

THE VOTE,  
SEPTEMBER 1, 1916.  
ONE PENNY.

*James* *Ref*  
**Keep the Flag Flying!**

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. XIV, No. 358.

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 1, 1916.

Edited by C. DESPARD.

**OBJECTS:** To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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### WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

#### Welfare Supervisors.

On the suggestion of the Ministry of Munitions and the Home Office two courses of preparation for welfare supervisors in factories have been arranged by the University of Leeds, under the direction of the acting head of the Department of Economics. Under the Police (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, which came into force on August 3, the Home Secretary is empowered to continue in industrial works the welfare supervision now exercised in national munition factories and many controlled establishments.

#### Women on New Film Censorship Board.

It is understood that a central and independent censorship of films, under the control of the Home Office, is to come into being and will include women members.

#### Food Inspectors—"A Woman's Job."

Dr. Wynter Blyth, public analyst, who, when medical officer of health for Marylebone, supported the appointment of women to take the place of men inspectors of military age, and found them successful in their work, now urges local authorities to employ women. "Food faking," he declares, "is far too general; now is not the time to economise in inspection. Let the women do it; it's their job!"

#### Honoured by the French Government.

Miss Kathleen Burke, of the Scottish Women's Hospital, whose visit to the Verdun lines we recently chronicled, has been awarded by the French Government the decoration of the Golden Palms and made an "Officier de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux Arts." She is called in France "The Knight of Tenderness and Pity" for her pleading in Great Britain, Canada, and the United States of the cause of the French and Serbian wounded.

#### Mill Girls as Hospital Orderlies.

A number of mill girls employed at Messrs. Burgess, Ledward and Co.'s Wardley Mills, Worsley, near Manchester, have been sent to assist in hospitals at Southport and Whalley. They volunteered for the work and will receive £1 a week for a period of three months while engaged in hospitals, the money being paid by the firm.

#### Women and the National Mission.

In a leading article *The Times* (Aug. 29) observes: "The Mission has already been threatened with trouble and division with regard to the part which women are to play in it, and the ordinary man is struck by the paltry character of the arguments put forward alike by the objectors in protesting and by the bishops in yielding to the protest."

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### FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.



DARE TO BE FREE.

Thursday, September 7.—CLAPHAM BRANCH MEETING, at 15, Clapham-mansions, Nightingale-lane, 7.30 p.m.

Saturday, September 9.—L. B. C. COUNTRY RAMBLE. Tickets, 1s. each. Full particulars see page 1159.

Sunday, September 10.—HYDE PARK (Marble Arch), 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Boyle. Chair: Mrs. Aldridge.

Friday, September 22.—CAXTON HALL. Mrs. Despard's Return Party, from 7 to 9.30 p.m. Invitation cards from W.F.L. Office. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Eunice G. Murray and Miss Evelyn Sharp.

Sunday, October 1.—HASLUCK'S ACADEMY, 3, Bedford-street, Strand, Miss Clara Reed, Recital "Becket," 4 p.m.

Wednesday, October 4.—CAXTON HALL. Speakers: Mr. Laurence Housman and Mrs. Despard. Chair: Mrs. E. M. Moore. 3.30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 11.—CAXTON HALL. Speaker: Mrs. Aldridge. Chair: Miss A. A. Smith. 3.30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 18.—CAXTON HALL. Speaker: Mr. H. G. Chancellor, M.P., on "The Soldiers' Rights," and Miss Eunice Murray. Chair: Mrs. Corner, 3.30 p.m.

Friday, October 20.—CAXTON HALL, Political Meeting. Speakers: Mrs. Despard, Miss Murray and others.

Wednesday, October 25.—CAXTON HALL. Speakers: Mrs. Nevinson, on "The Future of Women," Miss F. A. Underwood, 3.30 p.m.

#### PROVINCIAL.

ABERYSTWYTH CAMPAIGN.—Meetings on the North and South Beach each day at 11.30 a.m. and 8 p.m. Speakers: Miss Anna Munro and Miss Alix M. Clark.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE SETTLEMENT, 1, Everett-street, Nine Elms, S.W. 1d. and 4d. meals, weekdays at noon. Children's Guest House and Milk Depot for Nursing Mothers.

THE DESPARD ARMS, 123, Hampstead Road, N.W. (five minutes' walk from Maple's). Open to all for refreshments (dinners and suppers from 6d.) and recreation. Weekdays, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sundays, 4 to 10 p.m.

The Editor of THE VOTE is obliged, reluctantly, to express her divergence from the political manifesto given in last week's issue of the paper. She has been away from London, and it was passed, through a kindly desire to save trouble, in her absence.

As the questions involved concern the present policy of the League, it will be necessary to discuss them when ordinary work is resumed after the holidays. The result of such discussion will be communicated in due course to the readers of THE VOTE.

