

# THE VOTE

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

VOL. III. No. 72.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 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.

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## 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.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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## WHAT WE THINK.

### Our Next Issue.

As announced in last week's VOTE, Mrs. Despard has consented to take over the editorship of the paper. Our next issue will be the first under her guidance.

### On the Word of a Politician.

That the Home Secretary would find it convenient to deny the allegations contained in the Conciliation Committee's memorandum was only what we expected from this bright particular star in the Cabinet Constellation. According to the politician's standard of ethics, to admit a crime would be a most stupid offence against that deity to whom the unscrupulously ambitious seldom refuse to bow the knee—the great god Self. Besides being the easiest thing to do under the circumstances, a simple denial of facts invariably satisfies the one being whom the politician desires to convince—to wit, the party voter. But the thoughtful minority, which in these days of coalitions and suffrage activities it would be folly to ignore, are quite aware that though Mr. Churchill may not, in explicit terms, have given the police a "free hand" on November 18, there is, in the language of diplomacy, a silence much more pregnant than the spoken word. And though "no arrests" may spell clemency to the unsophisticated, those who are learned in the ways of the politician attach a very sinister meaning to the order.

### The Government and Monopoly.

Speaking at Coventry the other day, Mr. C. P. Trevelyan, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education, declared that "the real inner meaning of what the Liberal Party were doing was to provide a machinery, a new machinery, for the government of the country by the mass of the common men who felt the pinch of life. They would deal with economic monopolies as well as with the liquor monopoly, the religious monopoly in schools and the land monopoly."

It will be observed that with regard to that monopoly for whose abolition there is at the moment the greatest demand—the monopoly of representation by considerably less than half the population of the country—Mr. Trevelyan maintained a discreet silence. While on the subject of monopolies it would never do for a servant of the Government to cite his master as the arch-offender in that respect.

Mr. Trevelyan further stated that "the mass of the

people who paid rents, the mass of the people who drank whisky, the mass of the people would be the first consideration in a Parliament that was representative of the whole people." Since when, we would ask, has the word "people" come to mean men only? Or are we to understand that where duties are concerned "people" includes women; while in the matter of rights and privileges the word is intended to designate only that part of the community entitled to vote?

### Parliamentary Platitudes.

The debate on the second reading of the Parliament Bill makes interesting reading for Suffragists. Judging from the noble sentiments expressed by gentlemen on the Government side of the House, almost it would seem—were we not long since disillusioned—as if liberty had never such doughty champions. Ministers were particularly warm in their defence of the great principle of equality. It was because, said Mr. Asquith, the Government were "enslaved and fettered" by the hereditary principle of the House of Lords that the present proposals—i.e., to abolish the Lords' Veto—were now before the Commons. In his spirited denunciation of the Lords it probably never occurred to the Prime Minister that his own veto of the Women's Bill is a much more flagrant act of tyranny than any deed lying at the door of the Upper House: the hereditary principle which shuts out from representation the whole of a nation's womanhood a much greater menace to liberty than anything for which the occupants of the Gilded Chamber are responsible. Precept and practice need not, however, be necessarily allied, as ministers who hold office in the most illiberal Government that ever masqueraded under democracy's cloak are doubtless aware. And—as Lord Hugh Cecil opportunely stated in the course of the debate—if the Government had received a mandate in regard to the Parliament Bill, then they had received a much more imperative mandate in regard to Women's Suffrage, since a greater number of members had been returned to Parliament pledged to support a Bill removing the Veto of sex.

### The Woolmore Case.

Mrs. Annie Woolmore, who on February 10 was sentenced by the Epping magistrates to six weeks' imprisonment on a charge of neglecting her children, has now been released from prison by order of the Home Secretary. It will be remembered that the medical testimony was to the effect that the children were in exceedingly good health, and no proof was forthcoming to substantiate the charges preferred against her. On the contrary, there was ample proof that the poor woman had starved herself to "feed the kiddies." The result of the trial aroused much indignation among the humane of either sex. Mrs. Despard and Lady Constance Lytton took the matter up, and questions were asked in Parliament. There can be no doubt that it is as a result of the pressure brought to bear upon him that Mr. Churchill has now ordered Mrs. Woolmore's release. The victim—we use the word advisedly—of a law where the woman's view is never considered has, however, already served nearly four weeks' imprisonment. We cannot but think that if her name had been on the Parliamentary register the Home Secretary would have moved earlier in the matter, though in that case his interference would probably be unnecessary.



## THE CENSUS ACT.

### Authority and Expenses.

The special Act of Parliament for taking the Census on April 2, 1911, was finally passed on August 3, 1910. It is enacted that "The Local Government Board shall superintend the taking of the Census," and that the expenses incurred "shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament." This definite statement sufficiently answers those of our critics who are objecting to our action that the taking of the Census is not a piece of Government business.

### Particulars to be Given.

The schedules are to be filled up with the following particulars, and no others, namely particulars as to—

- (a) the name, sex, age, profession or occupation, condition as to marriage, relation to head of family, birthplace, and (in the case of a person born abroad) nationality, of every living person who abode in every house on the night of the Census day; and
- (b) whether any person who so abode was blind, deaf, dumb, imbecile or lunatic; and
- (c) in the case of any person who so abode being married, the duration of marriage, and the number of children born of the marriage, the number of such children living; and,
- (d) the number of rooms inhabited; and
- (e) in the case of Wales or the county of Monmouth, whether any person who so abode (being of three years of age or upwards) speaks English only, or Welsh only, or both English and Welsh.

### Procedure.

Every enumerator shall in the course of the week before the Census day leave at every dwelling house one or more schedules for the occupier and on every such schedule shall be plainly expressed that it is to be filled up by the occupier for whom it is left, and that the enumerator will collect all such schedules on the Monday then next following.

Every occupier shall fill up or cause to be filled up the schedule to the best of his knowledge and belief, so far as relates to all persons dwelling in the house occupied by him. Where a dwelling house is let or sub-let in different tenements occupied distinctly by different persons or families a separate schedule shall be left for the occupier of each such distinct apartment.

A person who is travelling or at work on the night of the Census day and who returns to a house on the morning of the following day shall be treated as abiding in that house on the night of the Census day.

The Registrar General shall obtain returns of the particulars required by this Act with respect to persons who during the night of the Census day were travelling or on shipboard, or for any other reason were not abiding on that night in any house of which account is to be taken by the enumerators.

### Penalties for Offences.

If any occupier for whom a schedule is left under this Act—

- (a) wilfully refuses, or without lawful excuse neglects, to fill up or cause to be filled up the schedule to the best of his knowledge and belief, or to sign and deliver it as by this Act required; or
- (b) wilfully makes, signs, or delivers, or causes to be made, signed, or delivered, any false return of any matter specified in the schedule; or
- (c) refuses to answer, or wilfully gives a false answer to, any question necessary for obtaining the information required to be obtained under this Act; he shall for each offence be liable on conviction under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts to a fine not exceeding five pounds.

The above details of the Bill answer many of the questions which have been addressed to me. They will also, I hope, help many more to decide to join the ranks of the passive resisters to the Census. Let us

all use this opportunity of showing our disapproval of government without consent.

EDITH HOW MARTYN.

## AT HEADQUARTERS.

Between now and April 2 our work will be unusually heavy. Will volunteers kindly send their names at once to this office? We want bill distributors, VOTE sellers, posters exhibited, poster parades, and posters drafted to advertise our Trafalgar-square meeting, Saturday, April 1, 3 p.m.

### "At Homes."

The Thursday afternoon "At Homes" at Caxton Hall are of a specially interesting character this month. For their own sakes, all members and friends of the Freedom League are urged not to miss Mrs. Despard's lecture on "Mary Woolstonecraft," and Mr. Laurence Housman's speech on "The Census," March 9; and as we have to be out of the hall before 6 o'clock, will our friends come as early as possible on this occasion? The next Sunday "At Home" will be held at 1, Robert-street, 4 p.m., March 26.

### Bournemouth.

We have had repeated requests for Mrs. Despard to give her lecture on "Shelley" in this town some time in April. Mrs. Despard is quite willing to please her friends in this matter; but before making arrangements here, we should be glad to learn from members and sympathisers in that district what sums they can guarantee in the sale of tickets. Even quite small sums will be gladly noted at this office.

