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THE VOTE

(THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE)



VOL. V. No. 106.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1911.

ONE PENNY.

NOTICE.

Letters relating to editorial and business matters should be addressed to THE EDITOR and SECRETARY respectively. Applications for advertising spaces to be made to the ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER.

Offices: 1, ROBERT STREET, ADELPHI, W.C.

Published by W. SPEAIGHT & SONS, 98 & 99, Fetter Lane, E.C.

EDITORIAL.

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

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OUR POINT OF VIEW.

Concentration on Conciliation.

In various ways the determination of women to concentrate on the Conciliation Bill is being brought home to the Government, and we know the value of continuous hammering upon one spot! The Executive Committee of the Women's Liberal Federation has just issued a resolution declaring its intention to support, by all means in its power, the Bill promoted by the Conciliation Committee until definite promises are made of a Government Reform Bill including women. The numerous bye-elections are affording excellent opportunities for impressing upon the constituencies the importance of the Bill. Perhaps we may accept as evidence that the Government is alive to the determination of Suffragists to brook no trifling, the fact that Scotland Yard is affording Cabinet Ministers a double guard, and that all entrances to No. 10, Downing-street are carefully watched.

The Tragedy of the Unfit.

Quite recently we referred to some terrible statistics showing the danger to the community of the increase of the mentally unfit, and urged the necessity of women taking a hand in the legislation which is so imperatively needed on this matter. Facts come to light almost every day which are appalling in their significance. The Lancashire Asylums Board reports that one out of every 225 inhabitants of Liverpool is being treated for insanity, and members of the Asylums Committee of the London County Council declare that the evil is becoming worse than that of consumption. A story which should drive home to the public mind the crying need for new laws dealing with the mentally unfit was reported to the London County Council Asylums Committee last week. A woman who has been discharged twenty-six times from lunatic asylums is now a patient in Colney Hatch, but her history is summed up in the following terrible facts:—

Fifteen times admitted to and discharged from the institutions controlled by the London authority.
Eleven times admitted to and discharged from other asylums.

Thirteen children born to her, of whom five are dead and two show signs of insanity.

Two of her sisters were lunatics; one committed suicide, the other died in an asylum.

Two of her aunts are now in asylums.

The story is made more tragic when it is remembered that this woman, and others similarly afflicted, after discharge, relapse into insanity but continue to add to the number of lunatics in the community. Again, we maintain that imperative as legislation may be, it is equally imperative that woman's direct influence should be felt in its making.

For Consideration and Discussion.

The Women's Freedom League stands for a great ideal, but recognises that no ideal is reached except by strenuous exertion. Our democratic platform, educating us in co-operation and responsibility, gives scope to our members to bring forward suggestions for the furtherance of our aims. This week we publish an article by Mrs. Thomson-Price, entitled "Evolution and the Women's Freedom League," which will, no doubt, stimulate thought and raise an interesting discussion. Ourselves preserving, naturally, a strict neutrality, we trust that members of the League and men readers of THE VOTE will take advantage of our "Open Column" to give their views on the proposal. A healthy interchange of thought upon all questions that bear upon the progress of our Cause and the welfare of our League cannot fail to be beneficial.

Women Jurors.

We are accustomed to American "hustling," and we may well rejoice that the woman's victory in California is likely to have an immediate effect in the empanelling of a jury of women. The State which has just enfranchised its women may be congratulated on taking the lead in so important a matter, and it is significant that the case on which the women jurors will be required to decide is that of the editor of a Southern Californian newspaper, who is placed on trial for circulating improper matter. The light of woman's power is being brought to the dark places. The utmost that British women can do in dealing with this very evil is exemplified in a strike declared in Limerick; the old Irish city has determined to stop the importation of objectionable papers from the Continent; newsagents and newsboys are lending their aid, and it is stated, on the authority of no less a person than the Lord Mayor of London, that one courageous woman, presumably a newsagent, returned unopened fifty dozen copies of a certain Sunday paper.

Equal Opportunities.

We hear with interest that the Caxton Publishing Company is to adopt a new method for filling a responsible position, in which a well-trained man or woman is required. It is to be by competitive examination in business methods. We suggest that the examination papers be marked by numbers or by pseudonyms, so that the gender of the writer may be unknown to the judges. We look to them for fairer treatment than that meted out by an "anti," Lady Griselder Cheape, when speaking to the Dundee Branch of the W.F.L. She refused to answer any questions! Suffragists will know how to deal with her in the future.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

Offices: 1, ROBERT STREET, ADELPHI.

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AT HEADQUARTERS.

Members' Meeting.—An important members' meeting will be held at Caxton Hall, Friday, November 3. The members of the National Executive Committee, who will that day meet at 1, Robert-street to deal with the business of the League, hope to meet as many London members as possible in the evening to discuss with them the position and affairs of the Women's Freedom League. The chair will be taken at 8 o'clock.

Discussion Meetings.—Members are urged to come in great numbers, and to be in good time at the Lower Essex Hall next Wednesday evening, when Miss Sydney Keith (of the Actresses' Franchise League) will open a discussion on "Why Should an Actress be a Suffragist?" her arguments being illustrated by recitations and music. Our President, Mrs. Despard, will take the chair at 8 o'clock.

The following Wednesday, November 15, Dr. Drysdale will open a discussion on "Our Food Supply and the Population Question." This should prove of great interest to a large circle of our friends, and we rely on our members to make the meeting widely known. Reserved tickets for these discussion meetings can be had from 1, Robert-street, at 1s. each.

Meeting at Fleming's Restaurant, 307, Oxford-street.—Mrs. Despard, supported by Mrs. Nourse, is lecturing here on Thursday, November 9, on "Co-operation Amongst Women." Will members and friends do their best to ensure a crowded audience on this occasion? The chair will be taken at 8 o'clock by Miss E. J. Read.

Literature Department.—We can give away some of the first edition of "Towards Women's Liberty," if applicants will enclose postage, which will be three-pence for the first pound, and one penny for every succeeding pound. We have two good second-hand copies of Olive Schreiner's "Woman and Labour," which we can let W.F.L. members (only) have for 5s. 6d. each cash net, postage 4d.

F. A. UNDERWOOD.

POLITICAL AND MILITANT WORK. THE BYE-ELECTIONS.

Keighley Bye-Election—Result.

Mr. S. O. BUCKMASTER (L.)	..	4,667
Mr. W. M. ACWORTH (U.)	..	3,842
Mr. W. C. ANDERSON (Lab.)	..	3,452
Radical majority over Unionist	..	825
Liberal majority last contested Election		3,636

Mr. S. O. Buckmaster, the Liberal candidate for Keighley Division, has been returned as the result of the bye-election by a majority of 825. It will be seen at a glance that the Liberal majority has been very considerably reduced, although possibly the introduction of a Labour candidate accounted for the greater number of these lost votes. At the same time, when in 1906 there was a three-cornered contest, the Liberal majority was 2,093. The W.F.L. opposed Mr. Buckmaster on account of his unsatisfactory attitude towards the widening amendments of the Conciliation Bill. Telling criticisms on this point were made by Miss Boyle and Miss Neilans at their various meetings. Miss Boyle did excellent work at this her first bye-election. The anti-suffragists appeared for a couple of days, but although we read in *The Standard* that they had been holding meetings with well-known speakers, we were

unable to hear of a single meeting being held by them or to find a single person who had been to one. However, perhaps the inclement weather proved too much for them. On election day a great number of the women were wearing Freedom League badges, and the polling-booths were staffed, and leaflets given away. Everywhere Miss Boyle and Miss Neilans were received with the utmost friendliness, and on the night of the poll many people called in at the shop to say good-bye.

Forthcoming Bye-Elections.

Miss Munro is making arrangements to go to Hitchin on Monday. Mrs. Tudor and Miss Lee have already begun preliminary preparations. At Bristol Mr. Hobhouse is likely to be returned unopposed. If a contest takes place in Oldham Miss Manning will probably be in charge, and will be glad of any help which can be given to her locally. As soon as the views of the candidates can be ascertained the policy of the League will be announced.

TAX RESISTANCE IN LIVERPOOL.

