

THE VOTE

(THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE).

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ONE PENNY.

NOTICE.

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EDITORIAL.

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OUR POINT OF VIEW.

Bravo, Pit Brow Lassies!

The Lancashire pit brow lassies accomplished something more at Westminster last week than the surprise caused by their work-a-day costume and the clatter of their clogs. They evoked from Mr. Masterman, M.P., a straight declaration on the value of women's opinions about women's work, and, in addition, the statement that when a Parliament of men, elected by men, deals with women's questions, the necessity of votes for women is proved. This is particularly interesting, coming so soon after Mr. Masterman's return to the House. We hope that it may be taken as an indication that he—perchance with his recent election campaign in memory—will not pursue a course of opposition to the Conciliation Bill simply because it does not give all that he desires. It is eminently a case of being content, as men have been, with certain steps in the right direction. By the passing of the Bill, the State will have recognised its duty to women as citizens, instead of postponing that recognition until some indefinite future when Adult Suffrage can be carried. The case for the pit brow workers was so ably stated by their supporters, aided by the splendid appearance of the girls themselves, that Mr. Churchill guaranteed the opposition of the Government to the disabling amendment when the Bill next comes before the House. Even so strong an "anti" as Sir Frederick Banbury showed signs of repentance during the debate, which, he said, justified the cry that women should have a vote in the affairs of the nation. It is not often that women's deputations to the House of Commons are marked by the joviality and success which attended the laughing girls from the pit brows of Wigan. Perhaps we may take it as a good augury!

Payment of Members—with Women's Money.

Mr. Lloyd George said that with regard to the Insurance Bill he must keep a tight hand upon the purse-strings, yet he is prepared to find more than a quarter of a million of public money to pay salaries to Members of Parliament. To this sum women contribute as well as

men, yet it is not deemed necessary that the enfranchisement of women shall precede such a measure in order that women may have a voice as to the spending of their money. The Supreme Court of Appeal has decided that it is illegal for a Trade Union to spend its money on salaries for Members of Parliament; but no qualm is felt about spending money partly contributed by voteless women in such a way. In addition to indirect taxation women pay twenty-five millions annually into the Exchequer direct. The Members who will decide to pay themselves a salary with women's money do not represent women, and some of them are opposed to the Conciliation Bill, which seeks to enfranchise women householders, and so remedy the injustice to some extent. If we could count on the boasted chivalry of Parliament to women because they are voteless, we ought to have seen a different attitude in this matter: precedence given to a Bill to enfranchise women and then consideration of a measure for the payment of Members. As it is, the case is intolerable, so far as women are concerned.

Mr. Lloyd George and Women Malingers.

There is to be a breathing space at Westminster, followed by an Autumn Session devoted to the National Insurance Bill. Last Friday Mr. Lloyd George was allowed, in a rather irregular fashion, to make a statement on the progress of the Bill. In the course of a long speech he rejoiced that the greatest difficulty—the doctors—had been overcome, and that now they were allies. Without the co-operation of the doctors—who have votes—the Bill would have been impossible. Dealing with criticisms, the Chancellor could not overlook the women's case, and although he is ready to consider the right of married women, who have been contributors, to benefit under the Bill, he is very suspicious of malingering among women whose service to the State is performed in the home. There may be women malingers, as, undoubtedly, there are malingering men, but those who know the homes of the poor have evidence enough to prove that it is the women who deny themselves food and rest for the sake of husband and children. They cannot afford to be malingers; the stress is too great. This, however, is not the only point in the woman's case. When the Bill comes up again it will be needful to develop "a skilful attack" on behalf of women such as that on which Mr. Lloyd George complimented the Member for Pontefract on behalf of the doctors and collecting societies.

A Government Department for Children.

We welcome the excellent suggestion, emanating from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, that there should be a Government Department for Children. We fully agree that "the health of children is as important as the breeding of cattle, and the statistics of human life and death as valuable as Trade Returns." We suggest, however, that the "Minister" at the head of the proposed Department should be a woman. It would be easy to find a woman, experienced with regard to children, who could well undertake the duties. We have had already many instances of failure when men have attempted to legislate for women; let a right start be made in this admirable proposal, and give a woman—with, if deemed advisable, a committee of women and men to help—charge over a most necessary State Department.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

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AT HEADQUARTERS.

We are constantly hearing from our members at seaside resorts that good suffrage meetings are being held there by members of the Women's Freedom League, and many copies of THE VOTE are being sold. All this is excellent propaganda, and we urge every one of our members, when starting for her holidays, to take copies of THE VOTE as part of her luggage. They are so easily sold to holiday-makers. Any sympathisers visiting Broadstairs, Eastbourne, or North Wales within the next week or two are asked to communicate at once with us, and we will put them in touch with workers in those districts.

Arrangements for our autumn work in London are well in hand. Tickets for Mr. G. K. Chesterton's lecture in the Small Queen's Hall, Wednesday, October 4, at 8 p.m., are on sale at the office, prices 2s. 6d., 2s., and 1s., and admission will be by ticket only. We have already received applications for tickets, so those who wish to know how Mr. Chesterton has arrived at the conclusion that female suffrage is the last blow to democracy had better secure their tickets early. Following Mr. Chesterton's lecture we shall hold our discussion meetings at Essex Hall, Essex-street, Strand, Wednesday evenings, from October 11 till December 6, and hope that our members and friends will enthusiastically support them. The October fixtures are:—Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe (hon. secretary to the Sociological Society, and ex-editor of *The Statesman*, Calcutta) on "The New Puritanism," Mr. Laurence Housman on "The Immoral Effects of Ignorance in Sex Relations," and the Rev. Hatty Baker on "Women in the Ministry." F. A. UNDERWOOD.

WHAT MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ARE SAYING.

"The chief impression left on me by yesterday's debate [on the amendment about women workers to the Coal Mines Bill] was that the case was another argument for the necessity of votes for women. It is essentially a question that women should decide for themselves. If you have an occupation which is acknowledged to be not unhealthy, dangerous, or immoral, a man's Parliament, elected by men, has no right to prohibit women from it."—*Mr. C. F. G. Masterman, M.P.*

"If women are to be excluded from working at pitheads under suitable conditions, if they chose to do so, then there will be justification for the cry that women should have a vote in the affairs of the nation."—*Sir Frederick Banbury, M.P.*

"Anything I can do to forward the Woman's Suffrage Bill I will do. My conviction as to the essential justice of the claim of women to the vote only strengthens with years. On the score of moral expediency also I think that all right-thinking people should welcome their reinforcement by such an addition of the really 'better classes' to the franchise roll."—*T. M. Healy, M.P.*

"I support Woman's Suffrage because I believe in government by consent and in representative government. I believe, moreover, that only by the vote can women put such pressure upon Members of Parliament as will gain attention for their questions which men's questions at present receive."—*Harold Cawley, M.P.*

WOMEN UNDER THE NATIONAL INSURANCE BILL.

VI.—THE "YOUNG PERSON."

The Bill states, as drafted, "all persons employed within the meaning of this part of the Act shall be insured," and the meaning is "Employment in the United Kingdom . . . under any contract of service, or apprenticeship, written or oral, whether expressed or implied, whether paid by the employer or some other person, whether under one or more employers, whether paid by time or piece or without payment," or as an outworker. The effect of this is, we may say, roughly, to include everybody who works for an employer, whether paid or not, and of any age, and all half-timers, apprentices, learners, &c., will have their insurance compulsorily deducted from their wages, if any; if no wage is paid, the amount due must be paid by the employer.