### Branches.

Very encouraging reports of work done and work planned have been received from branches, both in the provinces and in London. A new branch has been formed at Kensington, the members of which, we hope, will meet each other again at Mrs. G. E. O'Dell's drawing-room meeting, Wednesday evening, March 15, to be addressed by Mrs. Vulliamy.

### Census Protest Week—March 27-April 2 (Inclusive).

This is to be a week of self-denial and special effort. During that week it is suggested that every member of the Women's Freedom League should make every personal sacrifice of expenditure that lies in her power, and to send the whole proceeds to the funds of our League. More than a fortnight remains to think out plans of economising which can be put into practice during Census Protest week. British women have shown themselves ready to suffer for causes they believed in; they have been prepared sometimes to spend money lavishly on them; those of us who have not wealth have now the chance of placing a record sum at the disposal of the League through our personal economies. In addition, through the whole of that week we want collectors, bill distributors, poster and lantern parades in every part of London, so that our Trafalgar-square mass meeting shall be known to every observant person in the Metropolis. To attempt great things is to do them; and we must make this meeting a complete success.

FLORENCE A. UNDERWOOD.

MEN'S POLITICAL UNION.—A few days ago two members of the above Union—Mr. Abbey and Mr. Garrett—were charged at Bow-street with scaling the wall of the Premier's residence Downing-street, with intent to interrupt a Cabinet Council which was then sitting. Both men were bound over to keep the peace, but as Mr. Abbey refused to be bound over he was sent to prison for three weeks.

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## NEWS FROM NO-MAN'S LAND. THE CENSUS. By LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

The Census in No-Man's Land has been taken—or left, as the case may be. The official pill which, according to Government prescription, was "to be taken at bedtime" on Sunday night, has met with the healthy resistance of thousands of robust patients. And as a consequence the Suffragists of No-Man's Land are feeling better than they ever did before in their lives. Just as nothing is more stimulating to the body than exercise, so to those who are struggling for Constitutional reform nothing is more stimulating than an act of definite resistance to a Constitution which seeks to reckon without them. In this case of Suffragists *versus* the Census, the Government is hoist with its own petard; it will have to reckon without them. No "crime against science" whatever, but the very nicest adjustment of science to a political situation that could well be devised. Science, like all the other ameliorations of human existence, depends for its steady workings on the consent of the governed, and if the scientists cannot secure from the Government which employs them a fundamental act of justice to one half of the community, then, quite scientifically, they must expect to have their elbows jogged and their scientific calculations disturbed. It is the price they pay for taking service under an unrepresentative Government.

I mention science because the eminent professor whom I referred to in a previous article has been crying out in the No-Man's Land "Thunderer" of the injury which Census resistance will do to his own sphere of activity—the science of statistics.

He addressed his plea to the wrong quarter. Had he persuaded the Government of the injury which its unscientific attempt to govern without consent was about to inflict on science, all might have been well. The Government had only to promise facilities for the Women's Bill in Parliament, the Census boycott would have been withdrawn, and science would have been saved from damage. Science must discover that the line of least resistance is no longer the line of the woman Suffragist. It must seek the solution of its difficulties elsewhere.

One of the most curious things, now that the Census in No-Man's Land has been taken, is that nobody has any idea how many have actually resisted. Those who know most are the head organisers of the militant societies, and naturally they will not play into the hands of the Government by giving any details definite enough to go upon. But even they have only certain information as regards the active resisters; the passive resisters, the occupants of the non-fighting line, remain unknown and unnumbered. This second rank, I gather, has been recruited almost entirely from the "Constitutional" societies whose individual members have to this extent broken away from the policy of inaction prescribed by their leaders. The "militants" have regarded it almost as an honourable obligation to make their protest actively wherever it has been possible; and I hear now of spontaneous acts of militancy in many households where no resistance had actually been planned. Wives, sisters, daughters, and even servants, whose names have been included in spite of their protest by the responsible occupiers, have subsequently obtained possession of the offending form and have destroyed it. And the law-abiding householder who has asserted his right to include women's names without consulting them has been met with a counter-assertion of right which has helped to bring home to him more than anything else the fact that the women's claim has now become "practical politics." For a man very much dislikes to go and give evidence against the women of his own household; yet that is what these householders will have to do if the Government once starts on prosecutions. At present,

however, the authorities are making no sign; but the newspapers, which lay very low before the event for fear of giving an advertisement to so dangerous a movement, are now loud of tongue, denouncing it as an act of treason against Government, and at the same time scornfully declaring its utter failure. The Suffragists of No-Man's Land can afford to smile; they know better.

One outward and visible sign of the far-reaching success of the protest is to be found in the large aggregate of "collections" made at the social gatherings on Census night, the totals of which are already being published in the various Suffrage papers. The usual contribution, or "footing fee," quite voluntarily given by those taking part in one of the numerous forms of protest or evasion, was a shilling. Yet the total of Census collections already published amounts to hundreds of pounds, and a very elementary calculation enables one to read behind these sums a congregation all over the country amounting to many thousands. Not to be behind their militant sisters in this matter, "Constitutionals" also contributed to the funds of their own societies by "Census-night collections." And the coffers of the various branches have been replenished through their hearty co-operation in a demonstration which their leaders did not officially countenance. Militants have every reason to be glad of having devised a form of protest in which all alike, men and women, militants and Constitutionals, were able to bear a part.

The Suffragists of No-Man's Land are now awaiting with keen interest the outcome of your own Census boycott on the night of April 2. But the best news of all would be that the Government has put a peaceful end to the protest by promising full facilities for the Conciliation Bill during the present Session. Will it have the wisdom to do this, or is its crime against political science still to go on, producing, as it inevitably must, a state bordering on civil war?

LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION: RESULT.

A first prize of a year's (value 6s. 6d.) and a second prize of six months' (value 3s. 3d.) subscription to THE VOTE were offered in our issue of January 21 to the persons sending in the two best suggestions, during February, for increasing the sales of this paper. We have pleasure in awarding the first prize to Mrs. E. Pedley, 149, Croydon-road, Anerley, and the second prize to Mrs. J. K. Pring, 34, Narcissus-road, West Hampstead, N.W.

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### CAXTON HALL "AT HOME."

The speakers at last Thursday's "At Home" were Mr. G. E. O'Dell (of the Men's League) and Miss Alison Neilans.

Miss Tite, who occupied the chair, emphasised the importance of the Suffrage agitation. Personally, she had given up working for all other reforms; not that she had lost interest in other things, but because she realised that the only weapon with which to fight for the removal of national grievances is the vote. For the same reason she had ceased subscribing to various charities in which she was interested, giving the money to the Women's Freedom League instead.

Mr. G. E. O'Dell delivered an address on "Women and War," taking as his text a phrase from Olive Schreiner's "Woman and Labour," quoted in the current issue of THE VOTE. There were different opinions on this subject, declared the speaker. Some people said that women will always be wanting war, others that they will always be wanting peace; and if they had political power they would use it in favour of peace against war. There were excellent reasons for imagining that by giving women the Suffrage it would mean the abolition of war, except, perhaps, in extreme cases when it was impossible to effect a settlement of differences. The speaker did not think there was anything in nature to support this theory. In his opinion there was nothing more dangerous than to argue from nature. There was no difference known between man and woman that circumstances could not overcome. There was no proof that women were particularly timid by nature; no proof that they were better than men, more courageous or more timid. It depended on the circumstances in which women were put. It was often said that "Every woman loves a red coat," but this did not necessarily mean that they liked war, or that they wanted to make men fight. Women have depended on men for a living, man was woman's food-supplier. It was no wonder that women had preferred the physical strength of a soldier, for the soldier had always been a typically strong man, a man who could defend woman in danger. As wife and mother woman had always wanted man to be strong, so as to be better able to defend her and her children. But if circumstances changed, and woman became her own food-supplier, it was easy to see that woman might come to hate a red coat for the reason that she was a mother. Woman would always have a greater interest in the world than man because she was the mother, and had to bring up her children. Ruskin said that the great nations of the world had been the fighting nations. But in the end these nations had also been the effeminate nations, because the stronger men had not stayed at home and been fathers of the children.

Miss Neilans explained the meaning of the Census protest.