The Women's Freedom League heartily congratulates Mrs. F. N. Hall and her husband, who have made a splendid protest against the taxation of unrepresented women. The auctioneer, who is in sympathy with the suffragists, refused to take commission. The following interesting particulars are sent by Mrs. Hall.

The tax which my husband and I resisted was the Property Tax. This comes under Income-tax, Schedule A. The Income-tax Act of 1842, Section 45, which still holds good, stipulates that no married woman shall be held liable for taxation. It reads: "Provided always that the profits of any married woman living with her husband shall be deemed to be the profits of the husband and the same shall be charged in the name of the husband and not in her name nor of her trustee." Therefore it is easily seen that all demands made upon a married woman for payment of taxes, all attempts to enforce payment for same, or even to ask her to furnish particulars of her property or income are absolutely illegal on the part of the Somerset House officials and thus they themselves become law-breakers. Such unscrupulous proceedings of the Treasury officials have time after time been made known to the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the sufferers themselves, the Executive of the W.F.L. and the Women's Tax-Resistance League on behalf of married women, and also through questions asked and debated on by Members in the House of Commons—all so far without result. Year after year this Government Department still continues (illegally) to take advantage of the ignorance of married women to the extent of nearly £2,000,000, and I for one conscientiously and deliberately refuse, at any price, to condone this unjust and tyrannical misuse of power. The Government must either carry out this Statute—Section 45 of the Income-tax Act and obtain these taxes direct from the person liable—i.e., the husband, or they must repeal the Law of Coverture on which this Statute is based and allow the Married Woman's Property Act of 1882 (which in all these cases they deliberately ignore) to take its place—they cannot play fast and loose with both laws to suit themselves. Under the Married Woman's Property Act a taxpayer is dealt with as a person; under the Law of Coverture she does not exist. It is to establish the principle that I am a person and that my taxation must carry along with it representation that I refuse now, and ever shall refuse, to pay one penny towards taxation until "imperial votes" are given to women taxpayers as well as to men taxpayers.

The Government Department, after long correspondence, at last acknowledged my non-liability (thus clearly establishing the non-liability of all married women), but laid the liability on my husband. So I won my point. He refused to acknowledge this, as under the Married Woman's Property Act, which absolutely—when allowed to be used—annuls the earlier one of "coverture," I am responsible for my own debts on my own property; this was the position he took up, that as I was the owner and occupier of this property under the provisions of the Married Women's Property Act I was the responsible person. The distraint, however, was made on the goods in his name, though for my debt. I have still to be sued for the "Inhabited House Duty," but shall take a similar course of "refusing to pay."

For the sake of all married women and sympathetic husbands, I should like the position made widely known. I have heard of dozens of married women here in Liverpool who only want to have definite information to work from, and who are perfectly willing to "follow my lead."

IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY.

The prospects for this special campaign, which has been organised by Miss Clark, are very hopeful. A series of ten meetings in the district is planned, at which Miss Alison Neilans will be the principal speaker. On November 23 Mrs. Despard will speak at New-

town, and the Branch members are making great preparations for the event.

Any sympathiser who is willing to arrange meetings, or to help in any way to organise support for the Conciliation Bill in this district of Wales, should write to Miss Clark or to Mrs. How Martyn.

DAISY TURNER CAMPAIGN.

A meeting was held at Gloucester, in the Ruskin Hall, on Monday evening. Mrs. Hyde took the chair, and spoke of the past work of the Freedom League; Mrs. Vulliamy, who spoke afterwards, said that she had come to attend the Assizes to hear the trial of Daisy Turner, the girl of nineteen who is being tried for the murder of her baby. As the case had not been heard no comment was made on it, but the subject before the meeting was the inequalities of the law with regard to parentage, and the position of the "unmarried mother" and the illegitimate child. Mrs. Vulliamy based her remarks on the new leaflet, "Some Social Problems and Votes for Women," which has just been published by the League. Questions followed, and afterwards new members joined, who will be a nucleus for the Branch soon to be formed in Gloucester.

Mrs. Hyde, who has been canvassing in Gloucester, writes that:—

Mrs. Despard's speech in Gloucester has roused much attention, the result is a sustained correspondence in the local Press. Opinions seem fairly divided as to the merits of Votes for Women. Much work needs to be done, and I make an earnest appeal for funds. All readers of *THE VOTE* know the action the League is taking in the "Daisy Turner" case, and for such an object I am convinced I shall not ask in vain. Mrs. How Martyn or myself will be glad to receive contributions, small or large.

WOMEN AND THE INSURANCE BILL. SOME POINTED QUESTIONS.

A point that has not yet been made clear enough to women is that about eleven million men will receive the State contribution, but only about four million women will be eligible. This is, roughly, out of taxation of women and men, £4,766,700, or nearly £5,000,000 for men, and only £866,700, or nearly £1,000,000 for women. Women taxpayers are, therefore, to bear about 1½ millions yearly for insuring *men only*. Add to this one million for insuring *men only* against unemployment, and further £268,000 for payment of men's members, and we have some £2,000,000 sterling yearly taken out of women's pockets for benefits from which women are excluded. Further, women have to pay all through their young healthy years towards the sanatoria, only to find them reserved for *men only* if they apply for admission in later years of married life. We should also like to know out of what fund the sanatoria capital grant of 1½ million is to come, and in what proportion. Are women to be charged *half* of this? If so, we strongly protest. Clause 34, which is the last under which the position of women can be discussed generally, is to be taken together with Clause 35 in a single day! It is very apparent that no justice can be hoped for by women under this Bill. We ought, consequently, to reject it altogether, refuse to pay our contributions, or to collect them from other women, doing all in our power to make the Bill unworkable, and government without consent of the governed impossible. Let the word go forth, Boycott the Bill.

LEAH ANSON.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE: AN HONOURED NAME.

To have known Florence Nightingale was an honour and a joy, but her presence may still be felt throughout the land. All that needs to be done is to send 5s. to the Men's League for Women's Suffrage, 159, St. Stephen's House, Westminster; in return will come a charming reproduction, 15in. by 12in., of the picture of Miss Nightingale in the National Portrait Gallery. Through Captain Gonne's special process the picture is life-like in colour, and the well-known suffragist, Miss Eleanor Hannay, of the Royal College of Art, South Kensington, has designed a unique border, the Red Cross at the top and the cannon balls below symbolise the horrors of the battlefield and the merciful service of the women. Take advantage of this special opportunity and so help the men who are helping us.

LORD BEACONSFIELD: WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CHAMPION.]

At a recent suffrage meeting at Bath a letter was read by Colonel Skrine showing the strong support that Lord Beaconsfield gave to the cause of the enfranchisement of women. It was written before he entered the peerage, and ran as follows:—

"DEAR GORE LANGTON,—I was much honoured by receiving from your hands the memorial signed by 11,000 women of England, among them some illustrious names, thanking me for my services in attempting to abolish the anomaly that the Parliamentary franchise attached to a household or property qualification, when possessed by a woman, should not be exercised, though in all matters of local government, when similarly qualified, she exercises this right. As I believe this anomaly to be injurious to the best interests of the country, I trust to see it removed by the wisdom of Parliament.

Yours sincerely, B. DISRAELI."

"Thinking Women Read The Standard."

IN a few weeks this phrase has become a truism. Why? Order *The Standard* for a week, or a day, and you will see. It is because, since October 3, *The Standard's* daily news pages have included one headed:

"WOMAN'S PLATFORM,"

which every Thinking Woman in the land, and very many thinking men, want to see and to study every day. "WOMAN'S PLATFORM" has ended what was called the "Press Boycott" of the serious interests of thinking women—not their ribbons and ornaments, but their thoughts, aims, claims, views, hopes, deeds, and—Work.

"WOMAN'S PLATFORM" in *The Standard* has already become the Thinking Woman's own medium in the Daily Press of Great Britain. All thinking women, modern women, are keenly interested in "WOMAN'S PLATFORM." They know that it is their own; they themselves determine how much it can serve their own interests by:—

1. Following "WOMAN'S PLATFORM" closely and day by day in *The Standard*, and using it freely in women's interests, as opportunity offers.
2. Inducing the largest possible number of the general public—men and women—to do the same thing, thus extending the scope of its services to women.

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EVOLUTION AND THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

A SUGGESTION FOR DEVELOPMENT.