The reduced rates of payment for those earning low wages only apply to workers over the age of twenty-one, so that those under that age will have to pay the full 3d. from whatever they earn. A dressmaker's apprentice, or "match-girl," of, say, fifteen, earning 2s. 6d. a week (dinner and tea provided) would have to pay 3d. per week, but a girl over twenty-one, in the same workroom, earning 9s. a week, would only pay 1d. (if Saturday is regarded as a full day, or 2d. if Saturday is to be calculated as a half-day). The "match girl" may thus have to pay 13s. yearly for six years if she continues in employment, and if she marries at twenty-one she forfeits everything paid in, amounting to some £4 3s. 6d. If any such girl can afford to put away 3d. per week in the savings bank she would do very much better to do so. I do not see why girls who marry should be taxed for the benefit of girls who do not marry, but I will not digress.

No young person under sixteen is eligible for any sick pay or disablement benefit, although they have to pay for it; but only for medical and sanatorium benefit, see Clause 38. It is estimated that there are about 320,000 employed girls under sixteen who will have to contribute. This amounts to £208,000 yearly, and is clear profit, as the cost of medical and sanatorium benefit and administration is more than covered by the employers' contribution of 3d. and the State 2d.

The increased contribution to be paid by the employer which is to make up the reduced contribution of the insured person, as given in Schedule II., Part II., of 3d., 4d., and 5d., only applies to persons over the age of twenty-one, so that a direct premium is thus put upon the employment of young persons under twenty-one, at any wage, because they will have to bear the whole 3d. weekly, whatever they are paid, so long as they are paid something, and are under twenty-one. If the employer engages women over twenty-one at a low wage he may have to pay as much as 5d. per head per week; as long as he confines himself to ages below twenty-one, he only pays 3d. This 1d. or 2d. per head will certainly be a consideration in many cases, and girls who work as bottlers, labellers, tiers, packers, of every sort of goods, soaps, scents, sweets, lamps, pickles, mineral waters, fish, preserves, tobacco, &c.—any reader can extend the list for herself—will be preferred below the age of twenty-one, if possible. This may tend to make it difficult for elderly women to retain such work as they now have, for they may be replaced by younger persons as opportunity offers. And certainly it is going to make it still more difficult for the married woman or widow to re-enter such insurable regular employment, if she has left it during part of or all her married life, so that she forfeits all she paid in when a young woman before marriage, and is unable to avail herself of the advantages promised in Clause 34, because she will be obliged to confine herself to casual work, and if she cannot afford to pay the employers' contribution as well as her own, 6d. weekly, she cannot again come into insurance.

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

ECONOMIC AND OTHER RESULTS.

Among the most important of the contributions to the Woman's Suffrage Association Congress at Stockholm were those of Miss Hodge, from Australia, and Miss Newcomb, from New Zealand. I am indebted to Mrs. Corbett Ashby for fuller notes of these communications, and have confirmed and supplemented them by reference to the Official Year Books.

The first Colony to adopt Woman's Franchise was South Australia, in 1894, and immediately after this there was an agitation for factory legislation, of which, till then, there had been none. Women had previously been paid much less than men, but their position rapidly improved. In 1902 complete political equality was granted in New South Wales and the Federal Government came into being. This was followed almost immediately by the granting of old-age pensions—the age limit being *sixty-five for women and seventy for men*, a considerable advantage being thus given to women, especially in view of their greater longevity. In 1908 Victoria at last adopted woman's suffrage, and the result was to give women shop-assistants equal pay to men. At the present time there is equal pay for men and women teachers in South Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria, and the lowest salary for women in the New South Wales Government service is £110 per annum. Throughout Australia women are not permitted to work at any poisonous trades such as match manufacture, etc. The industrial organisation of women has gone on very rapidly, and now girls are taught the rights and duties of citizenship in the schools. For the last Federal House of Representatives 44.8 per cent. of women electors voted as against 57.4 per cent. of men. There has been a very rapid decrease in crime in the Australian Commonwealth, the proportion of convictions for serious crimes per 10,000 inhabitants being as follows:

| 1881 | 1891 | 1901 | 1908 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 69.3 | 44.8 | 29.1 | 26.6 |

so we may gather that the giving of the vote to women has not led to such unhappiness in the home as to increase crime, but apparently has had the reverse effect!

In New Zealand, although Woman's Franchise has existed since 1893, the women are mostly engaged in their homes; however, the number of wage-earners is on the increase, and the improvement in their economic conditions has been most rapid. The wages of tailoresses have risen from 21s. to 25s. per week, although the hours have been reduced from fifty to forty-five. The improvement as regards waitresses is most extraordinary, their wages having been increased from 10s. to 25s., and their hours reduced from 70–90 to 52 hours per week. Women's wages have on the whole risen much more rapidly than those of men. In the printing trades the wages of men and women are nearly equal, and they are exactly equal when the women are in the Trade Unions. Women only work forty-five hours as against forty-eight for men, and have an allowance of 1s. for tea. In other directions sex antagonism, which was manifested formerly in industries, has now ceased entirely, and there has been a considerable diminution in crime owing to the spread of Temperance. In the 1905 election 82.23 per cent. of women electors voted, as against 84.07 per cent. for men. It is a curious fact that both men and women in New Zealand make more use of their vote than men and women in Australia at the present time, and one is glad that the longer use of the vote by women in New Zealand has not brought with it the familiarity which breeds contempt.

B. DRYSDALE.

We join in the chorus of congratulations to M.A.P. on its new feature, "Our Special Suffrage Page," and especially the promise of the editor to answer the objections of opponents of women's suffrage.

The benefits for young persons, aged sixteen to twenty-one, are for men 5s. per week, and for women 4s. per week for the whole twenty-six weeks. The "Disablement Benefit for females, the sum of 4s. per week." The contributions are, however, the same for both sexes until the wage limit of 2s. 6d. per day for men is passed; over that, men pay 4d., and the maximum for women is 3d. I have yet to be convinced that it is actuarially impossible to give women the same proportion of return as is given to men for such payments as they make, but if that is the case I desire to lay emphasis on the fact that it is proposed to insure compulsorily an estimated number of 9,842,000 men and an estimated number of 4,076,000 women (p. 9 Actuarial Memo.), for each of whom the State is to pay 2d. weekly. This amounts to a grant from the public purse of (say) £4,265,040 for men's health, but only, say £1,766,440 for women's.

It is quite fair to claim that the public purse is filled by the payments of men and women *in equal proportions*, and the utter unfairness of this position hardly needs comment. Why should money contributed by taxing men and women be devoted in more than double the amount to assisting men in sickness than to women? It cannot be urged that the payment in the case of a married man benefits his wife, for it is strictly limited to him (except for maternity benefit), and however ill an uninsured (non-contributing) married woman may be she has no advantage from the fact that her husband is insured, and men are, therefore, benefited to more than double the extent of the women by the grant from the State funds. If it is really impossible to do more for women than is proposed by this Bill on the basis of their own contributions, why should not the State grant be fairly divided between men and women, or increased in the case of the women until the amount placed to the credit of the (separate) women's fund equals the amount credited each year in respect of the men? Such surplus could be availed of as might be decided—by women!

Either by supplying medical benefit to married women, or by some grant to working mothers in lieu of the wages forfeited by them during confinement and the four weeks afterwards, before they are allowed to return to work, or in many other ways.

Returning to my "young person," Clause 8 (viii.) seems to show that the drafters of the Bill suspected that they had been somewhat unduly harsh with her, for it provides that in some dim and distant future when the income from accumulated investments at 3 per cent. is sufficient to cover "the amounts then standing to the credit of all approved societies," "regard shall be had to the claims or special considerations of persons who have entered into insurance at an early age."

This word "person" covers men as well as women, and it is absolutely beyond question (I am repeating myself) that separate accounts must be kept of the women's funds, with sufficient number of women in this service to audit and guard the accounts, or we may have benefits for young men swollen by the amounts paid in by young girls who have been fined their contributions on marriage. Up to now, as was stated in the House of Commons on July 5, the plan of the Government that women's contributions should be allotted to women, and men's to men, is not yet *in the Bill*. I do not know at the time of writing when this amendment will be published, or under which clause it is intended to be moved. I submit we are entitled to be informed on such a point as this before the Bill is pressed into law.

LEAH ANSON.