### SPECIAL MESSAGES TO OUR READERS.

From Miss Ethel Fennings (VOTE Sales Organiser):—

Example is better than precept, and this week I should like to bring before members what can be done by enthusiasm, determination, and concentration. I refer to Mrs. Powell, one of our most constant and successful sellers, who continues to beat her own record and who certainly deserves the heartiest congratulations of all those who desire the triumph of our movement. She shows that where there is a will there is a way, and although not over strong she disposed of 287 the other week, and her grand total since THE VOTE made its debut is nearly seven thousand (7,000). Another member who is doing a fine work is Mrs. Pedley, of Hanley, who writes this week telling how she asks all her friends and relatives to buy THE VOTE. She also visits all the shops in the town buying her groceries, crockery, drapery, &c., at different shops each week in order to introduce our paper and sell a copy. No one

is left out, and even the doctors and dentists are induced to spend a penny in this manner. The town is thus permeated with Suffrage news through THE VOTE, and much seed is sown. Mrs. Pedley intends doing the same in neighbouring towns, and hopes other members will follow her example.

After this, I feel sure I shall get a splendid response to my usual appeal for street-sellers, and please remember the poster parades on Monday at 2 p.m., and a special one on Thursday, 16th, at 5.45 p.m.

From Mrs. Eileen Mitchell (Literature Department, Women's Freedom League, 1, Robert-street, Adelphi):—

Can anyone donate this department with a good, strong, old trunk, it does not matter how shabby? If so, please send it direct to Caxton Hall addressed to Mrs. Eileen Mitchell, and communicate with this department.

The following new books may be ordered from us:— "Mary Wollstonecraft," by G. R. S. Taylor (7s. 6d. net); "Woman and Labour," by Olive Schreiner (8s. 6d. net); "The Emancipation of Women," by Lyon Bleas (6s. net); "Marriage and Divorce," by Cecil Chapman, J.P. (2s. net). If you require a copy of either, will you remember that you can help our League by buying through us, and please send cash with order? EILEEN MITCHELL.

From Mrs. Rose (Advertisement Department of THE VOTE, 148, Holborn Bars, E.C.):—

I want this week to make a special appeal to our readers to support all advertisers in this paper. Please remember that in helping our advertisers you are helping the Cause. All Suffragists need food and dress; many of them need household goods. It is quite easy for readers of THE VOTE to order these things through VOTE advertisers. Please read through our advertisement columns every week and patronise as many advertisers as you can, telling them why you are doing so.



### SPRING FASHIONS.

A delightful range of the Latest Novelties for Spring wear are now being sold.

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## POSTER PARADERS.

By LOUISA THOMSON-PRICE.

A fat man with hard-boiled eyes, a tight collar and a double chin at the back of his neck, came slowly down the steps of a well-known club in Pall Mall as the poster-paraders wended their way along that historically famous thoroughfare.

When he had reached the pavement, he adjusted his monocle, took his cigar from his mouth, and read the words on the poster:

"BOYCOTT THE CENSUS!"

"Why, they must be mad!" he ejaculated.

"There is method in our madness," said I, quietly, as we passed on.

Have you ever poster-paraded? It is certainly worth the experiment. *C'est le premier pas qui coute.* After that, the other steps come easily and the experiment may become a habit. The only drawback is that one has to walk slowly. There are, also, certain police regulations which one is forced to observe. If eight or ten Freedom Leaguers elect to carry VOTE posters along Whitehall, Pall Mall, the Haymarket, Regent-street and Oxford-street, they must be prepared to walk in the gutter, to keep at least ten paces apart and to religiously avoid obstructing the passage of motors, taxis, cabs, and other vehicles which are continually drawing up at the pavement curb to deposit or take up shoppers and their kind. An eye must be kept on your "off-side," in order to dexterously avoid too close proximity to muddy cab-wheels, and you must certainly keep the other eye on the "shop-side," for you will have many an opportunity of handing a leaflet to an astonished, amused, scornful, sympathetic or hesitating passer-by.

Poster-parading, in fact, is a liberal education to the parader. When one is on the wrong side of the curb, one obtains rich opportunities for observing almost every phase of human nature and of studying all sorts of aspects of life from a philosophical point of view.

Just outside Lewis's, in Oxford-street, we drew up and stood ten paces apart, facing the pavement for five minutes, for a needed rest and to give Miss Fennings, our champion VOTE seller, a better opportunity of disposing of some copies of our organ. Six copies were sold within the five minutes, which speaks well not only for her persuasive qualities, but also for the responsiveness of the general public.

How good it is to possess the saving grace of humour. It is a valuable asset which poster-paraders cannot afford to be without. We found it exceedingly useful during our five minutes' wait. A young person with a cart-wheel hat, a hobble skirt, and a muff of abnormal dimensions, was arrested for a moment by the vision of eight big posters borne by eight militant Suffragists. She surveyed us with a pitying smile. Turning to her companion, a weedy young man in patent boots, who had evidently inadvertently mistaken a cuff for his collar at his morning toilet, she said, "Really, you know, they're almost ladies!"

A fussy old gentleman stopped suddenly, read the poster, looked at our little band with a pained expression, and then, stepping up to me, protested in a deprecating but not unpleasant manner: "My dear lady, you don't surely intend to be so indiscreet! To boycott the Census would amount to a very serious disturbance of public business. It would be a most drastic step and, well, exceedingly inconvenient."

"That is exactly why we are doing it," I replied. "Militant protests have been met with drastic punitive measures on the part of the Government, and we now propose that the body which has inconvenienced us by depriving us of taking part in legislation which concerns women as well as men shall itself be inconvenienced."

"Yes, yes, but think of the waste of public money,"

he retorted. "Don't you know that the Census costs the country about a hundred and fifty thousand pounds?"

"We are perfectly aware of it, but as a good many millions of tax-paying women's money has been drawn from them in order to promote legislation in which they have been denied a voice, we think a hundred and fifty thousand pounds a small matter in comparison, and so have decided to boycott the Census. As women 'do not count' in representative matters we have an idea that they should not be counted for the purpose of affording statistical information which may be used against their industrial interests by and by."

A small but interested crowd appeared to be gathering and at this moment a "man in blue" loomed large in the vicinity. We therefore promptly "moved on," and continued our slow journey as far as Bourne and Hollingsworths, then back to Oxford-circus, down Regent-street again (where we made another halt outside Liberty's) and so on home to Adelphi.

Miss Fennings and the redoubtable Mrs. Powell sold THE VOTE to curious or interested onlookers all along the course. Some hundreds of leaflets were given away, and when we reached the top step of the flight of stairs leading to our offices at 1, Robert-street, we all simultaneously heaved a tired sigh which had in it, nevertheless, a note of extreme satisfaction. We had successfully accomplished an educational tour—and, strange to relate, every one of us had really enjoyed it!

### MRS. BORRMANN WELLS' DEPARTURE FOR AMERICA.

Our colleague, Mrs. Borrmann Wells, who has given such splendid service to our League and to the Cause, set out the other day on her journey to America. I, with several other members of the League, saw her off from Waterloo Station. Her last thoughts and words were of our work. We wish her God-speed, and are glad of the hope held out to us that her absence from England will not be long. Very heartily shall we welcome her back! We are doing what we can to fill up the great gap made by her absence, but much more voluntary help is needed, especially between this and Census day. Our new secretary is Miss Underwood. We know the position is a difficult one, but we know also from experience (as she has helped us for some time) the quality of Miss Underwood's work, and we have great hope in her knowledge and enthusiasm. Will those who have at their disposal days or hours that they can offer to the Cause give in their names to her? C. DESPARD.

### OTHER SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

The Church League for Women's Suffrage.—Hon. Secretary—Rev. C. HINSLIFF, 11, St. Mark's-crescent, Regent's-park, N.W.

In addition to the existing fifteen branches, new ones will shortly be established at Mentone (South of France), Bromley (Kent), Cambridge, Cardiff, Cuckfield, Eastbourne, Harrow, Leicester, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Sittingbourne, and Winchester. The drawing-room meetings for this month will be held as follows:—(a) By Mrs. Monck-Mason, 93, Oakley-street, S.W., March 16, at 3.30 p.m.; speakers, Mrs. Lovibond and Rev. C. Hinscliff. (b) By Mrs. Shewell Cooper, 8, Warwick-avenue, Paddington, W.; speaker, Mrs. A. J. Webbe. On Thursday evenings during Lent, Rev. C. Hinscliff will continue his series of addresses on "Social Problems of To-day," the subjects being: March 9, "School"; 16th, "Business"; 23rd, "The Poor"; 30th, "The Unfit"; April 6, "The Profligate." St. Mary's Church is a short distance along the Harrow-road from the Edgware-road Station on the Bakerloo Railway. As Miss Maude Royden was unfortunately prevented from giving her promised lecture on "Joan of Arc," on March 3, at Caxton Hall, Miss Muriel Matters lectured in her place, to an appreciative audience, on "The Torch of Femininity," and followed her address by a recitation of one of Olive Schreiner's "Dreams."