#### The Despard Arms. 123, Hampstead-road, N.W.

WANTED URGENTLY! One or two helpers every evening from September 3 to 10 inclusive from 5 to 9.30 p.m., willing to get teas ready, cut bread-and-butter, serve suppers, etc., wash up, and do anything to help our excellent waitress who is taking charge for the week. Send names and dates beforehand, if possible, to the Hon. Secretary, Despard Arms, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. Another special and immediate need is a mattress for a single bed (3ft. wide); perhaps some good friend will find a spare one and send it on, carriage forward. We thank our friends who have kindly sent parcels for our jumble sale at the end of September, but, like Oliver Twist, we want "More!" Our grateful thanks, also, to friends in the country, including Mrs. Vincent and Mrs. Giles, for flowers, which have been most welcome and decorative. The "Despard United" have a strong football team for the coming season and a good list of fixtures.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

## THE SAME OLD BAG O' TRICKS— With a New Turn.

After the chorus of patronising appreciation come the second thoughts that wreck so many generous impulses. Repenting bitterly that they should ever have seemed to approve of the Prime Minister's benign attitude to women, which might have the disastrous result of leading them to expect something for themselves, certain papers are concerned to let us know that it is not our voteless condition that gives anybody any distress. It is for "democratising our institutions," for "doing justice to the fighting men," "remedying the outworn anomalies of public life," and so forth, that there is demand. It really does not matter much, if those things can be done without including women, whether we continue disfranchised or not. If the suffragists had not raised their voice in the nick of time it is quite likely that many people would have considered those subjects quite achievable without women coming into it at all!

"T. P." could not sanction women working their way as men did from a limited enfranchisement to a wider one. It might be reactionary women who would get it first! We have heard this before. *The Times* wants, once more, the referendum—at the expense of the women. *The Spectator* also wants a referendum. *The Sunday Times* does not consider this Parliament has the right to make such a change. Others will not hear of anything but universal suffrage—the bag of tricks as we have always known it. Anything rather than women's suffrage on the same terms as men, honestly and straightforwardly. The same warnings about jeopardising our chances by ill-timed insistence; the same, in fact, all round, under new conditions and with new catchwords.

There is only one new turn in the prestidigitator's programme, and that is the Conference. For an electoral conference there is to be, members to be chosen by the Speaker, if you please; and it is to sit at Mr. Long's headquarters. The concatenation of Mr. Long and Mr. Lowther is of evil augury for women; but we must make the best of it. At any rate, there is a conference on franchise questions, to which representatives of women's societies are to be admitted, and that is, at long last, something new, some change from the dreary round of chicanery, broken pledges, special pleading, and insult. Let us therefore make the best of Mr. Long and Mr. Lowther, and hope that their joint efforts may be less disastrous than their single and individual records might lead us to fear.

The Women's Freedom League approached Mr. Long when the idea was first mooted, to know whether the Conference would consist of Parliamentarians, or whether women representatives would be admitted. Up to the time of going to press, Mr. Long has only sent a formal acknowledgment; but the fact now seems beyond dispute, and the League claims representation. It will probably be a very diverting gathering, but it will mark a definitely new era, and will be of extraordinary historical interest.

C. NINA BOYLE.

#### Wear Your Badges!

This is the time when all suffragists can help the Cause by wearing their badges. Never go out without one! A badge often gives an opening for conversation, helps you to discover unexpected supporters, and enables you to bring the truth home to the indifferent. Women's Freedom League badges can be obtained at the office (Literature Department), 144, High Holborn, W.C., for 1d.; enamel brooches and tie pins 1s.

THEY SUPPORT US!

## KEEP THE FLAG FLYING! An Incident in Scotland.

There is always work, and tools to work withal,  
For those who will.

—J. R. Lowell.

On a broiling day, 85 deg. in the shade, I set forth, flag in hand and bundle of literature under my arm. Soon I persuaded myself that it was too hot to hold a meeting. I was lazy, and in the distance the trees beckoned temptingly. As I hesitated which way to turn to find shade and solitude quickly, clang went the factory bell, and before I knew where I was I was surrounded by girls.

"It's a suffragette come to preach! Come on, girls, and hear what she has to say!" cried one of them. So there was nothing for it but to mount a chair and begin. Lord Derby's words formed my text:—

Women are part and parcel of our great Army; without them it would be impossible for progress to be made, but with them I believe victory can be assured.

With this text I made a vigorous protest against any change in the franchise unless it included women. "Mind you, she's right; every word she's saying is true!" punctuated my address. "There's mair in what you Votes-for-Women people say than I yince thoct," volunteered a man who had stayed to listen. "May I say a word?" pleaded a young girl. "What about?" I asked. "I want to tell my fellow-workers how I became a suffragette?" "All right," I said; and my new comrade began.