At present legislation is all from the point of view of men only. Women have no means of redress. They cannot wait upon a Member of Parliament, because he will not listen to them. They have no votes, and are not regarded as of any consequence politically; although when an election is on they are invariably called upon to assist in the work, and their services are so highly appraised that they are sent to the most difficult and obstinate electors to persuade them to vote for the right man.—*Mrs. Hobbs.*

WOMAN SUFFRAGE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

I have been a supporter of women suffrage for twenty five years before some of my ardent young militant friends had even seen the light.

When I came to London I took a small, low-rented house in Bedford-park, intending to make a fortune by journalism (I have not made it yet). I had not been established very long in my new abode when there was a General Election, and an agent called at the door. He asked to see my husband, or, failing that, my brother.

"I have neither husband nor brother," I replied. "If I only had a vote myself, I should be delighted to exercise my privilege."

The man stared at me as if I had seven heads.

"Your husband or brother?" he repeated; for he seemed to imagine that I must have a male relative concealed somewhere, no matter if he was weak-minded or incompetent to earn his living.

"I tell you I have neither," I repeated; "but I am obliged to pay rates and taxes all the same. I am thinking of declining to do so any longer, and in that case I may be put in prison. I am quite ready to go."

At this the electioneering agent evidently gave me up as decidedly wrong in the head. He went away with a look as much as to say my case was a hopeless one. I little thought when I said those words that not only I, but numbers of other women, would be found ready to bear the horrors of prison life in defence of their principles. Soon after my interview with the agent, a discussion took place at the Bedford-park Club on the subject of "Women Suffrage." Among the speakers against it was Mr. Atherley Jones, the now well-known K.C. He was not then entitled to the magic letters "M.P." after his name, but was only known as a clever, pushing young barrister, likely to get on. He was also celebrated at the Club as an excellent chess-player. He got up and made a long, rambling speech, in which he said that women knew nothing, and cared to know nothing, about politics; that his wife did not even know who was Prime Minister. He poked fun at the small, insignificant number of women who wished for votes; he ridiculed the movement mercilessly, and then sat down amidst applause. The motive of his speech seemed to be that women were dolls, whose business was to amuse men, and that men wished them to remain in this position. Well, I could not stand that; it seemed to me so unjust, so unfair, to exclude from the Suffrage women who were capable, like Harriet Martineau, of writing leading articles for *The Daily News*, or, like Frances Power Cobbe, of contributing daily to *The Echo*. So I stood up, on fire with enthusiasm, and, feeble though I was, I essayed my first speech against no less a personage than the satirical Mr. Atherley Jones. I forget now all I said. My friends were rather ashamed that I should have ventured to record my testimony; but I delivered my soul, and was satisfied. I have since heard that Mr. Atherley Jones has now become a supporter of Women Suffrage. I may be mistaken, but it is my impression that he has. And may I fondly imagine that my poor words that evening may have left some impression on his flinty mind? After two years' experience of Bedford-park, which, to my thinking, has all the disadvantages of the country without any of the advantages of a great city, I left it. And I always said that one of the reasons why I gave up my house was because I was not allowed to have a vote. At that time Woman Suffrage was looked upon as a lost cause, and it found favour with only the higher type of women, such as Mrs. Fawcett and Miss Helen Blackburn. For Miss Ada Blackburn, as a personal friend, I always had the deepest admiration.

A few years afterwards a prize of five pounds was offered for the best story illustrating the principles of the Woman Suffrage Association. I thought I would have a try for it, and great was my surprise when I got

a letter from Miss Edith Palliser, the secretary, to say I had gained half the prize, which was divided between another lady and myself.

I never heard anything more about that story. Whether it was printed or not I am unable to say. I spent the money, and there was an end of it. And now years have rolled by and my fervour is no longer needed. Younger voices than mine prevail; new methods are adopted. But I still recognise the great principle that those who pay rates and taxes should be represented in Parliament; nothing can shake my unalterable conviction of the justice of this. I am still occasionally told that women care nothing for having the vote; that they are too frivolous, too ignorant about politics to wish for it.

Unfortunately, there is a class of women to whom this applies; but the education of public opinion must eventually make itself felt. Having the vote will certainly not "harm distinctive womanhood"; it will rather elevate and benefit it.

I find voting for the members of the London County Council, and also for the School Board, is the simplest thing in the world. Putting a slip of paper into a ballot-box is not a very formidable undertaking, though important results may arise from it. It is extraordinary to me that many women voters do not care to go to the trouble of voting for the L.C.C. or for the School Board. They certainly ought not to neglect using their privileges and making as much of them as possible. It is the thin end of the wedge. Those who refrain from voting, as I know many do, are doing grievous injury to the cause of Woman Suffrage.

CATHERINE JANE HAMILTON.

MIDDLETON BY-ELECTION.

On Monday, July 31, we went to Portsmouth Council Schools for the purpose of questioning Professor Hewins. He, however, pleading another engagement, hurried away without attempting to answer our question beyond a few irrelevant remarks about married women, so we immediately held a protest meeting outside, leaving Mr. Hewins' supporters to speak to empty benches. Men, women, and children gathered round in great numbers, and listened with flattering attention while Miss Neilans spoke. At the end every pamphlet on the Conciliation Bill, every pamphlet on the Insurance Bill, every badge that we had with us, as well as copies of *The Vote* were sold, and nearly every member of the audience escorted us to the railway station and cheered us away. It seems that we were the first Suffragists to hold a meeting in this district, and we hear since that we "have completely revolutionised public opinion on the question of the Suffragettes." On Tuesday in the Market Place the W.F.L. lorry held by far the biggest crowd, the Tariff Reformers and Free Traders speaking to very few people till we had finished. In spite of the noise—the rattle of carts over the cobbles, the roar of the trains over the viaduct, and the speeches of the party politicians—Miss Neilans held an ever-growing crowd from 7 till nearly 9 p.m.—a crowd of people who bought pamphlets eagerly, and asked question after question. A Lancashire crowd will not allow silly questions, nor will it tolerate a repetition of "Why don't you want votes for all women?" if the speaker has already dealt with that point. On Wednesday—it being polling day—we held our meeting at Hebdon Bridge just outside the constituency. Thursday—to-night—we are boldly taking the Sobriety Hall for an indoor meeting with every prospect of a fairly good audience in spite of the hot weather. The hall will hold between 300 and 400 people, but the interest aroused among men and women, especially on the National Insurance Bill, is so great that we feel justified in taking it. For this meeting we have had help from Miss Bates, a member of the N.U.W.S.S., and Miss Lee, President of the local Women's Liberal Association. The Press, too, is very sympathetic, and has accepted an article from Miss Neilans on the work of the W.F.L.

Our committee rooms look very bright and gay, and have attracted a good deal of attention and a fair number of customers.

We shall stay here till Saturday night holding meetings and endeavouring to get together a small group of people who will keep the subject of Votes for Women before Sir Ryland Adkins now that he has been returned to Parliament by "the will of the people." We have reason to believe that, since a great number of his own supporters regret his unsatisfactory attitude on the Conciliation Bill, and have kept the question before him during the election at many of his meetings, in deference to a growing body of opinion in his own constituency he will give a straight vote for the Bill in all its stages when the time comes next year. He is not an ardent Suffragist, but he is sufficiently a democrat to promise to bow to the will of a majority of voters.

MADGE TURNER.

SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATION FOR WOMEN WORKERS.

A FIRST STAGE.

Thanks to the passing of the Trade Boards Act in 1909 many thousands of working women are beginning to understand the vital necessity of securing the vote, and the value of well-directed Parliamentary legislation. This Act, which provides for the establishment of a legal minimum wage in four of the most notoriously underpaid trades, has already proved a striking success. The four trades to which the Act applies are:—

- Chain Making.
- Lace Finishing.
- Paper Box Making.
- Wholesale and Bespoke Tailoring.

About 200,000 workers are included in these trades, and all but an insignificant minority have been working under sweated conditions.