One of the most constant jibes which have been flung by Anti-Suffragists at those who have been fighting for the emancipation of womanhood for the past fifty years has been the assertion that they are "sex-antagonists." "The Woman Suffrage Movement is based upon sex-antagonism," say the Antis, and, strange as it may seem, there are still people in existence who believe that our objects are to wrest all power from the hands of men, to put the male sex in a politically subordinate position, to fill a majority of seats in the House of Commons with women, and to usurp all the best paid posts in the Cabinet!

That the women will all vote in one camp and the men in another is, also, evidently anticipated by those who think Woman Suffrage will mean the end of all things. Some, even, apparently imagine that, as soon as women obtain access to the ballot-box, they will immediately proceed to disenfranchise men. An Anti-Suffrage writer, in replying to an article by Mrs. Despard in *The Standard* not long ago, expressed this opinion in the following terms:—

As an old-fashioned Christian, who fears God and remembers Paul's warnings to Timothy in regard to the "perilous times" in which we live, I view with grief, amazement, and disgust this unfeminine and lawless movement to place the government of men in the hands of women.

That here and there, in the ranks of Women Suffragists, a "sex-antagonist" may occasionally arise is quite possible. Men who boast of being "women-haters" are also not unknown, but these exceptions may be said to prove the rule that those who are working for the freedom of women from political disabilities are actuated only by an earnest desire for sex-equality and not for a sex-supremacy.

In the early days of this great movement the very fact that women had begun a revolt—that they had cast aside tradition and convention, and were attempting to find a way to break the fetters which they had hitherto worn without a murmur—was, perhaps, sufficient to create misunderstanding. It seemed to men almost grotesque that those who for centuries had placidly acquiesced in being placed in an inferior position, should ask for—nay, even demand—"rights" which had always belonged, and naturally could only belong, to the dominant sex. "Divine discontent" was the prerogative of men only; for women to be discontented, and to translate such discontent into action was not only unwomanly—it was unpardonable. Mary Wolstonecraft, the pioneer of the Woman's Movement, was described by Horace Walpole as a hyena in petticoats.

We live in a changing world, however. One by one the thinking men of the community began to espouse the women's cause. How much women owe to John Stuart Mill need not be written here. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a veteran, who died recently in America, did yeoman service in the early days in lecturing and writing for the emancipation of women. Later on, came such champions as the Rt. Hon. W. W. B. Beach, the Rt. Hon. Leonard Courtney, Mr. Faithful Begg, Sir Wilfred Lawson, Sir William Wedderburn, the Rt. Hon. C. P. Villiers, and others.

In the great army of men who are fighting to-day for the recognition of the human rights of women are stalwarts like Lord Lytton, Laurence Housman, Israel Zangwill, the Rev. Hugh Chapman, Philip Snowden, Keir Hardie, Henry Nevinson, H. N. Brailsford, Joseph Clayton, and Victor Duval. The Men's League for Women's Suffrage published, some time ago, a "Declaration of Representative Men in Favour of Women's Suffrage," which included the names of men drawn from all parties, classes and professions. Leading lawyers and historians signed the declaration; the Army, the Navy, the Churches, the Schools, the Stage, Music

and Arts, Labour, Commerce, and Finance were all represented.

The advance of opinion among cultured men on the subject of Woman Suffrage is significant. At first men, with a few honourable exceptions, laughed at the movement; next, taking it more seriously, they gave to it passive resistance; later on they began to approve and applaud; to-day they are actively and bravely helping us by forming Leagues and Societies to strengthen our hands. The fact that men are now recognising, in these practical ways, that this great movement towards woman's liberty is really a movement towards human liberty, that "the woman's cause is man's" and that the interests of men and women, the home and the nation cannot be separated, surely proves that the time has come when men and women, who will by and by work together in that larger world for which we are all striving, should join hands and stand shoulder to shoulder in a real union within our ranks. The men who have sympathised with us so deeply in our struggle and who wished to evidence that sympathy by active service, have been compelled to form leagues of their own because the existing Suffrage Societies did not admit them to membership.

This condition of things was, after all, only to be expected. "Who would be free himself must strike the blow." It was fitting and right that the pioneer work should be done by societies consisting only of women. Until men had adjusted their vision, until they had come to the full understanding that we were fighting a battle, not for selfish interests or sex privileges, but for human justice and for bringing about a saner, happier, cleaner condition of things for the Father, the Mother, and the Child, we could not ask them to enrol themselves under our banners.

The Women's Freedom League owes much to the brave and valiant men who have helped us by their sympathy and active support on many public occasions. I am of opinion that if our League elected to be the pioneer Suffrage Society in throwing open its portals to men and women alike, our work would gain immeasurably by consolidation and expansion. We have, at present, a few men associates. Let the men who are willing to come in and work with us be given equal voting and administrative rights with the women. This development would not entail any drastic change in our constitution. Our principles and our methods would remain the same. Our internal organisation would be slightly different. The Council or Executive might be composed of twenty-four members, including a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Branches would, naturally, have the right to send delegates of both sexes to our Conferences.

The subject is one which, I venture to suggest, is worthy of serious consideration and discussion at Branch meetings, and upon which resolutions might be framed to send to our next Conference. It is one, also, which might afford an opportunity for the expression of views in our Open Column, one point being especially borne in mind, *i.e.*, that, as "The Women's Freedom League," we have asserted the necessity for democratic ideals in our constitution. Let us now, as "The Freedom League" (a very slight change in name), put those ideals into full practice. I agree with a recent contributor to *THE VOTE*, that women should enter all movements. I hold, indeed, that no progressive movement should exclude either men or women and that the time has now come for the Women's Suffrage Societies to open their gates wide enough to admit men who desire to work not only for but with us for the Common Cause. Now is the day, and now the hour for this great step forward.

LOUISA THOMSON-PRICE.

A NEW novel, entitled "No Surrender," by Constance Elizabeth Maud (author of "An English Girl in Paris"), has just been published by Mr. Duckworth. Though fiction, it deals with facts, and treats of many aspects of the great Woman's Movement of the day, and the way in which that movement affects girls of every class.



SEALSKIN

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The treaty about to be ratified between England and the various Powers interested in the Seal industry is of particular importance both to furriers and the general public. Pelagic fishing will be a thing of the past, and, in order to prevent the herd being exterminated, only a selected number of picked bachelor seals will be slaughtered each year. A very limited number of these will find their way into the English market, and it is thought that before the rookeries can be restocked prices will be doubled.

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WOMEN IN THE MINISTRY.

The subject for discussion at the weekly Essex Hall meeting held on Wednesday, October 25, provoked wide interest. The Rev. Hatty Baker, who is a minister of the Congregational Church, opened with a paper on "Should Women Enter the Ministry?" In a masterly manner Miss Baker marshalled fact after fact from authority after authority to prove that not only were women as much a part of the Church ministry as men, but that their ministry was accepted and appreciated by all until the darkness of the Middle Ages descended on the Church. The gradual widening of the rift between clergy and laity resulted also in the gradual exclusion of women from their recognised place in the ministry of the Church. The paper was divided into three parts, the first dealing with the position of women in sacred service in the Old and New Testament. Miss Baker proved her case by many quotations, including the authority of Christ and St. Paul. The second dealt with the position and authority of women in the ministry in the early Church, and evidence was given from Church historians as well as the "fathers" of the Church, notably St. Jerome and Tertullian. In the third part Miss Baker dwelt especially on the crying need for women in the ministry to-day, maintaining that the spirituality and intuitive insight of women, as well as the genius and reasoning faculties of men, were needed to interpret the Divine nature of the Mother-Father God to humanity. She also claimed for woman the right to serve her God in the highest and most direct way. After the address, which was listened to with intense interest, questions followed thick and fast, and the interest aroused was so great that the audience eagerly bought Miss Baker's little book, in which the arguments and authorities are set forth at greater length. There were many strangers among the audience, and a good collection was taken.

MADGE TURNER.

THE VOTE.

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SATURDAY, November 4, 1911.

KEEP YOUR POWDER DRY!

No sincere Suffragist requires to be convinced of the extreme urgency of the vote. But a consideration of the proposed legislation for the present Session and of recent Ministerial behaviour is not calculated to lessen our impatience for that, which according to so great an authority as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, can abolish almost every injustice if "skilfully, boldly, and prudently handled."