## THE VOTE.

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Mrs. J. E. SNOW, Mrs. L. THOMSON-PRICE.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 1911.

### THE PRESENT POSITION OF WOMEN.

The struggles of our pioneer women for freedom and education have at least produced a certain number of trained women abroad in the world, free to gaze for themselves into the abyss of wrong and injustice hid for the most part from our mothers and grandmothers, and into which thousands of our protected classes still refuse to look.

As doctors, as nurses, as teachers in colleges and schools, as inspectors and relieving officers, as municipal councillors and poor law guardians—women can see life as it is, in all its horror and desolation, in all its muddle and foolery under uni-sexual legislation; they can meditate at their leisure upon the fact that the earth is unnecessarily full of darkness and cruel habitations; that the cheap labour of women (who are white slaves all but in name) has been allowed to grow up till it is a menace to men also, that the weakest goes to the wall more than she ought, and that in marriage men ride on in triumphant selfishness and brutality, dragging behind them helpless women bound and bleeding, their cries stifled in the dust.

Read the revelations of the white slave traffic, recently published in *M.A.P.*, and see how easy it is for men to sell British girls into hell, to make large fortunes, and run syndicates paying 35 to 60 per cent. to the shareholders, with very slight risks to directors—six months only for a "misdemeanour" if caught!

Read the letter recently published in *The Times* by a Canon of St. Paul's, asking for subscriptions to endow Homes for "fallen children." The distinguished Churchman accepts life as it is without protest; he suggests no more stringent measures for scoundrels; he raises no cry against the horrors of our slums and the crowded dens of the poor, which often cause these crimes against nature: all he asks for is money to provide a scrapheap for our wronged babes. "With his night-cap and the hem of his dressing-gown he stops up the holes of the universe."

Neither Christ nor Moses nor Isaiah would have let such crimes pass without protest. If the mothers of England had the vote to-day I believe we should see to it shortly that such homes should be unnecessary, remembering literally the words: "Whosoever offendeth one of these little ones . . . it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea."

Long ago I gave up all connection with rescue work and penitentiaries, until such time as similar institutions are run for men. It seemed to me futile to tinker at a rotten system and to allow men full license to create fresh victims—scapegoats for the sins of the world—whilst neither law nor public opinion blame the sex, who call themselves the stronger.

Look at the pitiful rows of women day after day in our police-courts had up for "solicitation," and remember how common it is for "gentlemen" to follow and annoy decent women and helpless terrified girls. I have never seen a "gentleman" in the dock for such an offence; I doubt if the magistrates have.

We hold that prostitution is an economic problem rather than a moral one, not to be healed by philanthropic palliatives or one-sided legislation. We are not dreamers of dreams; we know that there are vicious women just as there are vicious men, but we believe that women will win their economic freedom through their political freedom, that with the right of full citizenship the whole sex will be dignified and uplifted to a higher

sphere, that wages will improve, and the free woman of the future will scorn to look to the vices of men for daily bread.

When the average wages of women are something between seven and eight shillings a week, when men are willing to pay vice more highly than virtue, when there is always a steady market for youth and good looks, the wonder to me is not that so many fall, but that so many keep straight, proudly wearing the poor clothes and eating honestly the dry bread and tea of semi-starvation. Mrs. Warren speaks the truth about her profession: "It's not work that any woman would do for pleasure, goodness knows . . . but it's far better than any employment open to her. I always thought that oughtn't to be. It can't be right that there should not be better opportunities for women. I stick to that it's wrong. But it's so, right or wrong; and a girl must make the best of it."

Our legislators do not trouble their heads about these things; some are said even to object to any reform. "Votes for women," a member of the House is reported to have said: "we must consider our sons; they would not get their women so cheap then."

They seem ignorant or indifferent to the fact that vice is corrupting the bodies and brains of the nation, breeding insanity and idiocy, deafness and deformity, blindness and a thousand ills, and peopling as fast as they are built the huge institutions which arise around all our great towns to harbour this human wreckage, the scapegoats for the sins of the world. This vice is ruining innocent lives and the health of generations yet unborn, and one remembers Blake's prophecy: "The harlot's shriek shall weave old England's winding-sheet."

Read that terrible account in Zola's novel, when in their hour of humiliation and defeat the people of Paris cried out bitterly and too late against the vices which had brought disaster on the great French nation. Nearly two thousand years ago, when the great Roman Empire was beginning to crumble and decay, Juvenal laments the loose morals of the city and the girls from the East standing for hire in the market-place. What would he think of us to-day in London? And he was a pagan, and we still profess to call ourselves Christian.

The younger generation of women have seen these things; no wonder they hesitate to marry and bring forth children (perchance girl children) to whom they can have no legal claim as parent or guardian; no wonder when they hear of the rumoured changes that will shut the married woman out of the labour market without however making any provision for her support or for that of her children, that we are told all over the country free unions are becoming more and more common. Will this make a better England? "Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people. . . . For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt. . . . Astonishment hath taken hold on me. . . . Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON.

It is intended to form a branch of the Irish Women's Franchise League in London, as it is felt there are many Irish Suffragettes living here who would be glad to join, and there is not yet a branch in England. It is hoped to hold an inaugural meeting very soon. Will all Irish women who are interested communicate with Miss K. Pearce, 31, Delancey-street, Regent's Park, N.W., who is acting secretary, and will be very glad to answer inquiries and give any information?

A NEW METHOD OF AGITATION.—Professor Karl Pearson, in addressing an audience of undergraduates, said: "You cannot settle such essential problems of society as alcoholism, tuberculosis, mental defectiveness, or the changing status of women by oratory in the market-place. I claim that these things must be studied in university laboratories, where Oxford shall check the results of Cambridge, and London correct both of them if need be." Judging from the behaviour of Oxford and Cambridge in withholding degrees from women as compared with London, there would probably be a great need to check their conclusions as regards Women's Suffrage.



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### BRANCH NOTES.

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

**Mid-London Branch (late Central).—MRS. TRITTON, 1, Northcote-avenue, Ealing, W.**

Our last meeting at Chandos Hall was only fairly well attended, owing probably to the fact that the 28th was a very wet day. However, a good collection was taken, and Miss Edith Craig sold a satisfactory amount of literature. Mrs. Cope made, as usual, a very interesting chairman, and Mrs. Arcliffe-Sennett gave us a very entertaining speech, not omitting references to the serious side of the Suffrage movement. It was, of course, a great disappointment not to hear Lady Stout, but the loss of her voice made it impossible for her to address us.

Our next public meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 15, at the Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, at 8 p.m. Our speaker will be Mrs. Despard, who, among other subjects, will explain the attitude of the W.F.L. towards the Census in consequence of the exclusion of women from citizenship. Mrs. Tanner will be in the chair, and we are to have the pleasure of a recitation from Miss Olive Terry.

As there will be some unavoidable expense in giving the small Suffrage play which has been promised us for the 29th, a fund has been started to defray this, and so prevent it falling on the ordinary branch funds. The following sums have been promised: Miss Edith Craig, 5s.; Mrs. Cope, 2s. 6d.; Miss Cicely Hamilton, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Tritton, 1s. I shall be glad to receive any contribution, however small, for this purpose from branch members.

Will all members of the Mid-London Branch (whether householders or not), willing to resist or evade the Census, communicate with Mrs. Hyde at 1, Robert-street, and state whether they will take in other passive resisters, let their houses for the occasion, or themselves require accommodation for the night? An important Branch Members' Business Meeting will be held at 1, Robert-street, on Wednesday, March 22, which I hope you will all make an effort to attend.—E. G. T.

**Tottenham.—Miss MARIE SIMS, 11, Elmhurst-road, Bruce Grove, N.**

Will members make special effort to attend meeting at 30, Lausanne-road, Hornsey, on March 14, when Miss Neilans is speaking on the Census?—MARY SIMS.

**Hampstead.—Miss LUCAS, 21, Gayton-road.**

Members are devoting all their energies, at present, to working

up the Census Meeting on March 21. The meeting is to be held at the Small Town-Hall at 3 p.m. The Hampstead Branch of the W.S.P.U. is joining with us in this effort, and two of their members, Mrs. Brailsford and Mrs. Massy, will speak. Mrs. Francis has also promised to address the meeting on this occasion, and Mrs. Nevinson will take the chair. Helpers are wanted at the Jumble Sale on March 11 at Spencer Hall, Dartmouth Park Hill, also more offers of old clothes, &c.