In each of the affected industries Trade Boards have been appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Act, and the results so far achieved may be shortly stated as follows:—

In the Chain-making trade a time rate has been fixed, for the commonest work, of 2½d. per hour. This rate represents a time wage of 11s. 3d. per week, whilst under piece rates the remuneration is considerably more. Pitifully small as these wages must appear, they represent an increase of 70 per cent., whilst in many cases women are able to earn more than double their former wages. Formerly the life of the Cradley Heath chainmaker was one of ceaseless drudgery, ever present privation, unrelieved gloom. Now she sees the dawn of a new day.

The Lace Finishing Board has secured 2½d. per hour as a minimum from October, 1911, to be raised to 3d. in October, 1912. A piece list has also been drawn up, based on these lines. These rates indicate a vast improvement in the status of the employes, as the majority of them have in the past worked for wages of 3s. and 4s. per week.

In the Paper Box trade notice has been given of the following minimum rates of 2½d. per hour immediately, rising to 3d. in January, 1912, and 3½d. in January, 1913. Under these rates the majority of workers will gain an increase of from 5s. to 7s. per week.

In the fourth of the scheduled trades, Ready-made and Wholesale Bespoke Tailoring, a minimum rate has not yet been fixed owing to the difficulties arising from the complicated conditions of the trade, but it is confidently hoped, and expected, that in this trade an even higher rate will be fixed than in the other three.

For these results the women workers in these sweated industries owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Women's Trade Union League, which has helped them with devoted service, money, and organising assistance, to obtain the proper administration of the Trade Boards Act.

When the Trade Boards Bill was first introduced by the late Sir Charles Dilke it was very coldly received by the House of Commons. Year after year with unwearied patience and industry he urged its justice and necessity. When finally it was timidly accepted by the present Government as an experiment in legislation, its application was limited to the four trades mentioned above.

But with the striking and beneficent results obtained from the passing of the Trade Boards Act, it is imperative, in view of the conditions prevailing in other trades, that the scope of this Act should be widened to include other industries in which sweating is practised. The woman slaves of Great Britain and Ireland must be rescued from the thralldom of grasping and unscrupulous employers. They must be taught the value of the vote as a weapon to wield in the battle against oppression and greed.

The Trade Boards Act marks the first stage in a struggle which must not end until every woman worker

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in the country has secured a minimum living wage. The London sempstress and the Belfast linen worker await with what patience they may the legal protection which has been so tardily doled out to the Cradley Heath chainmaker. Hood's "Song of the Shirt" still haunts the conscience with its echo of tragic cruelties.

Who will help to redress this monstrous wrong?

"THE MAN FARTHEST DOWN IS WOMAN."

Dr. Booker Washington, in his articles in the *New York Outlook* on his recent tour, writes of "The Women who Work in Europe," and finds great need for improvement in industrial and economic conditions. Drawing a comparison between unskilled women labourers here and negro women, he says: "The negro women in America have this great advantage, that they are everywhere admitted to the same schools to which the men are admitted. All the negro colleges are crowded with women. They are admitted to the industrial schools and to training in the different trades on the same terms as men. One of the chief practical results of the agitation for the suffrage in Europe will be, I imagine, to turn the attention of the women in the upper classes to the needs of the woman in the lower classes. In Europe there is much work for women among their own sex, for, as I have said elsewhere, in Europe the man farthest down is woman." Commenting on the above *The Christian Commonwealth* says: "Our conviction is that the Suffragette agitation is creating a large number of earnest and capable women citizens who do not intend to rest when they have got the vote, but who only want the vote as a means for all the reform work that needs to be done in the elevation of women."

APPROPOS of the Insurance Bill, a correspondent sends the following to *The Drapers' Record*:—"Possibly in the matter of the State Insurance Bill Mr. George has been a trifle too clever. The writer knows of one firm which has already drafted a circular in readiness to issue to its employees: 'Your engagement with me at a weekly salary of (say 35s.) per week will terminate on Saturday. If you so desire, and will let me hear from you to that effect in writing, I am willing to re-engage you at a salary of (say 34s. 6d.) per week.' How is Mr. George going to prevent that?"—*The Shop Assistant*.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., Ltd., 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.

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Directors—Mrs. C. DESPARD, Mrs. E. HOW MARTYN, B.Sc., Mrs. J. E. SNOW, Mrs. L. THOMSON-PRICE, Mrs. M. H. FISHER.

SATURDAY, August 12, 1911.

OLIGARCHY.

One notable sign of the greatness of the Woman's Movement is that, over and over again, between and beneath the controversial speaking which is its necessary accompaniment, we find questions of the deepest importance in the life of the nation forcing their way to the front and demanding an answer.

Such a question arises out of the correspondence between the adherents and the opponents of the Conciliation Bill, which, during the past few weeks, has been running its course through the columns of *The Daily News*.

Mr. Chesterton, an opponent, accuses the Suffragists of inconsistency. They claim the vote on the ground that to be voteless is to be subject to the oppression of an oligarchy. "Their arguments are arguments for the establishment of a democracy; their Bill is a Bill for the slight widening of an oligarchy."

The question arises: What is an oligarchy? And, further, is there any radical and unconquerable divergence between oligarchy, by which I understand Government by a part of the people, and democracy, which is government "by all and for all."

Britain makes it her boast that she is the world's pioneer in all that democracy means. If any doubt her claim she points back to her history and shows how, widening from precedent to precedent, political and Parliamentary reforms have been wrought out in the land. The Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic races have their own national and racial characteristics. They do not generally plunge and rush into change, however much change may be needed. Theirs is the experimental mind. While other peoples—the Latin races, for instance, logical, yet full of imagination—make revolutions, sometimes to fall back into a deeper servitude, Great Britain has, generally, moved slowly forward. Which is the better course is not now the question. That constitutes a grave philosophical problem that the wise in all nations should work out for themselves. Here it is stated simply as a fact. The political history of our own country has been (from Magna Charta to the latest Reform Bill) the "widening of an oligarchy." The same course is being pursued still.

It would be unreasonable for the women of the country to expect politicians, in answer to their agitation, to concede to them what has not been conceded, or, indeed, in any wide sense, asked for by men. The vote for all will come, but only when men and women are ready for it. Yet, it is most true that every widening out of the electorate has had in it the promise of a fuller democracy, and this may be said with greater justice of our demand than of any other, because, when sex-disqualification in politics is removed, we shall have for the first time in politics the elements of an unbroken people. It may be that when the Reform Bill of 1832 was passed, the men of the country should have done what they are asking the women to do to-day—should have accepted nothing short of such a Franchise Law as would have given to every adult a vote. We cannot read into history what is not there but, judging by precedent, one would imagine that such a course would have delayed even such social reforms as we have gained, for at least a century.

If women take the advice of some of the men of to-day, and neglect to follow the example of the men of the past, we shall not, in this generation, obtain our enfranchisement.

We need not fear the word oligarchy that is thrust at us; still less need we be alarmed by the charge of

inconsistency. While we are working towards the enlargement of the present oligarchy, we do not hesitate to maintain that we are working in the name and for the sake of that great democracy which we desire to see.

A striking illustration of the meaning and effect of the present male oligarchy comes to us from Lancashire.

In Wigan, and other mining districts, about 3,000 women are employed in what is known as pit-brow work. Judging from the evidence given in the House of Commons, we gather that while the conditions of this labour in some collieries call for complaint and remedy, in others they are much better and healthier than those which exist in many factories throughout the country. When, on Wednesday last, the Coal Mines Bill was further considered, an amendment was moved that: "No girl or woman, other than those employed on or before the 1st day of January, 1911, shall be permitted to be employed above ground on any mine."