In spite of the notoriously unfair treatment meted out to women under the Insurance Bill, the Government have signified their intention of carrying it through, allocating only one day for the consideration of those clauses which affect the voteless half of the community. From the politician's point of view—which is not necessarily that of the statesman's—it is safe to ignore the claims of those whom he considers powerless to influence his position in the House! Meanwhile, every day of our servitude adds to the arduousness of the task that awaits us when we come into the possession of the political weapon. Precedent, which in the House of Commons is worshipped as a fetish, has lately been established for the wholesale filching of Private Members' time. More recently still, precedent has been created for the Government's right to abolish free speech in the Mother of Free Parliaments!

It may be asked how Ministerial action in regard to rules and procedure of the House affect women who at present do not elect members to that assembly? If we had succeeded in inducing Mr. Asquith to make a Government measure of the Women's Enfranchisement Bill there would be no danger to our Cause—at least, from the standpoint of political expediency—in the new regulations. But the Bill that will be introduced next year, as in previous years, will be what is called a Private Member's Bill. Of course, the term is a misnomer; in reality there is no such individual as a "private" Member, since every Member of Parliament is elected by a certain number of the public. In the House of Commons, however, every representative who does not form one of the little circle known as the Cabinet—ostensibly the executive of and responsible to the entire House, but really an irresponsible bureaucracy—is styled by custom a Private Member. It is this Private Member—in charge of our Bill!—whose power is so rapidly waning that it may be said to be almost moribund.

But we have Mr. Asquith's promise of facilities. Is not that equivalent to a Government pledge to see the Bill safely through the House, since we are sure of our majority if unmolested; and is it not a mistake even to appear to question the Government's intentions? Is it not infinitely better from every point of view so to trust the Prime Minister as to make it impossible for him to betray his given word?

If advanced by the political tyro these arguments might be excusable. But no serious student of politics would consider them tenable. And here it may be said that it is the duty of every woman claiming the vote to make herself thoroughly acquainted with political history—past and present—lest she founder upon the sea of ignorance; and, what is much more important, wreck the craft for which she so ardently cares. To trust another—even a politician!—may, in certain circumstances, be both generous and wise. But if we are to make absolutely sure of getting what we want, we must trust ourselves alone. There is probably less reason to doubt Mr. Asquith's sincerity than that of almost any other Minister, but assuredly it will not

mitigate against the redemption of his pledge if Suffragists guard against fortuitous circumstances. On the contrary, as Mr. Asquith would be the first to admit—to himself—the more unceasing our vigilance, the more tireless our activity, the easier will it be to grant the facilities promised. That politicians yield only to pressure is not merely a platitude but an incontrovertible fact, and not until our Bill is actually an Act of Parliament can Suffragists afford to trust anybody but themselves.

Those who walk with eyes shut are apt to stumble. If there is an obstacle in our path it is much wiser to recognise and negotiate it than stupidly to deny its existence, since in the latter case it may trip us up when gazing heavenward in our beatitude! It behoves us, therefore, courageously to examine and fearlessly to face our present position. Although we are in sight of the goal, the vote is not yet won. There is still the last lap to run, and the race is to the swift. It must not be taken for granted that the laurels are already upon our brows. All history teaches the utter folly of making sure of anything until it is within our grasp. And what is the good of living in the twentieth century, if we are to repeat the mistakes of the nineteenth?

The Prime Minister has promised facilities for the Conciliation Bill next year. And so large is the number of friends who will ballot for our Bill, that it is practically certain an early date will be secured for the second reading. As the Bill will be drafted on exactly the same lines as this year's Bill, it is reasonable to suppose it will command at least as much support. The Committee stage, which is the crucial time for any Bill, will then have arrived.

It is usual, unless a Bill be highly controversial in character, to send it to a Standing Committee in order to save the time of the House. And there is no reason why this course should not be adopted in regard to the Women's Bill, the principles of which have so often and so handsomely been approved by Parliament, and which would long ago have passed into law, were it not for the intervention of the Cabinet.

But if time is to be granted to discuss the Bill in Committee of the whole House, what difference can it make? That is the point.

Facilities have been promised for next year, but the exigencies of Government will probably be pleaded for refusing to redeem the pledge till late in the Session. Now next year, as everybody knows, the Government intend to introduce a Home Rule Bill. It is of the utmost importance that the Women's Enfranchisement Bill should have passed through the Commons before the Irish measure makes its appearance. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly. Governments have come to grief over less contentious measures than Home Rule. We cannot, therefore, jeopardise our Bill by waiting till the end of the year. We must endeavour by every means in our power—and to the determined all things are possible, especially in politics—to have it dealt with as soon as Parliament meets next Session. It is rumoured that the Home Rule Bill is not to be introduced till March. There will be time, therefore, to pass the Women's Bill before the Irish Bill comes before the House. If in spite of the number of friends who intend to ballot for our Bill we should not be successful in securing the place we desire, Mr. Asquith will have a splendid opportunity of giving effect to his pledge in the best possible way—i.e., by providing time for our measure before the Home Rule Bill is introduced. If he agree to do this it will not greatly matter whether the Bill be sent to a Grand Committee or Committee of the whole House. Should he refuse to do this, however, then every member who votes for the Second Reading should vote also that the Bill be sent to a Grand Committee. Members who are sincere in their attitude towards Women's Suffrage cannot fail to see the necessity for such action. It should be remembered, also, that every Private Member who helps to carry our Bill will not only perform a signal service to women

but incidentally to himself. The placing upon the Statute Book of such an important measure as the Conciliation Bill by the direct aid of unofficial Members, will do much to rehabilitate them in their former honourable and useful position in the House of Commons.

But whether our Bill is carried next year depends mainly upon ourselves. If in spite of all our energies, our whole-hearted concentration upon the single issue, women are again betrayed, Suffragists will know how to act. And for that eventuality we must keep our powder dry!

M. SLIEVE MCGOWAN.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Miss Fay Davis at the Lyceum Theatre, on the occasion of the Actresses' Franchise League Matinee, October 27, 1911.

Before the sunrise there must come the grey,
So bear with me—the prologue to the play.
Not mere diversion is our true intent,
To whisper it—on politics we're bent.
While preachers rarely to performance reach,
We at one blow shall both perform and preach.
You dreamed us dummies to fit dresses on,
To prop heroic mask of Amazon,
Princess or Queen, ourselves but tailors' blocks,
Or if with thoughts, then merely orthodox.
Not so; behind our mask we keep our soul,
Nor take our mimic world for the great whole.
All noble causes tax our pence and prayers.
Are all the men and women merely players,
As Shakespeare said? Then players in their turn
Are men and women who aspire and yearn.
And is it true that all the world's a stage?
Then we would act on that and on the age.
And so we covet parts in that great play
For which the whole world is a stage to-day;
That drama with a purpose finely human,
To raise man higher by uplifting woman.
We, too, demand by love and sacrifice,
To pay our quota of the grievous price
Blind man exacts for setting woman free,
Labours and pains no less than gold the fee.
The scoff, the blow, the prison—worst of all,
The bitter need like men to brawl
And wherefore, prithee, all this monstrous ransom?
How is she not man's equal, save more handsome?
In Shakespeare's day, if Clio's voice be truth's,
His heroines were played by beardless youths.
Just fancy Rosalind a real male,
Quaffing, between the acts, her stoup of ale,
Or Perdita concealing manly art,
Or Desdemona shaving for the part.
Imagine some mere man for Ellen Terry—
You might as well replace champagne by sherry.
We've won equality upon the boards,
But on the world's stage men are still the lords,
Making sad mischief with their stupid swords.
The time is out of joint—let's set it right,
Not whine and wail with Hamlet, "Cursèd spite."
That cry was merely masculine hysteria,
For real statesmanship you need Egeria.
But Hamlet was so hard soliloquising,
He had no ear for feminine advising,
Ah! if instead of suicide-suggestion,
To vote or not to vote had been the question,
Ophelia had met, with mocking flout,
Hamlet's male insolence of sneer and doubt.
Nunnery, forsooth! When she at Hamlet's fat form
Could thunder suffrage from the castle-platform!
"The time is out of joint?" Then what's the cure?
Joint work of men and women, to be sure.
Joint work to foster every noble growth,
Joint work to make a better world for both.
Refuse us this, let false friends trick the nation
To burke the Bill that brings Conciliation,
Then have at you, my lords, on with the fray.
How long, O lords? 'Till woman has her way.