"Girls, before I was at the munitions I was a servant and my master and mistress were Antis, always running the suffragettes down. Master said he'd like to see them whipped, and mistress said they should be dipped in burning oil; that would cure them. They had a petition in the house against Votes for Women. I signed it. I had never seen or heard a suffragette, and from what I heard as I waited at table I thought they were all a bad lot, and that all respectable people were against them. Then came the war, and after a time I gave up my place and came here to make shells. I have my mother to keep, and thinking that the pay was good and that the country needed me I did right to come. But you should have heard my mistress! Master said it was free education that had ruined the masses; young women didn't think service good enough for them, and what with education and suffragettes the country was going to the dogs! When I went to say good-bye they were cool and nasty, and never said anything about the six years I had served them. In the works I was next to a suffragette I'm thankful to say. She had been to college and didn't think education had ruined me. She said, just like Miss Murray here, that women must stand up for themselves. I see now what we owe to the suffragettes—better wages, better conditions, more consideration. Why, the masters are frightened to impose on women when they know they're suffragettes. I think every woman who earns her bread should be one! That's all I've to say, but if you'll take this to help the Cause, I'd love to give it, and it will wash out signing the Antipetition." So saying, she handed me a pound note.

"Well, I'm blessed!" said an old woman, standing listening. "Mind you, the lassie's right, though to my way o' thinking she's o'er free wi' her money. But it's true we owe a lot to the suffragettes. My son, who's in France this very day, says it, so it maun be true. 'Mither,' he says, 'the suffragettes has din guid work both for men and women.'" "You ought to hae far mair meetings. Half the folk dinna know what you want. You should be preachin' all the time," cried another voice.

Time was passing, so I put a resolution which was carried with acclamation. I took a splendid collection of over £3, and sold all my literature. As I restored the honoured chair I felt glad that I had held that meeting, glad that our flag was still flying, but I felt the woman was right; we should have more meetings. They have never been so necessary as now. People who turned a deaf ear to us a short time back will listen now. Many women—in the industrial world for the first time—are sympathetic who were formerly indifferent. No matter who has betrayed our Cause, or who has deserted it, it lives! The Woman Suffrage Movement is unconquerable. We must have faith, courage, and, above all, perseverance. We must remember that no Cause is worth winning that is not worth fighting for, suffering for, and enduring for. When the girls first spoke of the Suffragettes preaching it made me smile, but as I wended my way homewards I realised that they were right. Our convictions have the intensity of a religion. A religion that is alive must be a missionary religion; its adherents must be ready to go on in spite of difficulties and obstacles or defeats. We must be ready to fight for the Cause of Woman Suffrage until the enemy of prejudice and injustice is completely conquered. Then, and then only, can we lower our flag.

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

### The Aberystwyth Campaign.

The campaign continues on the Welsh coast with unabated energy and vigour. During the past week large numbers of THE VOTE have been sold, and Miss Eunice Murray's pamphlet, "Women, the New Discovery." That THE VOTE is read and appreciated is proved by some of the remarks and discussions which Miss Clark hears and engages in during the time devoted to paper selling.

Market and beach meetings continue to attract a large number of the visitors, who occasionally request a particular subject for the next meeting. Ireland, Education, Mr. Asquith, are some of the topics on which Miss Anna Munro has been specially asked to speak.

1,400 VOTES have been sold; grateful acknowledgment and thanks to Mrs. Schofield Coates, £2 2s.; Miss Kate Husband, 5s. Further contributions to the campaign are urgently requested as it continues for another three weeks.

ALIX M. CLARK (Hon. Organiser),

Granville, North-parade, Aberystwyth.

### A Saturday Afternoon Ramble.

The London Branches Council is arranging a country ramble (weather permitting) on Saturday, September 9, from Upper Warlingham to Caterham, where Mrs. Fox Bourne has very kindly invited us to tea in her garden at Albany House. Tickets at 1s. each (exclusive of railway fare) must be obtained in advance, and may be had from the hon. sec. (*pro tem.*), London Branches Council, Miss Ada Mitchell, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Anyone who does not care for the walk may take the train direct to Caterham, leaving Charing Cross 3.12, or London Bridge 3.22, arriving 4.15 (fare 2s. 4d. return). The house is near the station. Those walking will go by train from Victoria 1.25, Clapham Junction 1.32, or London Bridge 1.38, arriving at Upper Warlingham 2.14 (fare 1s. 3d. single, probably returning from Caterham (fare 1s. 3d. single). We hope very much that a number of London members will take advantage of Mrs. Fox Bourne's kindness, and at the same time add to the funds which the L.B.C. is collecting for the winter's campaign.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 1164.