Mr. Harwood-Banner asked for delay, as a deputation of the women, headed by the Mayor of Wigan, was already on its way, and it would be interesting to hear its views. Only "interesting"! How differently would a deputation from, let us say, the Miners' Federation be spoken of in the House! The amendment was, in fact, inspired by that powerful Union. Well might Sir Frederick Banbury say that: "If women are to be excluded from working at pitheads under suitable conditions, if they chose to do so, then there will be justification for the cry that women should have a vote in the affairs of the nation." To which we may add that women, who have experience of their own needs and their own powers to enlighten them, are certainly better judges than men of what conditions are suitable for them in their work.

Arguments such as these have no effect on a male oligarchy. The amendment was carried by a small majority, and the clause that limited women's labour was added to the Bill.

Let our point be clear! We do not plead that woman should work either at the pit head or anywhere else. Every woman, like every man, has her own work to do—has her special corner of the universe to fill. What we demand is that, being a unit in the Demos—that mighty thing that is coming out into a world not yet big enough to contain it—she shall be allowed to speak with her own voice, and that a voice commanding attention, on all that concerns herself and her children.

Meanwhile, neither let us fear nor rebel against the universal order! The evolution of the human proceeds, and with it the evolution of society, autocracy, aristocracy, plutocracy, and that rule of the few which leads out into the rule of the many—the all-rule—not only over the destinies of nations but over themselves: so the great cycle runs! And though folly may delay ordered progress and aggravate the horrors of the strife, there can be no putting back of the mighty wheel. For as it was in the days of old, when great deliverances were wrought, so it is now. Wisdom cries aloud in our streets and will not be denied. C. DESPARD.

THE WOMAN LAWYER.

The Canadian province of Ontario has a woman lawyer, Clara Brett Martin, who has for years conducted a successful practice in Toronto. In other provinces of the Dominion, however, woman's progress towards legal honours and rewards has been difficult. In New Brunswick, for instance, a lady passed her examination and reached the stage when permission was required of the Barristers' Society of New Brunswick to enable her to practise. This society could not agree on the interpretation of the words "any party or persons," so the matter was submitted to the Supreme Court of the Province. The Court decided unanimously that she could not be admitted, not being a "person" within the meaning of the Act. This decision was the subject of many jokes on the status of women in general. One ardent suffragette won a prize by attending a masquerade ball labelled "Not a person."—*Financial News*.

WE want to double the circulation of THE VOTE within the next six months. Please post specimen copies of our paper to those of your friends who are likely to become subscribers.

WHY WE WANT THE VOTE:

THE WOMAN ARTIST.

BY EDITH M. MASON-HINCHEY.

"Life is so full and beautiful," said a woman artist; "there is endless joy to be had in it, there should be no room for suffering and deprivation and wrong. But I see pain and want and crime, over and over again, that need not be. Somehow, men have not succeeded in ordering things so as to prevent the wickedness and waste. The help we try to give is ineffectual and futile without legal authority and support. We insist, now, that we shall take a proper share in and responsibility for the work of the world. By the vote, we shall make or unmake laws through our elected representatives. Laws are needed that shall embody high ideals of fair homes and the upbuilding of a great race by every means in our power. We want laws to deal equitably with both sexes, not to press harder on the woman than on the man. To both they should temper justice with mercy. Oh! I have such faith in women," she said; "the larger hope, the greater sympathy is theirs. The pity is that this old world should so long have been denied the use of it."

"Life is so hard," another woman painter said. "We cannot create, we cannot imagine, for the haunting horror and the want and the cruelty of things about us. All that is beautiful in art is the outcome of man's joy in love or religion. We protest against the hideousness of things as they are; the dirt, the starvation, the sordidness of method and the blatant commercialism of every branch of industry and art. We want the vote to make that protest effective. We are not content any longer to say to men, 'These things ought not to be.' For ourselves, we say they shall not be, any longer than we can help! Great changes are needed, and better conditions of existence will become reflected in our art and breed new artists from amongst us."

These might have been two moods of the same voice, for in each the artistic temperament expressed the same need, a craving for beauty and joy, and the protest against its denial.

To the "outsider," the swift response of the woman artist to the call of the Women's Movement is the least explicable of its many-sided puzzle. To the unprejudiced observer there is no great difficulty in realising that the vote is the political instrument of the industrial classes. The history of any industrial organisation shows that legislation invariably results from such combination, affecting both the industry and conditions of work in it. Even within the ranks of professions, the broom of the law occasionally raises a dust, as in the medical profession to-day. But the artist, and especially the woman artist, is often supposed to live entirely in a world of beautiful dreams, whereas the actual facts of existence press as hardly upon her, or even more so, than upon most men. The problem of getting and spending lays waste her powers no less than they. Her student life was hedged about with limitations set by men, handicapping her ultimate career, which is subject to the same experiences as a man's. The frequency of exhibitions puts her under a constant and increasingly competitive strain. The intervention of dealer and agent between her work and possible clients gives her business views, and the range of her work may involve long and informing travel in all directions in search of material. Few people realise how much general knowledge, as well as exact information, goes to the making of a picture which has even such ephemeral existence as that of the monthly magazine.

On the other hand, many envy the simple life of the woman artist, with its comparative leisure, charm of culture and refined living, making beauty from the simplest means. Even when not in the first rank, and the means to live are hardly got, both loneliness and want are faced with a light-hearted courage and a compensating sense of participation in the best the world can give. For every aspect of Nature has a

double meaning to the artist, and some of the best of Art's creations are within free and open doors.

This detachment from the practical world is, however, neither the mark of the sex, nor of the profession as a whole. There are temperaments which shrink from active partisanship with the Women's Movement, just as many men artists are indifferent to politics. The artist Suffragist may be the outcome of either her busy experience or thoughtful leisure.

What is obvious is that the sense of detachment, formerly belonging to the professional ranks, is now disappearing. The greater complexity of life has brought them into closer association with the mass of the people. Laws affecting one affect the other. The actor, writer, and artist even, have their professional grades according to the class they serve. Each depends for his existence upon the margin of superfluous wealth which the community has to spend after the necessities of life have been provided for. Legislation affecting wages, therefore, directly affects this spending power. Educational measures may direct or altogether withhold encouragement of the arts of life, as a supplement to the curriculum of mere utility. Copyright laws have been framed variously in the interests of the owners, or of the larger rights of a community desiring wide and free choice in its literature and art. There are regulations for the enactment of plays, publication and exhibition of pictures, and the display of posters and artistic signs. Censorship and State aid of Art and the Drama intimately concern both professions and the public. In all these things, ranging from local to national importance, both have deep-rooted prejudice and interests at stake. Popular appreciation is the present substitute for individual patronage, and is highly valued and sought after by every means which social effort and commercial ingenuity may suggest.

The woman artist appears quickly to have grasped the fact that she cannot maintain an isolated and merely selfish point of view, since the interests of all are indissolubly bound together.

Miss Edith Downing, the sculptor who so successfully designed the recent Suffrage processions, writes:—"I want the vote for the good of the race. It is degrading to the women (of any race) to be in a position of subjection and of inferiority. It is bad for men to be in a position of real or imaginary superiority. Their participation in the ordering of affairs is, to my mind, the only possible hope for the future."

Such breadth of view has actually been engendered by the difficulties placed in the way of women's study of art in the past. The Early Victorian standard of amateur accomplishment has been the bane of women's art, and hardly fought by them in a long road of achievement, where real success has been all the more remarkable.

Until a very few years ago the entry of a woman student to the life rooms was bitterly opposed. A friend of the writer's very well remembers the expression of disgust from a male student of the Royal Academy Schools of her day at the presence of women amongst them at all. "Fancy a woman smelling of turpentine!" he shuddered.

At South Kensington the scholarships originally allotted to women for the same qualifications as for men were only granted for half the period. The big prizes, travelling scholarships and the diploma of the College were, therefore, denied to women who could not do the same work as the men in half the time!