#### Acton.

This branch holds fortnightly members' meetings on the first and third Wednesdays in the month at Mrs. Ashton's, 26, Buxton-gardens, Acton, at 8 p.m. Friends are always welcome. A public meeting will shortly be held on the subject of the Census Protest, and the members would be glad of help from members and sympathisers living in the neighbourhood.

**Croydon.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. TERRY, 9, Morland-avenue.**

Two successful drawing-room Meetings were held last week, the first on February 28, at Mrs. Labrousse's, where Miss Neilans very clearly explained the "Census Scheme." Although the afternoon was wet there was a good attendance, and several friends promised help in local work.

On March 1 the second meeting was held at Mrs. Ferguson's. We were disappointed that Mrs. How-Martyn was unable to address the meeting, but Miss Neilans kindly came again, and spoke on "How to Evade the Census."

Our thanks are due to both our hostesses for the use of their rooms and other work that a meeting entails.

We hope to open our new centre this week at No. 3, The Arcade, High-street, and heartily invite all friends and members to come and bring friends.

**Stamford Hill.—Mrs. CUNNINGHAM, 114, Holmleigh-road.**

Canvassing and spreading information regarding the Census Protest has now begun in earnest, and it is hoped that the weather will be favourable for open-air meetings at West Hackney Church and Amhurst Park each Monday and Friday evening during March. Will any member who has time to spare kindly help with the extra work?

**West Hampstead.—23, Pandora-road, West Hampstead.**

The usual weekly meeting was held on Wednesday, March 1. It was decided that an open-air meeting should be held at West-end-green next Wednesday, March 8, instead of the usual meeting at above address. On Wednesday, March 15, there will be the usual meeting at 23, Pandora-road, when sympathisers will be heartily welcomed.

Will any men or women in West Hampstead willing to evade the Census kindly send me their names and address as soon as possible?—JEANNETTE VAN RAALTE, Hon. Sec.

**Herne Hill and Norwood.—32, Geneva-road, Brixton, S.W.**

On Wednesday, March 1 a members' meeting was held at 28, Carson-road, Dulwich. The chair was taken by Miss Jenks, and final arrangements were made for the next drawing-room meeting. Some details of the Census protest were also seriously discussed, and Miss Jenks, who is acting as Census agent for the Branch, will be glad to receive the names of all members who can take part in the protest as soon as possible.

Our treasurer wishes me to remind members that their subscriptions for 1911 are now due, and we shall be glad to receive them as soon as possible. Mrs. Presbury, our VOTE organiser, will be very glad if a few more members will assist her in canvassing or street selling, as there is still very much to be done in this way to increase the circulation of our paper.—B. SPENCER, Hon. Sec.

The Jumble Sale, which was held on Saturday, February 25, and which finished up the work at the Battersea shop, realised £6 15s. I am very grateful to those members and friends who sent contributions for the sale, and to Mrs. Duval, Mrs. Sutcliffe, Mrs. Lenay, Mrs. Yaldwyn, Miss Uphill, Miss Underwood, Miss Sutcliffe and Miss Le Mesurier for helping at the Sale.—MADGE TURNER, Organiser, 316, Battersea Park-road.

**Clapham.—Miss F. UNDERWOOD, 31, Rush Hill-road, Lavender Hill.**

A well-attended meeting was held last Friday evening in the Lecture Room of Battersea Public Library, when Miss Neilans urged her audience to refuse to give any of the information asked for on the Census forms. Although several present were not members of a militant society, all were convinced that the Census Boycott was a logical, well-thought-out protest, for no opposition was offered and names of resisters were handed in at the close of the meeting. Literature and copies of THE VOTE were sold. Another Census meeting in this district will be addressed by Mrs. How Martyn, Tuesday, March 21, 3 p.m., at Phillip's Music Rooms, 13, South-side, Clapham-common.

**Peckham.—Mrs. PICKERING, 23, Albert-road.**

By kind permission of Mrs. Pickering a drawing-room meeting was arranged and addressed by Miss Neilans. Names of resisters were handed in, and some literature and VOTES sold.

**Brighton and Hove.**

Hon. Secretaries: Mrs. FRANCIS, 51, Buckingham-place, Brighton; Miss HARE, 8, San Remo, Hove.

A most delightful entertainment, arranged by Mrs. Francis, in the form of a dramatic reading of "You Never Can Tell" was given at Miss Hare's house. These Saturday Sixpenny Socials are proving a success not only as social gatherings, but



As a means of grace to the non-Suffragists who attend them, and a means of money-getting to the Suffragists who arrange them.

On Wednesday last a well-attended Drawing-room Meeting was held at 8, San Remo. Miss Hare took the chair. Miss Hayllar, to whose coming members had looked forward, spoke on "The Superfluous Woman," and members are now looking forward to hearing her again. Miss Nellen gave an interesting speech on "No Vote, No Tax," and Mrs. Francis recited "Woman This and Woman That" in her inimitable way. Some new members joined.

**Portsmouth and Gosport.**—MRS. WHEATON, 64, Devonshire-avenue, Southsea.

The meeting held last Thursday afternoon by the kind invitation of Mrs. Hay Shaw was fairly well attended. A number of Census papers were filled in, and the following subscriptions which our treasurer wishes to gratefully acknowledge were given for the Census protest.—Mrs. Casher, 10s.; Miss L. Carr Shaw, 10s.; Mrs. Brenner, 2s. 6d.; Miss Hattrill, 1s. An "At Home" has been arranged at the Sandringham Hotel for Saturday, March 18, at 8 p.m. Mrs. Despard will be the guest of the evening. The first part of the programme will be musical, after which Mrs. Despard will speak on the Census protest. Tickets 6d. each.

Members and friends are earnestly asked to make this widely known, and women householders are especially invited.—S. WHEATON.

**LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.**—Hon. Organiser: MISS MANNING, B.A., Harper-hill, Sale, Cheshire.

**Sale.**—VOTE AGENTS: Mrs. HOBSON, 13, Northenden-road; Mrs. WALKER, 125, Washway-road.

On Monday evening, February 27, our quarters at the Temperance Rooms were so crowded that the audience overflowed into the passage and was accommodated with seats on the stairs outside. *The Sale and Stratford Guardian* gives the following account of the meeting:—

"SHAKESPEARE'S FEMALE CHARACTERS.

"On Monday night, at the Sale Temperance Rooms (Cross-street), one of the series of fortnightly meetings connected with the Sale Branch of the Women's Freedom League was held, when Miss Manning lectured on the female characters of Shakespeare. Miss Hines presided.

"Miss Manning divided her subject into two groups—(1) The active characters, those who did something, whose action moulded; and (2) passive characters, who were moulded by circumstances. She submitted she could not go far wrong in this, because psychologists told them that humanity was divided into the active and the passive. Then these Shakespearean groups had associated themselves with two sub-groups, the supernatural and the comic. Of the active characters the one she liked best was Portia, which was the most modern. She gave an excellent analysis of the character of Cleopatra, which she urged was one of perennial fascination, one with which the art and poetry of Shakespeare was associated at its best.

"Scenes from the plays were recited by Miss Ruth Manning, Miss Carroll and Miss Bessie Manning, and the considerable histrionic ability they displayed afforded much enjoyment. The rendering by Miss Ruth Manning of the potion scene from *Romeo and Juliet* was illuminated by the most intense dramatic feeling, and created a vivid impression."

On Miss Hines suggesting that perhaps as this was a special occasion a collection might be taken, the audience not only applauded but gave generously to the fund. Miss Carroll and Master B. Gothard deserve our thanks for the excellent business they did in VOTES and Russian toffee. We have quite a substantial sum from the latter for the District Fund.

**Urmston.**

On Friday we had a very good attendance at the fortnightly meeting (over Wills' shop), and the members were pleased to see several new faces amongst the audience. Nurse Margaret Lawson spoke in her usual masterly and sympathetic manner of the dangers of the Midwives' Bill. The following resolutions were passed unanimously: (1) "That this meeting of the Women's Freedom League protests against Clause 17 of the Midwives' Bill, and demands any public provision made for birth and infancy shall be placed under the Public Health Authority, and freed from all connection with the Poor Law and all stigma of pauperism." (2) "That this meeting protests against legislation on such questions by a Parliament responsible solely to a male electorate." Nurse Griffin, Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Beanland took part in the discussion which followed.