## THE VOTE.

Proprietors:—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING Co., Ltd.  
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 FRIDAY, September 1st, 1916.

NOTICE.—Letters should be addressed as follows:—  
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 To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.  
 To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote  
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 Telegrams: "DESPARD, Museum 1429, London."

### 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 RATE.

At Home and Abroad ... post free, 6/6 per annum,  
 "THE VOTE" may be obtained through all Newsagents and at the Bookstalls of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son.

## A REAL NATIONAL MISSION.

We are hearing continually of a great National Mission. It is to be organized by the Church of England. We do not distinctly gather what the Mission is, whether the messengers, who are to be the most respectable of persons—bishops, priests, and deacons, with perhaps a few carefully chosen lay-readers—have any unusual message. We had imagined that every week and every day gave them the opportunity of proclaiming their message to a world that seems inclined to avoid hearing it. We presume the non-attendants are to be attracted for a certain number of days by more frequent services, by better music, by longer sermons; and no doubt the outsiders whom these things may attract will be warned, and admonished, and consoled; but the direct aim of the Mission we are not told. What we have gathered, so far, is that Nonconformists, if they want a Mission, must have one of their own, and that women, with all their gathered store of wisdom and experience, must keep silence while the men tell them their duty.

The curious infelicity of it all has set some of us thinking, not on the same lines, but in the same direction.

That a National Mission is wanted no one in their senses would deny. Every step in the Via Dolorosa which the peoples are treading, every revelation of ineptitude and opportunism and misdirected energy on the part of their Governments, past and present, drives us to the same conclusion. We are suffering on account of our ignorance. Knowledge of spiritual and physical laws and of the dangers run by those who break them might have saved our civilization from the darkness of horror and perplexity in which it is now plunged. It is clear, moreover, that unless such knowledge is acquired now and registered for all time in the experience of the race there is little hope for us.

A message, then, is needed. What will the nature of that message be? Certainly the keynote must be reconciliation. Until that is accomplished nothing else is possible. We must be shown how to remove the elements that create discord and to bring harmony into our lives.

That is exactly what the Mission which the bishops and clergy of the Church of England are setting on foot does not do. On the contrary, its keynote is exclusiveness, and that always spells discord. It has stirred up old sectarian animosity by excluding the Free Churches; it has revived dying controversy, at the same time weakening its attractive force, by the prohibition of women as mes-

sengers; and, in so doing, it has lost its claim to the term national. Doubtless it will be held; doubtless also many sad and anxious men and women will be consoled and edified. The nation, crying out for guidance and leadership, will not respond.

For those who would heal the nation's agony by bringing about reconciliation must have a definite outlook, must have a message of hope and assurance. Nothing else will move and draw the multitude.

That message may be on the way. Over and over again in the world's history it has been seen that the strongly-felt need creates, out of its own urgency, the means for its fulfilment. So it may be now. In the meantime, we know that to be effective the Mission must have many sides—spiritual, moral, intellectual, economic, political—for along all these roads we have gone astray; it must be given humbly by those who, for perfect vision, are prepared to pay the price of pain; and the messengers will be men and women, many of them young, who, in the bitter smart of their own living flesh and blood, or through that Divine compassion which takes up and bears the woe of others, have reached a knowledge that neither a liberal education nor a theological training can give. Men who have gone down into hell—not only the hell of combat, but the hell of felons' prisons; women who have hidden their own wounds that they might work for the wounded nation—such are the mission-bearers we seek. Not from bishops' palaces or priests' houses or peaceful rectories or churches and cathedrals will the bells of the new dawn ring out, but from the hearths and homes of the people; and so only can we have a true national mission.

It may be argued that much is being done already. We are not unaware of the fact that societies are being formed to grapple with abuses, nor that even politicians are astir. Groups inside and outside the House of Commons are being brought together to consider such vital questions as relations between capital and labour; how to deal with profiteers who, under cover of the law, are robbing the nation of her resources; how to rehouse the people; how to redeem the land; how to break down monopolies; how to save the children; how to stamp out disease; and this is all to the good. What we need is unification—to lay hold of the spiritual and moral laws that lie behind all these problems, and, for the first time in the world's history, to put them into practice.

This need not seem strange to women, for it forms the real substratum of our movement. For years we have been fighting the spirit of domination, through which our beautiful world is being made a charnel-house. We do not begin the battle now. It has been going on for generations. There could be nothing more cramping to woman than that crass materialism which saw its apotheosis in our national conditions before the war. Those who in the future read the history of our movement with intelligence will not be surprised at the hard hitting, for we fought—heaven knows!—against terrible odds.