Some of these injustices to the woman artist have been removed for the student to-day, but those who experienced them are the Suffragists in the Women's Movement. Such distinguished painters as Mrs. Swynnerton and Mrs. Jopling-Rowe are enthusiasts for the Cause. Miss Jessie Macgregor gives a clear statement of her position, which is that of many artists in the movement:—"I do not support the suffrage from merely professional motives, but on a wider basis—the justice of granting to women of all professions the academic honours which they have earned, and which will

be withheld from them so long as they are denied the elementary right of citizenship. No facilities for study, however splendid in their results, no distinction in service, whether professional or political, is of any use whilst the sex disability exists, barring her name from 'Birthday' or 'Coronation' honours."

The admission of women to the rank of Royal Academicians is forbidden by prejudice rather than want of precedent. To-day the work of Angelica Kaufmann and of Mary Moser would be seriously rivalled by competitors to the honour, if such were allowed.

Miss Florence White, Vice-President of the Royal Society of Miniature Painters, in a sentence charmingly suggestive of her own beautiful art, gives as a reason why we want the vote:—"We want to bring things into harmony. It is the struggle and discord that is so wearing to-day. As artists and women we feel the jar, temperamentally and intellectually. We want more of the colour and rhythm of life."

With the acquisition of the vote the work of women artists has before it a prospect of far greater development and more generous recognition. The expression of their own creative genius will become more adequate to represent new experiences and new ideals. What of joy their work can give to the world will be by fuller and free access, unfettered and unrepressed by the shackles of the past. The Art that is circumscribed is the Art that dies, but the Art of the Women's Movement is vital and throbbing. It is written in their dress and their pageantry and in those things which intimately concern everyday life. By-and-by we shall see the reflection of its new-born freedom in sculptured form and storied canvas in every country of the world.

A REFORMER'S OFFER.

Mr. M. S. Mohidin, a Mahomedan magistrate of Madras, who is in London for some months with his wife and two children, is a practical reformer with regard to the *pardah*, or seclusion of Mahomedan women. Protesting that such a custom is against the laws of nature, of man, and of God, he recognises that to break down the *pardah* is a reform which requires both patience and logic. The custom, as practised in India, has come to have a kind of religious sanction; but Mr. Mohidin, as well as such eminent authorities on the religion of Islam as His Highness the Aga Khan, the Right Hon. Syed Amir Ali, and the greatest commentators on the Koran, declare that no religious sanction exists. The Koran allows women to go about freely unveiled. Mr. Mohidin understands the power of a supposed religious sanction, and in order to break it offers a reward of £62 10s. (Rupees 1000) to anyone who can prove from the Koran or the traditions of the Prophet that the seclusion of women is authorised. His address is 2, The Parade, Golder's Green, London, N.W., and competitors are invited to communicate with him.

Mr. Mohidin brought the matter before the Universal Races Congress and spoke of some of the miseries of the *pardah* system, among them consumption and lung diseases for want of fresh air, as well as ignorance, because girls are almost uneducated. It is difficult to break a custom which has become traditional for centuries, but in the time of the Prophet himself women took part in the election of a ruler as well as in theological and judicial discussions. "We boast of having given to women, according to the Koran, the highest place compared with other nations, but of what use is this privilege if their very existence is to be that of birds in gilded cages? We imprison half our number—to our own cost; we are single-handed in competition with others in the onward march of progress." Mr. Mohidin is keenly alive to the value of the co-operation of women in life's work; and the example he and his wife set to their co-religionists in India has brought courage to some timid, though eager, reformers, who are anxious to break down a custom which is simply an inheritance from the turbulent days of constant warfare.

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.

A LIBERAL'S PROTEST.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR MADAM,—I had the pleasure of reading a noble plea for toleration from your pen in THE VOTE some time ago *a propos* of the secession of Mrs. Billington Greig. I think a repetition is needed. As a Liberal who is loyal to his party and the Government, whose life partner is a member of the W.F.L., and who shares her deep interest in the coming emancipation of women, I feel myself somewhat in the position of Issachar, "the ass crouching beneath a double burden." There are times when, like Balaam's ass, I feel constrained to make audible protest.

I protest against the imputation of base motives and dishonourable conduct to your political opponents. For example, in THE VOTE of July 28 Mrs. How Martyn wrote: "The utter insincerity of those Members who will not carry into law a Bill which, while not excluding wives and mothers, yet does not expressly enfranchise them, is shown by their action in supporting a National Insurance Bill, from the benefits of which nearly all wives and mothers are excluded."

If I were sufficiently ignorant or prejudiced I might write with equal speciousness and equal injustice of the "utter insincerity" of those who say that the Insurance Bill is a thoroughly bad Bill, a burden on the backs of the very poor, and yet denounce the Government for excluding married women generally from its benefits (?).

I make this particular passage the peg on which to hang my homily because it is in cold print for everyone to see, and because it is from the pen of one so justly esteemed as Mrs. How Martyn. If I wrote as above I should not be taking a course at all likely to influence Suffragist opinion in favour of the Insurance Bill. I should be merely feeding the hostility and prejudice which is not absent from either party. Votes for women is essentially an ethical question. You are contending for right and justice, for the triumph of moral force and intelligence over prejudice and ignorance. You must therefore appeal to the highest in your opponents and scrupulously avoid stirring up the hostility and prejudice which bars them from the truth. By so doing you are building up that divine spirit which is the basis of all reform and the hope of the world.

Hasty and unjust sayings and writings reach many who will never by intercourse with you know how little these putulant utterances represent your deepest and best thought. When men reach a certain plane they must see the justice and necessity of the franchise for women. What we have to do is to help the laggards up to this level. To impute base motives and dishonourable conduct will not assist us. It can only hinder.

Let us turn to the more material side of the question. The immediate future is very uncertain. A Conciliation Bill, amended in title so as to be capable of enlargement, has been carried through its second reading by 167 votes. This is practically the number of Liberals who voted for the Bill. You deprecate any enlargement of the Bill, not because you do not desire a more democratic measure, but for fear of alienating Unionist

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support. Clearly your Bill, whether enlarged or not, can only be carried by Liberal votes. Why, then, go out of your way to antagonise Liberals by cultivating and exhibiting a spirit of hostility. It is not the necessary outcome of your militant policy. There is a strong prejudice against you on the part of many Liberals, by whom you are quite wrongly regarded as a parcel of well-to-do women who want votes for yourselves and who don't care about the mass of the voteless, male or female. This prejudice feeds upon every vain expression of enmity.

It is not for me to censure your militancy, but you ought not to fight as joyfully inflicting injury upon irreconcilable foes. The militant policy only commits you to attack the Government where it bars you from your object. You must observe the conventional usages of civilised warfare, which limit the injury you may inflict on your present foe, with whom in due time you must make an honourable peace.

Further, though you may consider your policy and tactics essential to success, you must not entirely close your minds to the possibility that you may be wrong in this opinion. It may be that victory may come to you in the way indicated by Mr. Asquith, namely, by the carrying of a woman's suffrage amendment to a Liberal Government Bill extending the franchise. Don't render this unnecessarily difficult.

Votes for women is a great revolution, and revolutions can only be carried by the violent action of many progressive forces. Don't attempt to dam apart the converging streams by building walls of hostility and misunderstanding.—Yours faithfully,

HERBERT H. PRESBURY.

Oak Cottage, College-road, Dulwich.

Editor's Note.

We submitted the above letter to Mrs. How Martyn and append her reply.—Ed.

Dear Madam,—It appears to me that Mr. Presbury has read far more into the words of mine which he quotes than they will bear. To state facts is hardly "to impute base motives and dishonourable conduct." We have actual demonstration of the fact that the National Insurance Bill, which excludes nearly all wives and mothers from benefit, is being supported by the votes of men who say they will not vote for a measure to enfranchise women householders, because wives and mothers are not expressly included. To characterise such an attitude as one of "utter insincerity" is surely mild enough language.

It is no use for me to attempt to follow Mr. Presbury into details, not only because space is lacking, but because we look at this question from two very different points of view. He writes as a Liberal, while in the Freedom League we look at the whole question from a non-party attitude.