On March 17 Miss Neal and Mr. Allen will debate the following resolution: "That, on grounds of justice and expediency, votes should be granted to duly qualified women without delay."

**Moss Side.**

On Sunday afternoon Miss Manning spoke on "Prison Reform from a Woman's Standpoint" at the Men's Meeting, Unitarian Schools, Moss Side. The meeting had been thrown open to women, and an interesting discussion followed the address.

**Census Protest.**

The number of open houses for the night of April 2 has materially increased this week. Please send in names and addresses of evaders as quickly as possible.

**Organisation Committee.**

The monthly meeting was held on Saturday, March 4, at 302, Upper Brook-street, the Manchester, Eccles and Urmston Branches being represented. The Census Protest and the question of finance occupied the chief attention of the Committee, and each branch has on hand special schemes for increasing funds, amongst which I would draw special attention to the Jumble Sale of the Manchester Central Branch on March 18, for which goods may be sent to Miss Hordern, 89, Clitheroe-road, Longsight; and the Whist Drive, organised by the same branch in the Clarion Café on March 27 (tickets, 1s. 3d., may be had from Miss Hordern). The Eccles Branch is holding a Whist Drive next Friday, March 10, at Burgon's Hall, Monton-green (tickets may be obtained from Miss Hayes, Newholme, Hazlehurst, Worsley, price 1s. 3d.).—M. E. MANNING.

**Chester.**—E. WOODALL, 13, Abbey-square.

Since our King's Speech meeting, every available moment has been spent by Miss Taylor, our energetic treasurer, and myself in visiting the numerous people hitherto strangers to us who volunteered for the Census boycott. The results are encouraging, three of the volunteers having joined the branch, two gave subscriptions of 5s. each, and several promised to take THE VOTE regularly. An elderly member, who offers her house, would risk the utmost but for ill-health, so must spend the night with a friend. We have sold during February eleven dozen VOTES, and at least twelve copies a week are obtained through newagents, making a total of more than twenty-four regular subscribers—doubled since February 1. I usually sell two VOTES each day when travelling by train, which often leads to the name and address of a sympathiser being given. THE VOTE can always be procured at my cottage.—E. WOODALL.

**East Anglia.**—Hon. Organiser: Miss ANDREWS, 160, Norwich-road, Ipswich.

We have moved into our new rooms at 16, Arcade-street, and hope quickly to get them into working order. One kind friend has already sent a substantial contribution, and we shall be very grateful if others will do likewise, as we have many expenses to meet. Last Thursday evening, at our weekly meeting, Miss Cooke gave an extremely interesting address on "The Position of Women an Economic Blunder." She dealt with the subject in a very able manner, dealing with the position of women in all classes. Names are coming in for the Census boycott. Will those desirous of taking their share in this protest in and around Ipswich kindly send their names, so that the necessary arrangements can be made?

We need goods for the barrow, which will soon be starting again now that better weather has come. Jams, pickles, cakes, books, fruit, are all very saleable, and we shall be glad of these and of other goods. Amongst our speakers for this month are included Mr. Laurence Housman, Mrs. How-Martyn and Mrs. Nevinson, so there is a treat in store for all Suffragists in and around Ipswich.—CONSTANCE E. ANDREWS.

### THE MINERVA PUBLISHING COMPANY.

The directors have to announce the resignation of Miss Marie Lawson as a director of the company. The resignation was accepted with very deep regret, for Miss Lawson gave invaluable service to THE VOTE in its very early days, and as managing director during the first year bore the whole burden of the company's development. Unfortunately, for reasons of ill-health Miss Ridler is obliged to relinquish the secretaryship. The untiring devotion with which Miss Ridler has attended to the affairs of the company is very warmly appreciated by the directors, who all hope that the rest from these arduous duties will quickly restore her to health.

These two resignations have necessitated some alterations in the business of the company. It has been decided to close the Printing and Merchandise Department on March 17, and we wish in these columns to thank all friends who have helped us by supporting this department.

Miss Thompson has kindly agreed to be secretary for the present, and in future all communications for the company should be addressed to her.

In these unavoidable changes we look to all our members to support us by doing their best to increase the circulation of THE VOTE and to deal with the firms who advertise in it.

OUR deepest life is when we are alone. We think most truly, love best, when isolated from the outer world in that mystic abyss we call soul. Nothing external can equal the fulness of these moments.—A. E., in "The Hero in Man."

## OUR NEW EDITOR.

In these days of specialisation there are very few people of whom it can truly be said that he or she is a person of parts. It may be better to know everything about one thing than a little about everything; but it is a moot point if it be not better still to know a great deal about many things than to cultivate one talent only and bury any others of which one might be possessed. At any rate there can be no doubt that if Mrs. Despard were not gifted with a quite unusual versatility she would never have been the leader in the Suffrage movement that she is, much less would she have taken upon herself the difficult position of responsible Editor of THE VOTE. Although now known to the public chiefly as a Militant Suffragist, the President of the Women's Freedom League years ago won laurels for herself in the world of letters. "The Rajah's Heir," an anonymous novel from her pen which ran into several editions, was hailed as the book of the year by journals of such standing as *The Saturday Review* and *The Pall Mall Gazette*. At the height of her fame, however, Mrs. Despard abandoned all her literary aspirations in order to devote herself to the work of social reform.

**Influence of Shelley.**

To most of the readers of THE VOTE Mrs. Despard's personality is familiar, and these will agree with me that, externally, her expression is as varied as her powers. At one time she is like nothing so much as a mediæval saint; at another she is the rebel, chafing with a fierce impatience at restrictions which hinder the development of the mind as the fashionable corset retards the natural growth of the body. But at all times she is the Crusader, carrying aloft the banner of truth in the face of ridicule, danger, and obloquy. Our President attributes her passion for social equality and justice of every kind to the poet Shelley. In this, however, I think she does the poet too great honour. Poets cannot create, though they may influence, minds.

If Mrs. Despard, who was but a young girl when she first made acquaintance with the beauty and mystery, the power and truth of Shelley's works, had not been born with a passion for righteousness, not even the greatness of a Shelley could have bestowed it. What the poet did was to show the need for reform. His teaching fired the faggot that was already there—that later was to blaze forth with a mighty warmth of passionate indignation at the wrongs of humanity, and, beacon-like, illumine others with its own radiance.

**Poor Law Work.**

It was as a Poor Law Guardian for Kingston that Mrs. Despard made her first entry into public life. After twelve months unceasing toil and vigilance she determined to transfer her energies to a wider field. Coming to London, she took a large house in Wandsworth-road, one of the poorest of the south-western districts, and entered whole-heartedly into the life of the poor. She opened a club for working boys and men, and another for the "mothers" and girls. She

became a school manager and served on care committees. She opened a dispensary under the charge of an experienced hospital nurse. As if this were not enough, she also became a Guardian for Lambeth, and later for Wandsworth, posts which she occupied for eleven years. Those who knew Mrs. Despard in her Lambeth Guardian days, speak with unqualified admiration of the yeoman service which she rendered the poor of that district. Everywhere she found abuses—in the workhouse, in the infirmary, in the administration of outdoor relief. And everywhere she fought them; often single-handed, always with an untiring zeal and a determination little short of herculean. After nine years' strenuous service Mrs. Despard removed from Lambeth, and so lost her title to serve as a Guardian for that district. Her present abode is at Nine Elms, but a short distance from her original residence. And at this house also are the hungry still fed, the naked clothed, sufferers healed.

**Rights of Humanity.**

Although Mrs. Despard has always been an ardent Advocate of Woman Suffrage, she has never looked upon the vote as other than a means to an end. As an abstraction, political emancipation makes little appeal to her. As a mere cry, sex-equality sounds no *reveille* to this warrior woman. "Women's Rights," in the old, narrow sense of the term, has never been an obsession with Mrs. Despard. But the rights of humanity—and there is no humanity which is not made up of man and woman—its dignity and responsibility, are very dear to the justice-loving soul of the President of the Women's Freedom League. It was only after recognising the utter futility of the hope to establish woman's claim to human rights while she was still a political cypher that Mrs. Despard placed Votes for Women at the head and front of her programme of work, and became militant,

MRS. DESPARD.

not only out of impatience to right a wrong, but because she realised that militancy is the only way to arouse the proverbial lethargy of the politician. In a hurry? Yes. When one sees a creature in imminent peril of its life it is criminal not to hasten to its help. And with the realisation of the thousand dangers to womanhood while the sex is still in political subjection comes the responsibility of acquiescing in those dangers if one does not hurry to remove them. So our President, like all good Suffragists, is eager for the weapon which in skilled hands will break down mighty barriers. She longs for the vote because she knows that in a constitutional country it is as potent to overcome the Goliath of Injustice as the stone in the hands of David.

