely have postage as a steady and considerable item, but a concern in which we ought to have, as it were, a good reserve fund on which to draw without a moment's hesitation for a large sum for postage. Displays of activity calling for much postage, if carried out persistently, would doubtless react by bringing us in the necessary funds.

We have had experience enough to convince us that those who are in a position to give liberally will continue to give whilst they feel that other members in large numbers are continually doing what they can in money or services to keep the League going in a high state of efficiency.

One such generous friend has, in recognition of the services of our office workers, just replaced our worn-out type-writer with a brand new "Underwood," costing £22 1s. Will others kindly follow suit with two £5 notes for up-to-date copying apparatus and a small safe.

It may be pointed out that as compared with the women's Societies our members do next to nothing in collecting money from people who may be sympathizers with the movement, but who do not care to label themselves as members. If the Treasurer's subscription list contained every month a number of sums so collected, even if not large in themselves, it would be one of the best possible signs of the activity of our members.

REGINALD H. POTT.

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Subscriptions				£ 8.	? d.
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(Wording as per centre of this Advertisement.)

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Send them to M.P.'s and Cabinet Ministers, and let no one be able to say they do not understand what the Bill asks for. THE CONCILIATION BILL.

As revised 1911.

A Bill to [confer] extend the Parliamentary Franchise [on] to Women Occupiers.

- 1. Every woman possessed of a household qualification, or of a ten pound occupation qualification within the meaning of the Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the County or Borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.
- For the purposes of this Act a woman shall not be disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided that a husband and wife shall not both be qualified in respect of the same property registered as voters in the same Parliamentary Borough or County Division.

The alterations shown above have been made to allow of free amendment in Committee, and to overcome the objection that the Bill as it originally stood rendered the creation of faggot votes possible.

The alteration in the above is signified by deleting the words in italic and adding the words in brackets.

Issued without profit by the Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

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