So far as my work in the League is concerned, "Votes for Women" is essentially a political question, and I have to consider the best means for the League to do its share in bringing the question to a successful issue. So I have to face facts. One of these disagreeable facts is the parliamentary history of women's suffrage. It is one long record of the betrayal of women who trusted to the honour and integrity of Members of Parliament. We know this, and we act accordingly. Therefore, we do not wait to be betrayed again before we speak; we try to discover the first signs that a betrayal may be contemplated, and hope, by pointing it out, that Members will be shamed into behaving at least with common honesty, even towards women who are voteless.

Since Mr. Asquith's definite statement we have suspended our anti-Government policy, and at bye-elections we now oppose those candidates of any party whose attitude is unsatisfactory towards our question. Any member who insists on voting for widening amendments and in so doing goes into the lobby with avowed and open anti-suffragists might as well be classed with them at once and we should know better how we stand.

The Women's Freedom League is concentrating all its political work on winning support for the Conciliation

Bill so that it may be passed into law next session, and Mr. Presbury, in throwing any doubt at all on the accomplishment of that purpose, is surely attributing to Mr. Asquith most "dishonourable conduct" after the clear and definite statement given in his letter published in our issue of June 24. That letter seems to me to make the future quite definite and certain. Mr. Asquith as an honourable man will keep his pledge, our majority of 167 will be staunch and true, and a "Votes for Women" Bill will be placed upon the Statute Book in 1912. Thus will an honourable peace be concluded.—Yours faithfully,
EDITH HOW MARTYN.

AN OBJECT LESSON FROM AMERICA.

The visionary nature of the bugbears that wait upon Woman's Suffrage has been strikingly shown by a recent incident in Connecticut. A Bill to give women municipal suffrage had passed the Senate and was pending in the House. All the Conservatives were horribly alarmed. The Legislature received sixty-eight petitions, signed by several hundred women, protesting that they did not wish to have the burden of the municipal vote imposed upon them. The leaders of the New York Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women and the principal anti-suffrage papers of Connecticut held forth upon the frightful consequences that must follow from letting women take part in municipal elections. During the debate in the Legislature amendments to the Bill were offered, providing that, if women were given the municipal vote, they should be made liable to military service, that married women should be made jointly responsible with their husbands for the expense of supporting the children, and that no woman should be allowed to claim damages for breach of promise, or alimony in case of divorce. It was declared that to give women the municipal vote would unsex them, would prevent the enforcement of municipal ordinances (since women cannot fight), would destroy the home, and subvert the foundations of society. When the Bill was defeated, *The Hartford Courant* seriously congratulated the people of Connecticut upon having escaped the widespread moral deterioration which must have followed its passage. Almost every American Anti-Suffragist is just as sure that all these direful consequences will follow from women's municipal vote as the English Anti-Suffragist is that they will follow from women's parliamentary vote. This shows that the bugbears are not solid, but are like the spectres which appear in delirium tremens.

ALICE STONE BLACKWELL,

President of the New England Woman Suffrage Association, 45, Boutwell-avenue, Dorchester, Mass.

CHINESE WIVES.

How Chinese women were expected to behave themselves two thousand years ago is set forth in an ancient Chinese work in 313 chapters, of which samples have been translated into English by Miss A. C. Safford.

According to this voluminous manual, the first duty of a Chinese wife in those primitive times was to "reverence her husband as heaven." If his life were in danger she must not hesitate to die for him. Among the many little stories told in the book is one of a peasant who, during a severe famine, was seized one day by some starving soldiers, who intended to make a meal of him. His wife pleaded for him. "My husband is very lean," she said; "he will scarcely be a mouthful for you. I am fleshy and of dark complexion, and they say that the flesh of such persons is excellent eating." The hungry soldiers, we are told, were convinced by this sound argument, and ate her instead of her husband.

As to deportment, "in the presence of her parents or parents-in-law a woman may not sneeze or cough, neither stretch, yawn, or lol about when tired, nor may she presume to stare at them. She should be of a mild, pleasant deportment in serving them, in order to soothe them." The wife of a certain Liu Kung-tseh comes in for a large share of praise simply because "for three years after her marriage nobody had ever seen her smile."

WE WANT VOLUNTEERS to sell THE VOTE at all our open-air meetings. Those who will help us in this very valuable way are asked to send their names to Mrs. Snow (Vote Sales Dept.), Women's Freedom League, 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

BRANCH NOTES.

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

Anerley and Crystal Palace.—Hon. Secretary: Miss J. FENNINGS, 149, Croydon-road, Anerley.

The last series of meetings for this season was held on Monday, at the Crystal Palace, when Miss Ethel Fennings spoke. There were several questions, and hope was expressed that we should soon come back again. On Wednesday we started our new pitch at Penge. Miss Anson held the attention of a large crowd for over an hour. Miss Fennings took the chair. Several questions were asked. Many copies of THE VOTE were sold. We would like to thank those men who have helped us in many little ways at our meetings, and hope that others will come forward. Tickets for the Garden Medley, on September 5, are now ready. Sixpence each.

Herne Hill and Norwood.—Hon. Secretary, Miss B. SPENCER, 32, Geneva-road, Brixton, S.W.

On Sunday afternoon, July 30, a meeting was held in Brockwell-park. A large crowd listened attentively while Miss Alice Palmer and Miss Le Croisette explained why suffragists are working so strenuously to ensure the passing of the Conciliation Bill next Session, and why widening amendments which some politicians desire would probably wreck the Bill. Many questions were asked at the close of the meeting, and readily answered by the speakers. At the next meeting in the park, on Sunday, August 13, Miss Neilans will speak at 3 p.m.

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

It is most important that we should have a good attendance at our quarterly members' meeting on Tuesday, August 15, at 8 p.m., at 1, Robert-street. Many of our members are out of town just now, so I appeal to all of those still here to make a point of attending, for if we have not a quorum we can do no business. In addition to our Branch business we shall have many details to arrange in connection with the "At Home" which we have agreed to organise in September. We are entirely responsible for this "At Home" both as to advertising and securing a good audience; also, we must provide efficient stewards. The Treasurer and I are not likely to have another opportunity of talking over the proposed arrangements with the members.—E. G. T.

Mrs. Hyde would be glad if as many members as possible would make an effort to be present at the Hyde Park meetings on Sundays during August. So many of our comrades are out of town, that double obligation rests on those remaining, and much useful work can be done by mixing with the audience.

London Branches Council.—Contributions have already been received towards the autumn sale. Friends are reminded that many other kinds of goods besides old clothes find ready purchasers, and it is hoped to have a big enough collection of useful articles to hold a private sale for members on the evening before the jumble sale. A few shilling pots of excellent honey are still to be obtained at 1, Robert-street.—L. M. T.

EAST ANGLIA.

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

"True Womanhood," by Inez Ben-Susan, will be given at the Picture House, Ipswich, from August 7 to 12. All interested in the Woman's Movement should not miss the opportunity of seeing this. On Thursday, August 3, I had an opportunity of speaking on the Insurance Bill at a meeting in the Labour Institute of members of Trade Unions and Friendly Societies, and the resolution passed included the following reference to the political disability of women: "This meeting regards the blindness of the Insurance Bill to the interests of women as an instance of that political negligence which is always the lot of the unfranchised."

OTHER PROVINCIAL BRANCHES.

Cheltenham.—Hon. Secretary: Mrs. EARENGEY, Ashley Rise.

It was with great pleasure that members and friends listened to the very able address which Mrs. How Martyn gave at the garden meeting at Miss Lloyd's. Miss Boulton, the Branch Hon. Treasurer, took the chair. After the speech the usual question time was allowed, and those present had an opportunity of a talk with Mrs. How Martyn at teatime. The cake stall was cleared of its contents, and the fancy work stall was also patronised. Our thanks are due to Miss Lloyd, who was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for her kindness in lending her garden and helping to make the meeting a success.

LITERATURE DEPARTMENT.