Many things have changed—this chiefly, that the world of society has seen and felt to what an *impasse* the lines along which it was travelling with gay unconcern have brought it. We hope profoundly that these steps may be retraced.

Ruskin was told once of certain persons who were backsliders. His answer was characteristic: "Along the path upon which we are travelling," he said, "the sooner we slide back the better. Slide back to the cradle if going on is to the grave." That is the word we need, and may there be thousands of messengers to proclaim it. "Back to sincerity; back to honesty; back to simple love and noble compassion; back to the great things, our

nation—men and women, young and old, of every class and calling—must move, and then it will be ready to deal worthily with the problems that peace will bring.

C. DESPARD.

## PARLIAMENT & WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

### The Electoral Reform Conference.

It is understood, says *The Times*, that the Speaker has made considerable progress with the selection of members of the conference to consider electoral reform, which will be held at the offices of the Local Government Board. It is stated that the conference will assemble on September 26. It is not intended that commerce should be directly represented at the conference, although a number of the members will be eminent in the commercial world, but there will be direct representation of Labour and the Woman Suffrage Movement. It is hoped that the conference may be able to make an interim report to Parliament shortly after its reassembly after the autumn recess.

### Sir John Simon's Motion.

Before Parliament rose, Sir John Simon handed in the following notice of motion:—

That in the opinion of the House the Parliament to deal with industrial and social reconstruction after the war should be elected on a wide and simple franchise exercised by both men and women, and that therefore legislation establishing such franchise is urgently required and should be passed during the war.

The intention is that this notice of motion should be on the paper of the House of Commons at the resumption of Parliament in October, when a day may be asked for its discussion, if necessary.

### "A Wide Extension."

At a meeting of the adult suffrage group in the House of Commons before the recess, presided over by Sir John Simon, and attended by about thirty members, representing all parties, the following resolution was passed:—

That this meeting is of opinion that provision should be made during the war for a wide extension of the suffrage, so as to secure a register representative of the men and women of the country for the purpose of electing a Parliament which will deal with the problems of reconstruction after the war.

Mr. Leif Jones, M.P., was appointed secretary of the group, and a representative executive committee was appointed.

### SOME PRESS COMMENTS.

#### Spectator, Aug. 26.

Though we are not so confident as Lord Cromer in the power of the anti-suffragists to resist the demand for the vote if it is made after the war by the women who have been doing war work, we are most strongly of opinion that such a revolution as female suffrage cannot be allowed to reach us by a side wind. If the political prerogative of men is to perish it must perish in the light and not incidentally. Further, female suffrage ought not to become the law of the land until it has been endorsed by a referendum. To pass such a measure haphazard, at the fag-end of a falling Parliament, would be the very height of political folly.

#### Sheffield Daily Telegraph, Aug. 22.

The tone of some of the speeches in the Lords last night shows how real the antagonism remains. We are inclined to think that the war record to which our women can point will overpower their opponents in the end, but we are still afraid that the war, however much it has taught us, has not yet opened a broad and easy road through all our difficulties.

#### Nation, Aug. 26.

We are met with the objection that the present Parliament is incompetent to deal with the general question of the franchise, and in particular with the case of women. That familiar obstacle is invariably raised whenever a Parliament has got beyond the two or three main items in the electoral programme of the party in power. In this instance it is absurdly inapplicable. Women have pressed their claims, intervened in contests, and drawn pledges from candidates in election after election for many a long year. The last election was held after the first successful introduction of the Conciliation Bill, and under a promise from the Prime Minister that full facilities for its passage would be given in the present Parliament. On its second introduction in

the new House it secured a still larger majority, and the immediate consequence of this success was Mr. Asquith's promise of a Reform Bill, which should be open to amendment in the interests of women. Only the unforeseen obstacle of the Speaker's ruling prevented the carrying out of this programme. Not only is this House competent to settle this question; it was elected under a promise that it should be enabled to settle it. The same House is sitting still, and we do not see by what magic the lapse of time and the outbreak of war can be held to have affected its competence or destroyed its obligations.

## A FREEDOM LEAGUER'S "BIT" ON THE LAND.

There was great excitement in the reading-room at college. A fresh notice had appeared on the board—not a dull announcement of a general meeting, but a request for volunteers to work on the land during the summer vacation. Examinations would be over, all our worry would be ended, and we could really do something for our country. Of course, we were "on it" like a shot! From that day onward almost all our talk was of the farm.