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

THE ACTRESSES' MATINEE.

The suffragettes, suffragists, and members of the general public who attended the matinee given by the Actresses' Franchise League at the Lyceum Theatre, on Friday afternoon last, were regaled with a feast of good things. Every item on the long programme was interpreted by an artist of note, and the League is heartily to be congratulated on the influence and organisation that can call together such an array of "names to conjure with."

The prologue, written by Mr. Zangwill, was delivered most effectively by Miss Fay Davis. Miss Lena Ashwell delighted the audience with her rendering of "The Species of the Female," a witty and telling parody of Kipling's egregious poem, "The Female of the Species." The fairy-like dancing of Miss June Tripp—what a felicitous name for a little girl of eight or nine who can dance like a leaf blown by the wind!—brought her some well-deserved flower trophies; while Miss Marie Tempest's songs, Mr. Tom Clare's humorous sketches, and Miss Lottie Venne's delightful monologue, given in her inimitable style, won great applause.

Miss Lily Clare kindly sang "The Awakening," at a few hours' notice, in place of Miss Marie Stewart. It was illustrated by a tableau arranged by Sir George Frampton, R.A., in which Miss Lily Brayton posed as the Woman of the Future. Round this exquisite centre were grouped some of the most beautiful actresses in London, typifying the women of various nationalities. Two scenes from Ibsen's "Doll's House" were powerfully acted by Mr. Ben Webster, Mr. Ewan Brook, and Miss Cecilia Loftus. Miss Adeline Bourne took the part of Mrs. Linden in the second scene, and it must have been a disappointment to many that this brilliant artist was not seen in a longer role; though we can understand that—as the invaluable hon. secretary of the A.F.L.—she was needed in many capacities that afternoon. Miss Loftus received some beautiful bouquets at the end of her scene, and she and Mr. Webster had to respond several times to the calls of the audience.

Of course, the chief attraction of the afternoon was the production of Mr. Lawrence Housman's clever skit on "Alice in Wonderland."

"Alice in Ganderland" must be read to be thoroughly appreciated, for epigram follows epigram, witty inconsequence hits back in sly digs at the political parties with such rapidity that one can hardly take in the humour and satire of it through the medium of a play. The Mad Hatter (the Liberal Party) who looked just as if he had stepped out of the pages of Lewis Carroll's book; the Dormouse (the Conservative Party) who kept falling asleep and was promptly suppressed by the Mad Hatter and the March Hare (the Labour Party) whenever he attempted to speak, were all inimitably acted by Mr. Ernest Thesiger, Mr. T. N. Weguelin and Mr. Lytton Grey, whilst Alice in the costume in which she captivated the hearts of children and grown-ups two generations ago was delightfully rendered by Miss Eva Moore.

The stately pageant of the Suffrage Leagues at the end of the play was a fitting conclusion to a most enjoyable suffrage afternoon, and if any "antis" were present they must have realised that they have a long way to go before they will "catch up" with the numerous leagues and unions that have sprung into being since the militant wing began "putting the clock back" with such abnormal success a few years ago. M. H.

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB DINNER.

A goodly company assembled in the Grand Hall of the Criterion Restaurant last Thursday on the occasion of the annual dinner of the International Women's Franchise Club. Among those present were Sir Alfred Mond, M.P. (presiding), the Hon. Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G., Lady Cockburn, Mr. and Mrs. Israel Zangwill, Mrs. Snowden, Mr. T. W. Pethick Lawrence, Lady Stout, Captain Gonne, Miss Eva Moore, Mrs. Bertha Ayrton, Mr. and Mrs. Fox Bourne and Mr. Goldfinch Bate.

Letters and telegrams of regret were received from Lord Lytton, Madame Sarah Bernhardt, Lady Willoughby de Broke, Lady Abercrombie, the Bishop of Lincoln, Miss Dove, Sir Frederick Pollock, Mrs. Arthur Lytton and Mr. Ernst Backman, President of the Swedish Men's League for Woman Suffrage.

In proposing the toast of "The Cause and the Conciliation Bill," Sir Alfred Mond remarked that Woman Suffrage was only one manifestation of the righteous attempt to obtain equality in the treatment of both sexes. As long as one half of the population remained without political power there could be and should be no peace. The Conciliation Bill was the only Bill which we could have an opportunity of placing on the Statute book in this Parliament. It had been shown that eighty per cent. of the women who would be enfranchised by the Bill would be working women and no married woman who was already qualified under Municipal Suffrage would be excluded. He urged all friends in the House to concentrate on the Bill.

Lady Stout said she came from the land where every woman of full age had the vote, and she deplored the fact that when New Zealand and Australian women came over to this country they lost their citizenship. She pointed out that in New Zealand, where Woman Suffrage was accepted in theory and practice, a man could not leave his property away from his wife and family, that there was no entail, and that landed property was divided among sons and daughters as personal property. The divorce



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laws in New Zealand were equal for men and women and under the naturalisation laws a woman who married a foreigner did not, as in this country, lose her rights as a British subject.

Mr. Israel Zangwill, in a speech sparkling with wit and humour, referred to the debate in the House of Commons in which an Anti-Suffragist, Mr. McCallum Scott, had said that there were only fifteen arguments against Woman Suffrage, and with fourteen of these he totally disagreed. "Like the Italians in Tripoli," said Mr. Zangwill, "we are on the field, and, like them, our object is to displace the Turks. All these centuries of Turkish delight do not die without a struggle." Referring to Mrs. Humphry Ward's articles in *The Standard*, Mr. Zangwill thought that there was no greater argument for Woman Suffrage than Mrs. Ward herself. He had often asked her why she considered herself his political inferior, but she never would rise to the challenge. It was an interesting fact to observe that out of 670 members of Parliament, only eighty-eight were found bold enough or desperate enough to vote against the Conciliation Bill. Mr. Lloyd George's attitude towards the Bill had been such that he must not be surprised if we considered him a more dangerous enemy than Lord Curzon, Lord Cromer and Mrs. Humphry Ward rolled into one. All the Suffrage societies agreed with the Conciliation Bill. Parliament must not put asunder what all the Suffrage societies had joined together.

Sir John Cockburn said he looked upon the joint citizenship of men and women as the best hope of the future. This was a world-wide movement, and even the dry bones of Persia were being stirred. Mrs. Philip Snowden spoke of the aims and ideals of the club and Mrs. Stanbury gave some interesting particulars of its progress. Mr. Cholmeley, in the absence of Mr. Cecil Chapman, J.P., proposed the toast of the chairman and the guests. L. T. P.

BRANCH NOTES.

NATIONAL OFFICES, LONDON.—1, Robert-street, Adelphi, W.C.

London Branches Council.

A meeting of the Council was held on Monday, October 23, when it was decided that the Jumble Sale should take place on Saturday afternoon and evening, November 11, at Tolmer's-square Institute, 141-153, Drummond-street, N.W. All Branches are asked to help make this a great success by collecting articles of any description and forwarding them to Mrs. Fisher, THE VOTE Office, 2, Robert-street, Adelphi. New goods of any description, particularly those suitable for Christmas gifts, will also be acceptable, as Mrs. Fisher hopes to be able to arrange a sale of these the night before. Volunteers are wanted to help at the sale.

It was also arranged to hold a series of *cafés chantants*, organised by Mrs. Fisher and a small committee, at Caxton Hall on the following Saturdays, November 18, December 16, January 20 and February 24, from 7 to 10 p.m. Tickets, at 1s. 6d. each or 5s. the series (including refreshments), are on sale at the office, or they may be obtained from the Branch secretaries. Everyone is asked to make these socials a signal success by coming and bringing with them as many of their friends as possible. Mrs. Fisher is arranging a most interesting programme of music, theatricals, dances, &c., and a room for whist will be provided for those who prefer it.