MEMBERS of the Freedom League who are spending their holidays in the country or at the seaside should not neglect to take a small parcel of Suffrage literature with them for propagandist purposes. Mrs. Eileen Mitchell, of the Literature Department, Women's Freedom League, 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, W.C., will be very glad to send a parcel of assorted literature, for distribution, for sixpence, post free.

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AN EASY WAY TO HELP WOMEN WORKERS.

How many women there are who have the will but do not know the way to help women workers! "We have no influence with Members of Parliament or those in power, yet we should like to help," they say. We agree that influence by means of the vote with Members of Parliament or those in power is a weapon which must soon come into our hands, and still greater reforms will then be accomplished for women workers than those noted in our article on the result of two years' working of the Trade Boards Act. But something may be done at once, to-day, to-morrow, next week, every week, in one most important direction, namely, the use of leadless glaze china. For some time there has been in progress a crusade against the poisoning of women by use of lead in glazing china; something has been accomplished but much more may be done to prevent this serious evil. The public must insist on having leadless glaze china, and if women buyers take a still more definite stand on this point, they will render splendid service to the many women employed in the trade. Public demand creates supply.

It has lately been said that lead poisoning no longer exists in the Pottery districts, but this is quite a mistake. There are about 63,000 workers engaged in the manufacture of china and earthenware; of these nearly 7,000 are engaged in the dangerous processes. Among the lead workers more than 2,000 women and girls are employed. Statistics show that women are much more susceptible than men to the action of lead. In several processes the risk has been proved to be twice as great for women as for men. Special and stringent rules may minimise the danger, but they cannot stamp out the disease. There is the risk whenever lead is used in the dipping-house. Leadless glaze eliminates all risk; it is obvious that there cannot be lead poisoning where there is no lead.

An excellent choice of leadless glaze china may be seen at Mr. N. W. Franks' shop, Chepstow-place, Bayswater, W., opposite Bradley's—the corner well known to our VOTE sellers. Can it be that Mr. Franks has been moved to seek the aid of THE VOTE advertisement columns by the energy of VOTE sellers in his neighbourhood? In any case those who require artistic china at moderate prices—a special feature—will do well to visit Mr. Franks, and see the attractive breakfast services, reproductions of spode, from 5s. 9d. upwards, besides many other useful and artistic things. Those who cannot call can write for a catalogue. They will have the double satisfaction of knowing that they are helping women workers by increasing the demand for leadless glaze china, which manufacturers will be obliged to supply, and supporting a VOTE advertiser who helps to support THE VOTE.

TAX RESISTANCE.

MISS NEILIGAN, late headmistress of the Croydon High School, who has resided for nearly forty years in the neighbourhood, and is widely known and respected, had some of her silver sold at public auction last Sunday for the non-payment of Imperial taxes. Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson, representing the Women's Tax Resistance League, was, by courtesy of the auctioneer, allowed to explain the reason of the protest. Judging by the applause with which her remarks were received, most of those present were in sympathy. Mrs. Clarendon Hyde, on behalf of Miss Neiligan, bought the article for a sum slightly exceeding the claim. A meeting was afterwards held, at which most of the Suffrage Societies were represented. Mrs. Cameron Swann (Chair), Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson, and Mrs. Hyde were the speakers. A resolution was unanimously passed, calling on the Government to bring in a Women's Franchise Bill next year.

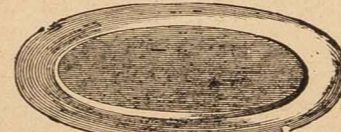
OVERHEARD outside the Little Theatre, after performance of *Fanny's First Play*:—Chubby-faced male, in evening dress, to his companion: "I think it's a satire—it *must* be a satire—on the Suffragettes and all those sort of people!" G. B. S. ought to see this!

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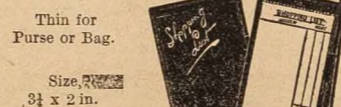
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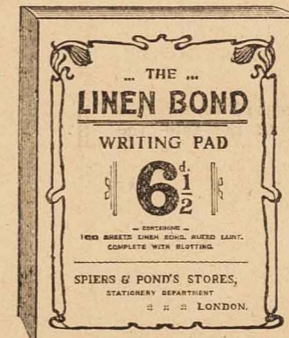
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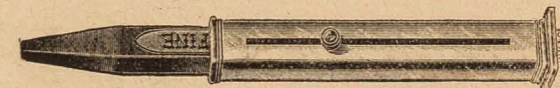
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FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

LONDON.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Wed., Aug. 9.—Penge: The Triangle, Beckenham-road, 7.30 p.m. Miss Norris.
Thurs., Aug. 10.—Highbury Corner, 7.30. Miss Weir.
 Tottenham Gas Offices, High-street, 8 p.m. Miss Turner, Mr. Victor Prout.
Fri., Aug. 11.—West Norwood Fountain, 8 p.m. Mrs. Duval.
Sat., Aug. 12.—Church End, Finchley, 8 p.m. Mrs. Hyde.
Sun., Aug. 13.—Brockwell Park, 3 p.m. Miss Alison Neilans.
 Hyde Park, noon. Miss Weir, Miss Turner.
Tues., Aug. 15.—1, Robert-street, 8 p.m. Mid-London Branch, Members' Quarterly Meeting.
 West Hampstead, West Fortune Green Fountain, 8.30 p.m. Hampstead Heath, 8 p.m.
Wed., Aug. 16.—Penge: The Triangle, Beckenham-road, 7.30 p.m.
Thurs., Aug. 17.—Highbury Corner, 7.30 p.m. Tottenham, Gas Offices, High-street, 8 p.m.
 90, Croxsted-road, West Dulwich, 3 p.m. Mrs. How Martyn, Mrs. H. B. Jones.
Sun., Aug. 20.—Hyde Park, noon. Miss Benett, Malcolm Mitchell, Esq.
Sun., Aug. 27.—Hyde Park, noon. Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson, J. Y. Kennedy, Esq.
Fri., Sep. 1.—1, Robert-street, 2.30, National Executive Committee.
Sat., Sep. 2.—1, Robert-street, 10.30, National Executive Committee.
Sun., Sep. 3.—Hyde Park, noon. Miss Anna Munro.
Sun., Sep. 24.—Mid-London Branch, "At Home," Caxton Hall, 4 p.m.
Thurs., Sep. 28.—Hackney Branch, "At Home," 7 p.m.
Wed., Oct. 4.—Small Queen's Hall, 8 p.m. Mr. G. K. Chesterton on "Female Suffrage—the Last Blow to Democracy."
Tues., Oct. 10.—Highbury Branch, "At Home."
Thurs., Oct. 19.—Hampstead Branch, "At Home."
Mon., Oct. 23.—Herne Hill Branch, "At Home."

PROVINCES.

Mon., Sep. 25.—Bournemouth, St. Peter's Hall, 8 p.m. Lecture on Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," by Mrs. Despard.

SCOTLAND.

Scottish Council West Coast Holiday Campaign.—Head-quarters, Rothesay. Meetings at Rothesay, Millport, Largs, Dunoon, and other places. At noon, 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Miss Anna Munro, Miss Pemberton, and others.

OTHER SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

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

The Rev. C. Hinscliff, who founded the School Nature Study Union, will be glad to give lectures on Nature Study at schools or elsewhere, profits to go to the Church League. Prayer cards for children of Suffragist households can be obtained at the office. Subscriptions and workers are still much needed for the campaign during the Church Congress at Stoke-on-Trent.

The Actress's Franchise League.

Owing to the very great increase in the work of the Actress's Franchise League during the past year, it is necessary to enlarge the offices, and Room 16, Adelphi-terrace House, has been taken for the use of the Play Department. The Committee appeal to their members and friends for help in furnishing the new premises. A carpet, or floor covering, a large table, six chairs, a gas stove, a large cupboard or bookshelf, a roll-top desk and a waste paper basket are all urgently needed. Will any kind friends give one or more of these or donations towards the expenses?

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