At last everything was settled. In our party there were seven. On arriving at the nearest station to the farm we were met by our employer, who asked if we could walk three miles over the fields. Of course, we said we could, and we did, but we were very glad to reach our destination. K. and I were billeted together in a delightful little cottage, with a thatched roof, which was the one shop in the village. We had a delicious tea, then met the others and went exploring. We were awakened next morning at 5.45, and were ready for work punctually at 6.30. Docking corn was our first duty. The docks were growing plentifully among the wheat, but we attacked them vigorously, and soon became quite intimate with the life and habits of a dock. We discovered that it likes to surprise you. You pull and pull, but it refuses to budge; then you give a terrific heave with both hands, and it calmly pops out while you probably sit down suddenly and run the risk of damaging several rows of corn. We started work that morning feeling very merry, but our chatter gradually died away, and we found ourselves working in dead silence. Lunch-time was hailed with great delight, and afterwards we found a pile of uprooted docks a very comfortable pillow for a short siesta. Our field was about 1½ miles from the village, and returning home at night we fully appreciated Gray's lines, "The ploughman homeward plods his weary way." We came to the conclusion that the poet must have worked on the land.

The next morning was wet, but in the afternoon we were set to spudding thistles and mowing nettles. A spud is an iron jabber with a long wooden handle, specially designed to bring up blisters; with it, however, you are supposed also to dig up the thistle and its roots. As beginners, we either cut the thistle off or tried to dig up half the field and broke the spud; but we soon became quite good shots. Then K. and I were entrusted with scythes. It is lovely to swish the scythe round and see the nettles falling, but we did not work very close to one another, as we had no desire to lose a limb, even in the service of our country. After two days' work our hands were covered with blisters, many of them broken, and our backs—no words can possibly describe the ache! The next day was Sunday, and never have we enjoyed a day like it. One of our chums wrote and asked what we did with ourselves on Sunday, and whether we were not fearfully bored? It was quite plain she had never worked on a farm!

The following week found us thoroughly settled down; our hands were getting fairly hard, and aches



less acute. We worked nine hours a day, starting at 7 a.m.; had lunch from 9-9.30; dinner from 1-2, and left off work at 5.30 p.m. Our food was very good, but monotonous, so we determined to have a feast. We walked to another village two miles away to get something more varied and interesting. It was a perfect evening, so we had our feast out in the open on the grass by some cross-roads; wild roses covered the hedges by the roadside, and an astonished cow looked at us over a gate. We feasted on cake, biscuits, bananas, tomatoes, peppermints and chocolates, and made lemonade by pouring cold water on lemonade powder. It was great fun, and will long be remembered as the first of many similar feasts. The next week we started new work—haymaking. This is work indeed. One day we worked solidly for eleven hours, and we were away from home for fourteen hours, and the next day we worked the usual nine. It was very hot, and we had one or two short rests; we were glad to tumble into bed after our haymaking.

We were the first women workers in the neighbourhood, and the people were all very interested in us. Even in the surrounding villages they had heard of us, and quite a crowd gathered the first time we went to do some shopping. We did our best to impress them favourably, and I hope we succeeded. The first week it rained almost every day, which was distinctly trying, but we always went on working. We ate our lunch on a gate, our boots being full of water, and then returned to "paddle in the field." We went home soaked through. Then came the hot weather and haymaking.

We were paid 4d. an hour. The first week we earned 14s. 2d., the next 14s. 8d., and this was about the average.

On the whole, we thoroughly enjoyed our work on the land. The most essential part of a worker's equipment is a sense of humour. You must not be too particular either. We used to have lunch sitting in the field, accompanied by beetles and spiders, with our hands covered with mud and dirt. We had no water to spare to wash them! We laughed when we thought how particular we are at college to wash if we have the slightest ink-stain on our fingers.

U. B.

### THE HIDDEN SCOURGE.

The ever-present danger of the insidious revival of the infamous Contagious Diseases Acts is especially marked in war-time; and suffragists should read with some interest and mark down the men concerned in the remarks published in last Sunday's *Observer*. The article is called "Danger to the Army." It should much more properly be called "The Army a Danger to the Nation." *The Observer* quotes with evident approval the opinion of someone not unconnected with the East and with those ideas of sexual domination which seem to flourish in Oriental regions—who is "in intimate touch" with the National Council for Combating Venereal Disease. It fills us with concern to know that persons holding such views should be consulted or even tolerated. We quote this gentleman's specific:—

In the next place, they consider that the police regulations for prohibiting women from the surroundings of the camps ought to be strengthened. The real danger comes not so much from the professional prostitutes as from those whom the police call "clandestine" prostitutes—young women engaged in shops who supplement their living by prostitution. Often they contract a form of the disease without knowing it, and this is the way in which it is disseminated. More police powers are wanted to deal with these respectable-looking girls in the neighbourhood of the camps. The Home Office has granted powers to deport from the district any woman who has been convicted; but what is wanted is an extension of the Defence of the Realm Act to deport all women from

camp areas who cannot give a proper account of themselves. One solution of the problem would be to develop the women police and get them to work in conjunction with both the municipal and the military police. Women police have done splendid work at Hull, Grantham, and Folkestone, and the Ministry of Munitions is now utilising their services in some of the munition areas. They have proved very clever and tactful.