**Mrs. Despard's Militancy.**

The militant agitation had been but a short time in existence when Mrs. Despard became one of its strongest supporters. In those days the stupidity of politicians had probably not been fully gauged, for it was thought by many that if a woman so well known in the philanthropic world as Mrs. Despard were to





prove her readiness to suffer imprisonment in the cause of Woman Suffrage, the vote would not long be withheld. It is certainly a fact that the police, acting no doubt upon instructions, were very loth to take into custody the Lady Bountiful of Nine Elms. Lesser known women were arrested often on the mere suspicion of being Suffragettes, and without having had an opportunity of making the slightest protest. Mrs. Despard, on the other hand, was frequently allowed to make with impunity a vigorous speech in the sacred precincts of Palace Yard itself. On one occasion Mrs. Despard, together with Miss Alice Milne, of Manchester, mounted the Cœur de Lion monument in Palace Yard, from which point of vantage our President delivered a short speech. She was, of course, not allowed to proceed very far in her address before being hurled from her impromptu platform and, as she imagined, taken into custody. Finding at the station that she was not charged, although her companion, who had done nothing more than to stand by her, was accused of obstruction and disorderly conduct, Mrs. Despard went back to Palace Yard and again delivered with impunity a short speech within the prohibited area. The next day, as chief witness for the defence in the case of Miss Alice Milne, Mrs. Despard had an opportunity of stating her views upon the quasi justice of arresting the accused for practically nothing at all, and at the same time allowing witness twice to commit a technical offence against the law without any punitive result. Mr. Horace Smith, the presiding magistrate, expressed his amazement in such plain terms that no doubt was felt by those present in court that the police had "acted upon instructions."

#### Making History.

Since the incident recorded above, the President of the Women's Freedom League has twice suffered imprisonment for the cause. She was arrested for the first time in February, 1907, when, at the head of a deputation, she was on her way to the House of Commons to present to Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, the then Prime Minister, a resolution which had been passed at Caxton Hall calling upon the Government to enfranchise the women of the country. As the leader of the deputation, Mrs. Despard was the first to be arrested, and, also in that capacity, was sentenced to an extra week's imprisonment when brought before Mr. Curtis Bennett the next day at Rochester-row. The date upon which Mrs. Despard was first arrested is particularly memorable in the annals of the Militant Movement. It was the first occasion upon which the mounted police were called out to do battle with the Suffragettes. It was also the first time upon which arrests were made on a large scale. Hitherto the greatest number of arrests at any one time had been thirteen, but as a result of this demonstration nearly one hundred women were taken into custody.

#### Attempt at Bribery!

In accordance with her belief that taxation and representation should be inseparable, one from the other, Mrs. Despard has for the past few years refused to pay her taxes. Twice have her goods been seized, and once at least has violence been threatened to her person in order to induce compliance with the law of the land. But the most amusing episode in connection with Mrs. Despard's tax resistance occurred last summer. She received a document from the Board of Inland Revenue which, as a mixture of bullying and persuasion could only be compared with the eloquence invariably practised by the heavy father in old-fashioned melodrama. While dire results were threatened the delinquent if she continued to resist the law, she was promised a reduction of two pounds off the amount due if she would only be good! Mrs. Despard showed her contempt of the Government by practically defying them to do their worst. But it was many months afterwards before a humble instrument of the law—to wit, the "man in possession"—knocked nervously at the door of Mrs. Despard's house and apologetically announced his

errand. Mrs. Despard is now for the third time expecting a visit from the Government's emissaries. As, however, she lives the simplest of lives in the poor district in which she makes her home; as, moreover, anything of intrinsic value which the house once contained has been already looted, it will be difficult for them to find anything which from a monetary point of view will be worth carrying away. If every Suffragist were, like the President of the Women's Freedom League, willing to act up to her principles, at whatever cost, the question of Votes for Women would very soon be settled.

M. SLEEVE MCGOWAN.

### SCOTTISH NOTES.

Glasgow: Suffrage Centre, 502, SAUCHIEHALL STREET.  
Suffrage Centre Manageress: MISS K. McARTHUR.  
Hon. Secretary: MISS B. S. SEMPLE.  
Hon. Treasurer: MISS JANET L. BUNTEN.  
Telegrams: "Tactics," Glasgow. Nat. Telephone: 495 Douglas.  
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.  
How often have we been confronted with the question: "Why cannot you be content as your grandmothers were?" And how good it is to realise that the grandmothers—at least those of them who count for most in the progress of the race—never were content with the position of subjection in which they found themselves and their sisters. This we had the opportunity of realising afresh in listening to Miss Jacob's most interesting lecture on "Some Pioneers of the Woman's Movement." The lecture dealt not so much with the women, whose work is known and honoured by all Suffragists, as with those whose very names are all too unfamiliar. Nor were the many male thinkers who have recognised the essential equality of the sexes forgotten. Miss Jacob had spared no pains in getting together material for the lecture, much of it from out-of-the-way sources. She had also herself made the lantern slides which illustrated it. At the beginning of the meeting tea was served by Mrs. Simpson and Miss McLaren, to whom thanks are due for having so efficiently looked after this department during the last month.

Arrangements are now in hand for the social meeting on March 29, at which Mrs. Despard will speak. Miss Winifred Simpson, A.R.C.M., has kindly consented to play "The Awakening," and to train a choir to sing the chorus. Names are wanted at once.

A "Birthday Sale," to commemorate the opening of the shop will be held on May 6. Please begin as soon as possible to get your "birthday presents" ready. Mrs. Kennedy Fraser's song lecture has been postponed till May. A Jumble Sale is in prospect; goods can be received at any time at the shop. We are looking forward to having Miss Sidley during the remainder of this month. Every member who has any time at all is asked to help in working up the Census protest along with Miss Sidley.—HELEN MCLACHLAN, Assistant Secretary.

#### Glasgow.

An "At Home" given by our good friends, the Men's League for Women Suffrage, was held at the Centre on Monday evening, February 27. Mrs. Israel Zangwill was the speaker, and Mr. Solauders, as chairman, introduced her in a happy little speech. Mrs. Zangwill, who captivated the large audience by her charming personality, said that she did not think the enfranchisement of women would bring the millennium. She contended that the spirit for righteousness in women had never been fully used, but granting the vote would be the means of its outlet. It was ridiculous that women should be shut out from the national nursery at Westminster while the men were solemnly discussing the Children's Bill. Passing on to the question of Imperial politics in Great Britain, Mrs. Zangwill said that of course Imperial politics concerned the women more than the men—there were more women to be concerned than men. She then read the resolution passed in the two legislative Houses in Australia, urging all nations enjoying representative government to grant votes to women. Since the fact that this resolution had been cabled to the Prime Minister had been ignored, she had much pleasure in bringing it before her audience. Woman's enfranchisement would make for peace and for economy, and would bring about the abolition of sweated female labour. The Government was perhaps the worst of all sweaters, both directly and indirectly. While it had a fair wages clause for men there was no such clause in the contracts which were to be carried out by women, and accordingly the contractors undercut each other to secure the contract. Concluding, Mrs. Zangwill said that Women Suffrage was the greatest change since Christianity. It was Christianity for it proclaimed that all women were sisters.

During the evening Mr. Henderson sang two songs, and Miss Bunten sang "The Awakening," which were all much appreciated. Mr. Mahon kindly played the accompaniments. There was a good collection taken.

The annual business meeting of the Glasgow Branch of the W.F.L. took place in the Suffrage Centre on Thursday, March 2,

at 8 p.m. Miss Eunice Murray was again unanimously elected president, Miss Janet L. Bunten treasurer, and Miss Mina B. Steven, hon. secretary. At the request of one of our members and with the object of obstructing Government business until women are recognised as citizens, the branch unanimously passed the following resolution regarding the "Red Cross Voluntary Aid Society" (Women's Detachments):

"As a protest against the exclusion of women from the rights of citizenship, every woman is urged to refuse to fulfil its duties, and to withhold her assistance from the "Red Cross Voluntary Aid Society" in connection with the Government's Territorial scheme."