Many interesting reports of Branch work were read. The Kensington Branch has arranged to hold a speakers' class twice a month during the winter. Members of other Branches are invited, and it is hoped that many will take advantage of such a valuable class. It was decided to hold the annual meeting of the Council at 1, Robert-street, on Monday, November 6, at 7 p.m.

Battersea.—Secretary, pro tem: Mrs. TIZARD, 56, West Side Clapham-common, S.W.

Will members and sympathisers in the South-Western district please remember the jumble sale? Parcels will be gratefully received by Mrs. Sutcliffe, 113, West Side, Clapham-common. It is hoped to arrange for an "At Home" in Battersea at the end of November, further particulars of which will duly appear in THE VOTE.

Croydon.—Hon. Secretary: Mrs. TERRY, 9, Morland-avenue, Croydon. Office: 32A, The Arcade, High-street.

At our weekly "At Home," on October 27, Mrs. Tanner gave a most useful and interesting *resume* of Olive Schreiner's book, "Woman and Labour," showing how the writer had traced woman's life from the earliest times until the present, when she is demanding a share "of honoured and socially useful toil." There was a good attendance of members and friends. On November 3 we hope for a good gathering, when Mrs. Harvey has promised to give us a reading.—E. TERRY.

Hackney.—Hon. Secretary: Miss P. LE CROISSETTE, 238, Navarino Mansions, Dalston-lane.

On Thursday, October 26, a Branch meeting was held at the Hackney shop, and a most enjoyable social evening was spent. Miss Roles provided the entertainment in her role of *raconteuse*. Mrs. Despard is the speaker for November 2, when it is hoped the Branch members will come in large numbers. The Weekly Sewing Meeting is held every Wednesday at the address announced in Forthcoming Events column. A whist drive will be held at 23, Terrace-road, South Hackney, on Thursday, November 16, by favour of Mrs. Catmur. Please keep this date free and apply for tickets as early as possible from the Branch secretary or the shop.—P. LE CROISSETTE.

Herne Hill and Norwood.—Hon. Secretary: Mrs. A. PRESBURY, Oak Cottage, Dulwich.

Despite the disadvantages under which our "At Home" was organised, many members and friends, with a preponderance of strangers, filled Willoughby Hall, West Norwood, on Monday, October 23. Mrs. How Martyn and Mrs. Tanner were the speakers, and Miss Underwood chairman. Mrs. Wright gave the keynote by a spirited rendering of "The Awakening." The audience listened with manifest interest to addresses by Mrs. Tanner and Mrs. How Martyn. The former dealt with the broader aspects of the struggle for woman's emancipation. Mrs. How Martyn dealt with the Conciliation Bill as a practical measure. A very satisfactory collection was taken, after which coffee and cake were served. Many thanks to all members and friends who, by assisting with post-parades, bill distributing, and in other ways, helped to make the meeting a success.

Mid-London.—Hon. Secretary: Mrs. TRITTON, 1, Northcote-avenue, Ealing, W.

I hope that we shall have a good attendance at our quarterly Branch meeting on November 13, 7.30 p.m., at 1, Robert-street. After the necessary business is disposed of, a member of the N.E.C. will lay some proposals before the meeting.

Stamford Hill.—Hon. Secretary: Mrs. CUNNINGHAM, 114, Holmleigh-road.

Will members be sure to attend the "At Home" on November 7 in full force? It is to be held at Northfield College (by kind permission of Miss James). A full programme is arranged. Tea and coffee will be served punctually at 7.30 p.m., the addresses following at 8 p.m. Members will have the pleasure of hearing for the first time Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett, as well as Mrs. Tanner, who will speak on "Women's Fight Against Prejudice and Ignorance," and Mrs. Piercy, A.J.S.M., who will recite extracts from the works of Olive Schreiner bearing upon the "Woman's Movement." Will all members kindly do their utmost to bring three friends to hear these excellent speakers? The speakers' class will meet as usual at 4 p.m. on Thursday, November 9, at Mrs. Thomson's. Sewing parties meet now on Wednesdays at Mrs. Cunningham's at 3 p.m.; Mrs. Cregan, Mrs. Cunningham and Mrs. Barron will read papers on November 10 at Mrs. Goodwin's, 23, Stamford-hill Mansions.

West Hampstead and Cricklewood.—Hon. Secretary: MME. J. VAN RAALTE, 23, Pandora-road.

A Branch meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 7, to discuss the question of organising an "At Home" to working women. Will all members kindly make a special point of attending?—J. V. R.

SOUTH OF ENGLAND.

Brighton and Hove.—Hon. Secretary: Miss HARE, 8, San Remo, Hove.

The Jumble Sale resulted in a profit of nearly £4. Miss Hare held a very crowded "At Home" on Wednesday, at which Mrs. Despard spoke, delighting and encouraging members of the various local Suffrage Societies and many friends who were present. In the evening a meeting was held under the auspices of the local Theosophical Society, at which Mrs. Despard gave an inspiring address on "Theosophy and the Woman Movement." The next meeting will be at Mrs. Francis' house on Wednesday, November 8, at 3.30 p.m., when Miss Nina Boyle, of Johannesburg, will speak. Members and friends are welcome.

EAST ANGLIA.

Ipswich.—Hon. Secretary: Miss C. E. ANDREWS, 160, Norwich-road.

Our sale of work was very successful; our thanks are due to all the kind friends who helped, especially to Mrs. Bastian, who opened the sale with most encouraging words. News comes from Stowmarket of the wish to form a Group there, and I have undertaken to arrange a meeting at the earliest opportunity. We are looking forward to a good meeting on November 2, when Mr. Henlé has promised to speak for us. On Thursday, November 9, there will be a meeting at the offices at 8 p.m. to discuss arrangements for a further programme of work.

WALES AND MONMOUTH.

Swansea.—Hon. Organising Secretary, Mrs. KNIGHT, 23, Walter-road. Hon. Corresponding Secretary, Miss PHIPPS, B.A., 5, Grosvenor-road, Sketty.

Mr. Olsson, on Wednesday evening, convicted us—not the "antis," but ourselves—of keeping back the Cause by indifference, want of sympathy, lack of interest in THE VOTE, and want of financial support. The discussion that followed was in dead earnest, and vows of amendment were made. The immediate result was a record collection. Do not forget to attend the Parliamentary Debate on November 15, at Dynevor-place. Come and hear Mr. Lloyd George and the "antis"—all on the same side. The Jumble Sale takes place on November 21, at the Ragged School, Orchard-street, next door to the police-station. Come at two o'clock to arrange the goods.

OTHER PROVINCIAL BRANCHES.

The Potteries.—Hon. Secretary: Mrs. PEDLEY, 18, Bower-street, Hanley.

We were very pleased to welcome our President, Mrs. Despard, on October 21, and there was a good attendance to hear her address in the Lecture Hall, Glass-street. The Rev. Mr. Pegler presided, and on the platform, in addition to the lecturer, were Mrs. Beechener, Mrs. Pedley and Mrs. Gough. Mrs. Despard

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dealt forcibly with industrial questions as affecting women and the position of the unmarried mother; she urged the women workers in the Potteries to support the Cause of women's emancipation. Literature and THE VOTE sold well, and the meeting was reported at length in *The Staffordshire Sentinel*.
Sunderland.—Hon. Secretary: Miss CLARK, 3, Havelock terrace.

A meeting of the Branch was held in Westcott House, John-street, on October 24. Miss Constance Tite, the treasurer of the League, presided, and urged members to concentrate their efforts upon the Conciliation Bill. Dr. Blair, in his paper on "Women," said that whether for good or evil there had been a great revolution in the position of women within the last twenty years. The question of woman's right was a change that had to be taken into account, and he defined the term as the right of a woman to develop herself to the highest point to which she was capable. He expressed himself in favour of the Conciliation Bill, but he thought that women should hesitate before mixing themselves in political turmoil. Discussion followed, in which several of the points mentioned by the Doctor were combated.

SCOTLAND.

Scottish Council.