It will be news to many of us that the Home Office has granted powers to deport women convicted, and it is the more serious inasmuch as we know how these convictions are obtained. The "respectable-looking girls"—as in the evil days of Josephine Butler's martyrdom—are now to be persecuted and blackmailed and medically examined if this offensive person has his way; and then the road will be clear for the men to hunt down innocent girls, who in turn will be submitted to the same infamies.

"Canadians feel anxious," we are told, "and think we ought to protect their boys from this disease." And we, foolish as it may seem, think we ought to protect our girls! The best way is for "Canadians" to teach their boys how to behave. There is not one word in all this tirade of condemnation for the men who, trading on their country's need of them, indulge their passions and then dare to ask for protection from the consequences. It is indeed pitiable that gallant warriors whose valour is unquestioned should show themselves so lacking in public spirit and national honour as to spread this danger broadcast through the community—a danger almost as dread as the Hun.

The habit of talking of the responsible men of the nation, once they become soldiers, as if they were innocent, unworldly, helpless lambs, who require shielding from the world and the conditions that they themselves have created and are responsible for is intolerable. We wonder what would be said of women who, if they had a dangerous national task to perform, were to qualify for it, and refresh themselves after it, by orgies of evil living, then cry for protection from their associates? There would be no "harpies" if men had not paid them to be harpies; but no one would lift a finger to stem the tide of vice before the war for the sake of women! No night-clubs were closed to save young girls, but dissolute officers, preferring the society of prostitutes and card-sharppers, when home on leave, rather than that of their mothers and sisters, must be saved from the designing female. The designing male, the man prostitute, the creature whose pleasure is vice, will always find a man advocate and protector.

We would call our readers' attention to the allusion to the women police. It will be remembered that the Women's Freedom League severed its connection with the force that sent police-women to Grantham and Folkestone because those women allowed themselves to be used for the purpose of coercing women under an illegal order, subsequently withdrawn. The danger foreseen then, that men might use women, as was done in Germany, to carry out infamous regulations, is drawing appreciably nearer. We appeal to women, in their zeal for public service, not to allow it to be said that what men shrank from actually doing themselves was done for them by women in paid official positions.

C. NINA BOYLE.

### Opposition to Women's Work.

At the Trade Union Congress, to be held at Birmingham on September 4, the motion of the London and Provincial Union of Licensed Vehicle Workers will be considered urging the Home Secretary to revoke the Order licensing women to act as conductors on omnibuses or trams; the licences, it is declared, were granted as a war emergency measure, and should automatically expire on peace being declared.

### 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.

#### WOMAN SUFFRAGE PROGRAMME.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR EDITOR.—The Political and Militant Department of the W.F.L. "regrets that some suffrage societies should allow themselves to be drawn into the agitation for adult suffrage before the sex barrier has been removed. Adult suffrage involves asking for votes for more men, and can therefore form no part of the women's suffrage programme."

This criticism implies a strange inability to realise the new situation that has suddenly arisen, and, further, a failure to apply to that situation our common formula, on which THE VOTE very properly bestows its heaviest type, "to secure for women the vote as it is or may be given to men." In common with the W.F.L. and other suffrage societies, with which I have long worked, I have until recently opposed the adult suffragists, not on principle, but because their demand was invariably used by anti-women suffragists to delay the breaking down of the sex barrier. We are now confronted with an exactly opposite position of affairs. Adult suffrage, instead of being, as heretofore, a weapon in the hands of our foes to delay votes for women, is now, owing to the changed conditions and larger views brought about by the war, likely to become the chief means of removing that barrier. The demand—unquestionably a national and non-party one—that our sea and land fighters should be enfranchised on the ground of service carries with it the equivalent demand for women, and the two demands, added together, spell "Adult Suffrage." This is simply the up to date form of asking for the "vote as it is or may be given to men." I have always admired the old formula because it could be applied to any situation that arose, but if we fail to apply it it becomes indeed but an empty and meaningless phrase—a mere shibboleth to clog the progress of our movement.

The fairness of the demand for an equal service franchise for women and men, and the reasonableness with which it is put forward is now universally recognised by all parties and by all manners of men, from the Prime Minister downwards, with the exception of bigots—such as Lords Cromer and Curzon—whose opinions on the subject are unrelated to either facts or reason; and Sir John Simon, by openly linking up the soldiers, the sailors, and the women, has created what is likely to prove an irresistible force. The W.F.L. must be careful lest by a narrow and mistaken reading alike of public feeling and of the phrasing of their own demand, they find themselves in the position at last of opposing the only means by which votes for women can be won—an unthinkable sad one for a society that has done such admirable work for the Cause.