The Glasgow Branch have arranged to have another whist drive in the Centre on Friday evening, March 24, at 7.30 p.m. Tickets may be had from convener of each district, or at Suffrage Centre, price 2s. 6d. each.

Our next "At Home" will be held in the Centre, on Saturday evening, March 25, at 7.30 p.m., when Miss Anna Munro and Miss Jacob (of Edinburgh) will be the speakers.

A public meeting will be held in Pollokshields Burgh Hall on Thursday afternoon, March 30, at 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Miss Anna Munro. Chairman, Rev. David Graham. Admission free.

On Thursday evening, March 30, Mrs. Despard has very kindly consented to lecture on "Shelley," in the Suffrage Centre, 302, Sauchiehall-street, at 8 p.m. Chairman, Miss F.M. Stewart, B.A. Tickets, price 1s. each, now on sale.—K. McA.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

MADAM,—A case has just been reported to me in which a provincial tax surveyor has broken the solemn oath of secrecy (which all tax officials must take on their appointment) by disclosing a woman's income to her husband, the particulars having been given, under the seal of confidence, by the woman's employers.

The Board of Inland Revenue has been requested to give its immediate attention to this grave breach of law. May I ask your readers to report any similar case that may come under their notice?—Yours faithfully,

E. AYRES PURDIE.

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February 27, 1911.

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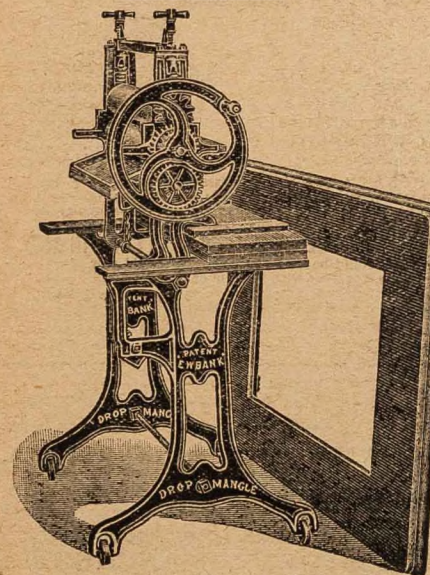
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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS.



**DARE TO BE FREE.**

- LONDON.**
- Thurs., Mar. 9.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches 3.30 p.m.—Mrs. Despard, Mr. Laurence Housman, on "Women and the Census." *Chair:* Mrs. How Martyn.
- Sat., Mar. 11.**—"Old Pump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Nurse Ritfield. Hampstead. Jumble Sale at Spencer Hall, Dartmouth Park Hill, Doors open 2 p.m.
- Tues., Mar. 14.**—30, Lausanne-road, Hornsey. Census Meeting, 7.30 p.m. Miss Neilans. Grovedale Hall, Upper Holloway, 8.45 p.m. Discussion on Census Protest.
- Wed., Mar. 15.**—8 p.m., at the Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, a Public Meeting, organised by the Mid-London (late Central) Branch. *Chair:* Mrs. Tanner. *Speaker:* Mrs. Despard. *Hostess:* Mrs. Hyde. With a recitation by Miss Olive Terry. Drawing-room Meeting. Mrs. G. E. O'Dell, 20, Ravenscourt-gardens, W. 7.30 p.m. Mrs. Vulliamy.
- Thurs., Mar. 16.**—Poster Parade, starting from 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, at 5.45 p.m. "At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches, 3.30. Lady Stout, Mrs. Despard.
- Fri., Mar. 17.**—Census Meeting, N. Finchley. Stephen's Memorial Hall. Mrs. How Martyn, Mrs. Nevinson, Mr. J. Malcolm Mitchell, 8 p.m. Debate: Lecture Room, Public Library, Lavender-hill, 8 p.m.
- Sat., Mar. 18.**—"Old Pump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Mr. Victor Duval.
- Tues., Mar. 21.**—Census Meeting at Hampstead Town Hall (small), 3 p.m. Mrs. Brailsford, Mrs. Francis, and Mrs. Massey. *Chair:* Mrs. Nevinson. Census Meeting, Phillips' Music Rooms, 13, South Side, Clapham-common, S.W. 3 p.m. Mrs. How Martyn.
- Wed., Mar. 22.**—Mid-London Branch: Committee, 7 p.m.; members, 8 p.m., 1, Robert-street. Miss Tite. 8.15 p.m., Town Hall, Anerley. Mrs. Despard and Mr. Joseph Clayton.
- Thurs., Mar. 23.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Mr. J. Cameron Grant.
- Fri., Mar. 24.**—1, Robert-street, 2 p.m. National Executive Committee.
- Sat., Mar. 25.**—1, Robert-street, 11 a.m. National Executive Committee. "Hard Up" Social, Holborn Town Hall (small), 6.30 p.m. "Old Pump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Miss Gadsden.
- Sun., Mar. 26.**—1, Robert-street. Members' Meeting. "At Home," 1, Robert-street, 4 p.m.
- Mon., Mar. 27.**—Census Meeting, Hackney Town Hall. Mrs. Despard, Miss Neilans, Mr. Joseph Clayton. Census Meeting, Harrow, 8 p.m. Mrs. How Martyn and Mr. Laurence Housman. Poster Parade, starting from 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, at 2 p.m.
- Mon., Mar. 27-Sun., April 2.**—Census Protest Week.
- Sat., April 1st.**—3 p.m., **MASS MEETING, TRAFALGAR SQUARE.** Mrs. Despard, Mrs. How Martyn, Mrs. Francis, Mr. Laurence Housman, Mrs. Cobden Sanderson. "Old Pump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Miss Alison Neilans.
- BURY ST. EDMUNDS. PROVINCES.**
- IPSWICH.**
- Fri., Mar. 31.**—Mr. Laurence Housman, Mrs. Tippet.
- CHESTER.**
- Thurs., Mar. 9.**—16, Arcade-street, 8 p.m. Mrs. Tippet.
- HOVE.**
- Fri., Mar. 10.**—Branch Meeting at Mrs. Dutton's, 34, Frodsham-street, 8 p.m. *Speaker:* Miss Nellie Smith.
- Sat., Mar. 11.**—At 7.30 p.m., Women Poets and Women Song Writers, with dramatic and vocal interpretations. Arranged by Mrs. Francis. To be held at Tylehurst, Dyke-road, by kind invitation of Miss Strachan.
- HOVE.**
- Wed., Mar. 15.**—At 8 p.m., Drawing-room Meeting. *Hostess:* Miss Close, 48, Rutland-gardens, Hove. Miss White will speak on "Woman's Sphere." All members are welcome at these meetings, and they are asked to bring unconverted friends.
- IPSWICH.**
- Thurs., Mar. 16.**—Old Museum Rooms, 8 p.m. "At Home." *Hostess:* Mrs. Hossack. *Speaker:* Mrs. Nevinson.

### MARLOW, BUCKS.

**Fri., Mar. 17.**—Mrs. Vulliamy, Mrs. Sargent Florence.

### PORTSMOUTH.

**Sat., Mar. 18.**—7.30 p.m., Sandringham Hotel. Mrs. Despard. "At Home," Sandringham Hotel, 8 p.m. Mrs. Despard.

### IPSWICH.

**Thurs., Mar. 30.**—Co-operative Hall, 8 p.m. Mr. Laurence Housman, Mrs. How Martyn.

### EDINBURGH.

**Tues., Mar. 14.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. "At Home," 4 p.m.

**Wed., Mar. 15.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. Branch Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Wed., Mar. 29.**—Annual Social Meeting. *Speaker:* Mrs. Despard.

### SWANSEA.

**Tues., Mar. 21.**—Annual Meeting, St. Gabriel's Hall. "How the Vote was Won." Business Meeting, 7.30 p.m. Entertainment, 8 o'clock. Tickets 1s.

### SCOTLAND.

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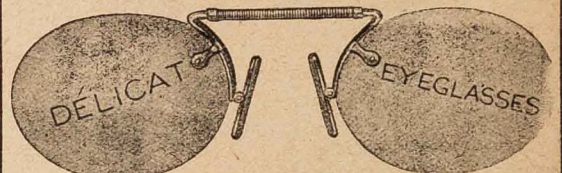
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