With the beginning of the winter session, the Kilmarnock Branch are preparing for an active winter's work. A preliminary meeting was held at the Temperance Hall, at which Miss Anna Munro was the speaker. She laid stress on the necessity for women to educate themselves in preparation for the powers they have yet to hold, and indicated some of the especial reforms with which women will probably identify themselves. Mrs. Glass, the newly-elected President of the Branch, took the chair, and urged all present who were not already members to join the League. Her appeal had a good result in new members. A syllabus of monthly meetings has also been prepared at which Miss Murray, Mrs. Sproson, Miss Semple, Mr. and Mrs. Scrimgeour, and Miss Munro are expected to speak. Miss Jean Waddell has accepted the position of hon. secretary on the regretted retirement of Mrs. Cowan, owing to other engagements.

Glasgow.—*Suffrage Centre:* 302, Sauchiehall-street. *Hon. Secretary:* Miss MINA STEVEN. *Hon. Treasurer:* Miss JANET L. BUNTON.

The cake and candy sale on Saturday was a great success, especially the concert in the evening. Our thanks are due to the talented artists who so very kindly helped us: Miss Hendry, Miss Watson, Miss Wilson, Miss Kirkwood, Miss McAulay and Mr. Bathgate. Remember the jumble sale on Saturday first. The amount drawn depends on the quantity of goods sent to us. Will all who have collecting boxes and cards kindly return them to Miss Bunton before November 11. The Branch meets on Thursday first, when we hope to have Mr. Graham Cassells speaking on "Taxation of Land." Tickets for Mrs. Despard's meeting can be had from the conveners of districts, or at the centre.

Edinburgh.—*Hon. Secretary:* Miss A. B. JACK, 21, Buccleuch-place. *Hon. Treasurer:* Miss M. A. WOOD, 67, Great King-street. *Hon. Shop Secretary:* Mrs. THOMSON, 39, Rosslyn-crescent.

Many of those things which, according to Lady Jersey, "ought never to be publicly mentioned," were dealt with by Miss A. C. McLaren in an able paper on "Child Purity," read to the Branch on Wednesday evening. Miss McLaren's facts and figures were sufficiently appalling, but we rejoiced that the shop was crowded by an audience of women alive to the "dangers of ignorance." Special attention was drawn to the inadequacy of the provisions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, and to the need of radical amendment—one of the first objects to which enfranchised women must devote themselves. Our thanks are due to Miss McLaren for treating this difficult subject so courageously and so reverently.

The committee request members to keep Saturday, November 11, free for open-air work to advertise Mrs. Despard's meeting. Miss Dundas Grant has kindly promised the cost of a vehicle, and we hope to have the assistance of Miss Anna Munro. Tickets for the meeting (2s., 1s., and 6d.) are to be had at the shop. A new feature at the sale will be a second-hand bookstall. Contributions for this stall, as well as cakes, jams, sweets, and soft goods of all descriptions, will be gratefully received. Councillor Inman has kindly consented to open the sale.

HELEN McLACHLAN, Assistant Secretary.

Dundee.—*Hon. Secretary:* Miss L. CLUNAS, 1, Blackness-crescent.

The usual Branch meeting was held on Thursday last, Miss Husband presiding. The members turned out in large numbers to hear Lady Griselda Cheape. The meeting was robbed of any interest or excitement by the announcement that the speaker would answer no questions. True to their traditions, the members of the League gave the lady a courteous and patient hearing, though an onlooker might have observed on their faces humour struggling with decorum, eagerness to arise and confute fiction with truth, and again a wave of anger at the lady's placid acceptance of the wrongs of humanity. We felt at the end that by their own tactics the "antis" are defeating their ends. Without full and free discussion in public they will never make converts. The secretary intimated that tickets could be had for Mrs. Despard's lecture, and also drew attention to the Cake and Candy Sale, on November 25. Correspondence from headquarters was also discussed.—J. A. SMART, Hon. Press Secretary.

OUR OPEN COLUMN.

* * Letters intended for publication must be written on one side of the paper only, and authenticated by the name and address of the writer. It must be clearly understood that we do not necessarily identify ourselves with the opinions expressed.

"THE DANGEROUS AGE."

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

Dear Madam,—The reviewers inform us that this book (by Karen Michaelis) has been widely read on the Continent. Some predict that it will have as large a sale in England. Most of the reviews I have read have been written by men, all of whom seem to think that now the heart of woman has been revealed. The literary style is certainly above the average. It is the confession of a woman of forty-two—a woman whom the world held above reproach. From childhood upwards she considered a wealthy marriage as the "Mecca" of her existence. After living with her husband for twenty years she is filled with seeming disgust at the thought of continual connubiality. She leaves her husband, and goes to live in the heart of a forest. After a few months of solitude the desire for connubial bliss takes such possession of her that she offers herself first to a lover, then to her husband, each of whom in the interim had taken unto themselves a fresh lover. The teaching of the book—or the confession of the writer—is this: That when a woman is harassed by men her natural dignity prevents her yielding to their desires; but as soon as the pursuit ceases the position is reversed, and she is ready not only to yield but to offer voluntarily what she had before refused. The author admits that during this period, which she calls the dangerous age, she was suffering from hysteria. My objection to the book is not so great as my objection to the reviews. A woman with no aim or object in life save that of being admired might feel and write about her feelings as Madam Michaelis has done. The reviewers, however, seem to think that the author has given them the "Open sesame!" Women now stand before the world unmasked. As a story of a woman the book is great. As the story of women over forty the book is untrue. I have carefully inquired of my friends if any of it is true of their life. In nearly every case I have been answered in the negative. The few who think that the "Dangerous Age" is true of most women are those who, like the author, have taken no part in the world's work outside their own homes. To me the book was an appeal for the better education of our girls with a professional or business training—the independence of women so that marriage for a home or for means of sustenance should no longer be necessary. I would have the admission of women into all social, municipal and parliamentary spheres,

so there may be an outlet for the intelligent energy they possess. When that time arrives no woman will dread the "dangerous age," or go through the experiences of Madam Michaelis.
H. BRAY.

OTHER SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

The Church League for Women's Suffrage.—*President:* THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN. *Offices:* 11, St. Mark's-crescent, Regent's Park, London, N.W.

November 2, Redhill, St. Matthew's Church, Service of Intercession, 5.15 p.m., preacher, Ven. Archdeacon Daniell; Kensington, Queen's Gate Hall, Mrs. Percy Dearmer's Reading of "The Soul of the World," 3 p.m. November 3, Aylesbury, Co-operative Hall, 8 p.m. Rev. C. Hinscliff, Miss Canning, Miss Matters, Dr. H. Rose (chair). November 4, Wendover, Men's Discussion Meeting at Bosworth House, 8 p.m. Mrs. Meade. November 8, Hampstead Town Hall, 8.15 p.m. Rev. Percy Dearmer, Rev. S. Healey, Mrs. Mansell-Mullin, Mr. Laurence Housman, Mr. Reginald Pott (chair). November 10, Alan's, 263, Oxford-street, 3 p.m. Rev. T. G. Cree, Mrs. A. J. Webbe, Rev. A. H. Lee (chair).

Free Church League for Woman Suffrage.—*Hon. Organising Secretary (pro tem.):* Mr. and Mrs. ROGERS, 4, Cholmeley Park, Highgate, N.

November 2, at 33, Berkhall-road, Catford, Miss Hove, at 7.30 p.m., to form a Branch. November 3, at Aylesbury (Church League), Mr. T. G. Rogers. November 9, Plashet Park Congregational Church, Mr. Rogers. The Croydon Branch held a meeting on October 24. *Speakers:* Rev. E. T. Barron and Mrs. Baillie, D.Sc.

The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society.—*Hon. Secretary:* Miss RENDALL, 22, Wilberforce-road, Finsbury Park, N. *Hon. Treasurer:* MONICA WHATLEY, 75, Harcourt-terrace, The Boltons, London, S.W.

The meeting on October 26 was a splendid success, and a large audience listened with great interest to the magnificent speeches of Miss Abadam and Mr. Clayton. Mrs. Walter Roch made an excellent chair. A good collection was taken and many promises of help. A drawing-room meeting is being arranged for the first or second week in November.

The New Constitutional Society for Women's Suffrage, 8, Park Mansions-arcade, Knightsbridge (opposite Tube Station). *President:* Mrs. CECIL CHAPMAN.

The drawing-room meeting in Folkestone, at which Mrs. Chapman spoke, was most successful. It is hoped shortly to hold a

(Continue on page 24.)

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

LONDON.



BARE TO BE FREE.