WINIFRED HOLIDAY.

### News from the U.S.A.

The International Woman Suffrage Alliance has received the news that Mr. Hughes, Republican candidate for the Presidential election in the United States, has publicly announced his belief that an amendment to the Federal Constitution granting votes to women should be submitted and ratified.

Although the States which have woman suffrage have each been enfranchised by a State referendum, the suffragists have always maintained that the women of all the States should be enfranchised by an amendment to the Federal Constitution. In view

of the situation the National American Woman Suffrage Association is to hold a special convention in September to decide upon its policy in the coming Presidential election.

### "Touch of Motherhood" Needed in Court.

Among those members of the East Side Civic Club and the Citizens Welfare League of New York City who have favoured the bill for appointing a woman justice of the Children's Court are: Judges William H. Wadhams and Otto A. Rosalsky, of the Court of General Sessions; County Judge Lewis S. Fawcett and Dr. Frank Bohn. Dr. William H. Hoople, president of the American Motors Corporation, said that the "touch of motherhood" was needed in the courts as much as in the home, if the interests of the little ones were to be safeguarded.

### MEN DEMAND VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Northern Weekly Leader (Newcastle-on-Tyne), Aug. 26.

It has been suggested in the Press that a Parliamentary Bill should be brought in now to make it illegal for women after the war to be employed in certain posts—in banks, railways, omnibuses, etc. Would such a Bill even be suggested if women were enfranchised? One thing is sure: women are going to take a new place in the nations. . . . They are certain to make new demands. They will ask for what they are not having even now: Fair conditions of work . . . political enfranchisement. . . . There seems not one sound reason for refusing women who have proved their capacity to work efficiently as citizens in the larger world outside, whilst carrying on their special duties in the home, all the rights of full citizenship. . . . If the women's claims were ignored it would mean the revival of political warfare, the side-tracking of a large amount of women's energy and work. It would mean something of a national catastrophe.

Catholic Times, "Democrat," Aug. 26.

The cause of votes for women has been advanced by the admission of the Prime Minister that the women have strengthened their claim by their noble and invaluable services during the war. And indeed the nation could hardly refuse them any favour they asked, any right they demanded, seeing what they had done for it. But it is well for us all, it will be well for the women especially, to bear in mind the fact that the nation, whatever it be held to be in theory, is in practice a handful of individuals to whom our constitution gives the power of blocking any political measure they dislike. And the women will have to face great hostility, will have to conquer stern opponents, before they achieve the victory of winning the vote.

Sheffield Daily Telegraph, "Politician," Aug. 24.

Many of us feared that women's intervention in politics would be a danger to the State and degrading to themselves. I, for my part, feared the latter, for I hate the filthy trickery of politics—at any rate, politics as practised before the war. But women have shown so much ability and resource in adapting themselves to all sorts of masculine employment that there is little fear even if they take the places of some of our over-paid M.P.s. And, as for becoming soiled by contact with politics, there is, I hear, to be a new and cleaner type after the war. I am not without doubts on that point, but we must hope for the best. Perhaps the presence of women in politics will have a refining influence. Votes for women were inevitable sooner or later; and it is perhaps as well that they should be granted sooner.

Leicester Pioneer, Aug. 19.

Women have rallied to the support of the country in such noble fashion, and have proved their service in a thousand different ways during the last two years, that there is no sound reason for keeping them out of the rights of citizenship.

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FRIDAY,  
SEPT. 1,  
1916.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

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

The work of the Settlement starts again this week after the summer vacation. We want to make it go really splendidly this session, and for this we appeal for more helpers. A third resident at Nine Elms is urgently needed if we are to make the most of our opportunities here; we also need as many daily workers as we can get. Will readers of THE VOTE, if they cannot spare time themselves, try and persuade some friend to give us an hour or two weekly at the children's dinner-time, from 12 to 1 o'clock? It would not take very much out of their day, and would make ours so much easier and more satisfactory. Mrs. Tippett held a Jumble Sale for the Settlement at Wetherden during the holidays, with excellent results for our funds. We have also received a gift of £12 for our milk depot, per Mrs. Giles, from an anonymous donor. This will relieve us of all anxiety about this branch of our work for the present, at a time when the milk so necessary for nursing mothers and babies is being sold at an almost prohibitive price for poor people. We thank Mrs. Mapp, of Singleton, for a second

gift of garden produce, and Mrs. Strange for kindly paying carriage. Such gifts are always most useful, and we should be very grateful to anyone who could send us some apples or other fruit for tarts. Small and windfall apples often go to waste in a large garden, and would suit our purpose admirably.  
KATHLEEN HOLMES.

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