Thurs., Nov. 2.—HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB BRANCH SOCIAL MEETING, The Institute, Hampstead Garden Suburb, 7.30 p.m. Tickets 6d. *Speaker*: Miss Nina Boyle. HACKNEY BRANCH MEETING, 8 p.m. *Mrs. Despard*.

Fri., Nov. 3.—NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, 2.30. IMPORTANT MEETING FOR MEMBERS ONLY, Caxton Hall, 8 p.m. HACKNEY, Queen's-road, Dalston, 8 p.m. *Mrs. Mustard*.

Sat., Nov. 4.—NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, 10 a.m.

Sun., Nov. 5.—MEN'S ADULT SCHOOL, WOODSIDE, 9.30 a.m. *Speaker*: Miss Ethel Fennings.

Mon., Nov. 6.—LONDON BRANCHES COUNCIL, Annual Meeting, 7 p.m., 1, Robert-street.

Tues., Nov. 7.—STAMFORD HILL BRANCH "AT HOME," 8 p.m., Northfield College. *Speaker*: *Mrs. Tanner*. OUTSIDE ACTON CHURCH, 7.30. *Mrs. Emma Sproson*.

Wed., Nov. 8.—LOWER ESSEX HALL, Discussion Meeting, 8 p.m. Miss Sydney Keith (of the Actresses' Franchise League) on "Why Should an Actress be a Suffragist?" illustrated by Recitations and Music. *Chairman*: *Mrs. Despard*. HACKNEY SEWING MEETING, 3 p.m., 23, Terrace-road, S. Hackney.

Thurs., Nov. 9.—FLEMING'S RESTAURANT, 307, Oxford-street (second floor). Public Meeting, 8 p.m. *Mrs. Despard* and *Mrs. Nourse* on "Co-operation Amongst Women." *Chairman*: Miss E. J. Read. HACKNEY BRANCH MEETING, 8 p.m. *Mrs. Wheatley*.

Mon., Nov. 13.—MID-LONDON BRANCH MEMBERS' QUARTERLY MEETING, 7.30, 1, Robert-street. *Mrs. Vulliamy*.

Tues., Nov. 14.—CLAPHAM BRANCH "AT HOME," Wirtemberg Hall, Clapham, 3.30 p.m. Lady Stout, *Mrs. How Martyn*. *Chairman*: Miss C. V. Tite. OUTSIDE ACTON CHURCH, *Mrs. Duval* and Mr. R. Pott, 7.30 p.m.

Wed., Nov. 15.—LOWER ESSEX HALL, Discussion Meeting, 8 p.m., Dr. C. V. Drysdale on "The Food Supply and the Population Question." *Chairman*: Miss F. A. Underwood. HACKNEY SEWING MEETING, 3 p.m., 238, Navarino-mansions.

Thurs., Nov. 16.—Whist Drive, *Mrs. Catmur*, 23, Terrace-road, South Hackney.

Sat., Nov. 18.—CAXTON HALL, Café Chantant, in aid of London Branches Council.

Fri., Nov. 24.—SOCIAL MEETING, Hampstead Garden Suburb, at the Club House, Willfield Way, 8 to 11.30 p.m. Dancing.

Mon., Nov. 27.—MID-LONDON BRANCH MEMBERS' MEETING, for discussion of Conference Agenda, 7.30, 1, Robert-street.

PROVINCES.

Thurs., Nov. 2.—IPSWICH "AT HOME," Mr. Henlé.

Wed., Nov. 8.—BRIGHTON. Miss Nina Boyle.

Thurs., Nov. 16.—EASTBOURNE. *Mrs. Vulliamy*.

DUNDEE.

Thurs., Nov. 9.—GILFILLAN HALL, 8 p.m. Subject: "A Vacation School in Paris." *Speaker*: Miss H. Wilkie, M.A.

Mon., Nov. 13.—Y.M.C.A. LOWER HALL, 8 p.m. Lecture on Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," by *Mrs. Despard*. Tickets 3d. EDINBURGH.

Tues., Nov. 7.—SUFFRAGE SHOP, 33, Forrest-road, 4 p.m. "AT HOME." *Speaker*: Miss Parker.

Wed., Nov. 8.—SUFFRAGE SHOP, 33, Forrest-road, 7.30 p.m. "At Home" *Speaker*: Miss Margaret Drummond, M.A.

Wed., Nov. 15.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, Forrest-road, 8 p.m. Lecture by *Mrs. Despard* on Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound." *Chairman*: A. Blyth Webster, Esq., M.A., Lecturer in English Literature, Edin. Univ. Tickets 2s., 1s., 6d.

Sat., Nov. 25.—SUFFRAGE SHOP, 33, Forrest-road, Sales 3 p.m. To be opened by Councillor Inman.

GLASGOW.

Thurs., Nov. 2.—BRANCH MEETING. *Speaker*: Graham Cassells, Esq. Subject: "Taxation of Land."

Sat., Nov. 4.—JUMBLE SALE IN PARTICK. CARDONALD LITERARY SOCIETY. Address by Miss B. Semple.

Sun., Nov. 5.—Adult School, Portland-street. *Speaker*: Miss Shennan.

Tues., Nov. 7.—Great Hamilton-street U.F. Church. *Speaker*: Miss B. Semple.

Fri., Nov. 10.—MEETING IN PHILOSOPHICAL ROOMS, 207, Bath-street, 8 p.m. *Speakers*: *Mrs. Despard*, Miss Anna Munro. Admission 6d. Doors open 7.30 p.m.

Sat., Nov. 11.—"AT HOME" in The Centre. *Speaker*: *Mrs. Despard*. Hostess: *Mrs. Turner*.

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Mon., Nov. 13.—Dennistoun E.U. Church, Meadowpark-street. *Speaker*: Miss B. Semple. KILMARNOCK.

Mon., Nov. 13.—Temperance Hall. Miss Anna Munro. PERTH.

Tues., Nov. 14.—PUBLIC MEETING, City Hall, 8 p.m. *Mrs. Despard*. Admission 1s., 6d., 3d.

SWANSEA.

WALES.

Wed., Nov. 15.—Dynevor-place, Parliamentary Debate on the Conciliation Bill. 8 p.m.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGHS.

Thurs., Nov. 2.—LLANMYNECH, Church Rooms. *Chairman*: Dr. Cartwright, Oswestry. *Speakers*: Miss Neilans, Miss Clark.

Mon., Nov. 6.—ABERMULE, Dolfornyn Schools. *Chairman*: Miss Clark. *Speaker*: Miss Neilans.

Tues., Nov. 7.—CAERSWS, Village Hall. *Chairman*: Edward Jones, Esq. *Speakers*: Miss Neilans, Miss Clark.

Wed., Nov. 8.—LLANFAIR, National School. *Chairman*: Charles Garfitt, Esq. *Speakers*: Miss Neilans, Miss Clark.

Thurs., Nov. 9.—MONTGOMERY, Town Hall. *Chairman*: Miss Clark. *Speaker*: Miss Neilans.

Wed., Nov. 22.—LLANFYLIN, Town Hall. *Speaker*: *Mrs. Despard*.

Thurs., Nov. 23.—NEWTOWN, Public Hall, Suffrage "At Home." *Speaker*: *Mrs. Despard*. 4 to 7.30 p.m.

Tues., Dec. 5.—WELSHPOOL. Debate, "Free Church Council." Miss A. M. Clark and *Mrs. Joseph Davies*.

OTHER SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

(Continued from page 23.)

campaign in Folkestone culminating in a public meeting. The Hythe campaign is in full swing, and our organiser reports that a local Branch for Hythe and Folkestone is being formed. The Christmas Sale has been fixed for Tuesday, December 12. Members are urged to help by sending goods suitable for Christmas presents. Some charming pottery has already been given, and Miss Douglas has kindly promised Christmas puddings. Orders for these can now be received at the office. The Jumble Sale takes place on November 3 at Sydney Hall, Pond-place, Chelsea, at 3 o'clock. Miss Porter will be glad to receive further parcels. The next office "At Home" will be on November 7, when Miss Roper will speak at 4.15 p.m. on "The Pit Brow Girls." Members will find this meeting especially interesting to their friends, and should make a point of bringing them to hear Miss Roper.

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