

THE VOTE,
FEBRUARY 15, 1918.
ONE PENNY.

On the Statute Book!

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, FEB. 15, 1918

OBJECT: 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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VOTES FOR WOMEN ON THE STATUTE BOOK.

Final Stages Completed and the King's Assent Given on February 6, 1918.

After the grave warning of the Speaker that the attempt to restore the Alternative Vote in the form in which it had been passed by the House of Commons, but rejected by the House of Lords, would have the effect of killing the Bill outright, both Houses of Parliament composed their differences and the "immeasurable calamity" of losing the Bill at the last moment was averted. The Alternative Vote is struck out of the Bill, and the Commons, after an animated discussion, accepted, under pressure of Government Whips, the compromise on Proportional Representation, by which a Commission is to be appointed to consider its application to 100 seats. If the Government accepts the proposals of the Commissioners, it will submit them to the House of Commons, which will have absolute freedom to accept or reject them.

The Bill was sent back to the Lords, accepted by them, and received the Royal Assent on Wednesday night, February 6, 1918.

WOMEN VOTERS UNDER THE ACT.

The Representation of the People Act gives votes to women as follows:—

1. Women of 30 who are entitled to be Local Government electors.
2. Women of 30 who are the wives of men entitled to be Local Government electors.
3. Women of 30 who are graduates of a university.
4. Women of 30 who are abroad or afloat serving in the Red Cross or any other body with a similar object, and who, but for the war, would have been qualified.
5. Women of 30 who are nursing or otherwise serving His Majesty's Forces at home, abroad, or afloat, and who, but for the war, would have been qualified.

A woman, married or single, can qualify (a) as owner and occupier of any land, house, shop, or building, however small its annual value, the £10 annual value having been abolished; (b) as tenant; (c) as lodger renting unfurnished rooms, no matter how small the rent, for which she provides the furniture; (d) as occupier, by reason of her employment, unless her employer live in the same house; this is the service franchise, and applies to a schoolmistress who has a house as part of her salary.

Under the lodger vote a woman may qualify in the house of parents, relatives, or strangers. She must have complete control over the room and should have a latch-key. Women voters absent on war service will either vote by post or by proxy.

On the question of "Joint Occupiers," Miss Chrystal Macmillan, in an enlightening article to which we are indebted, in *The Common Cause*, writes:—

Where a number of persons occupy premises or land for the purpose of a profession, trade, or business, every one of the partners is entitled to a vote. For example, three dress-maker sisters, carrying on business together as partners, would all be entitled to vote for their business premises. On the other hand, where a house is occupied jointly as a dwelling house by more than two persons, only two are able to qualify as joint occupiers. If four sisters were the joint tenants of their house, they would have to arrange among themselves which two should be registered as occupying tenant Parliamentary electors. It will no doubt be asked whether in such a family of four living together in the same house it would not be possible for two to be tenants and the other two to rent unfurnished rooms, provide their own furniture, and become qualified for registration as lodgers. As I read the Bill—others may interpret it differently—it will not be possible to have more than two tenants, or one tenant and one lodger qualified. If, however, a man is the

tenant and his wife becomes a Parliamentary voter because of his tenancy, it will be possible for one daughter and one other person to become a lodger voter—at least as I understand the Bill.

What to Do Now.

Under the Act it is the duty of registration officers, paid by the local authorities, to register everyone, men and women, who are entitled to be on the roll. Two registers will be compiled each year: the spring register for the six months' qualifying period ending on January 15, and the autumn register for the qualifying period ending on July 15. Women, however, will do well to make sure of their claim to registration, and not trust solely to the agent. This year there will be no spring register, but the Act enables the Local Government Board to take whatever steps may be necessary for the register on which the first General Election under the new Act will be held. It is important for women to prove that they have been occupiers of houses, rooms, etc., for six months from September or even June, 1917. Armed with a written recognition from the owner or evidence that she has been accepted tenant for six months, a woman can go to the Town Clerk or a party agent and make sure that her name is on the register.

Dates are not yet fixed with regard to the new register, but Headquarters is on the watch and information will be published in THE VOTE. Members are invited to communicate with Headquarters in cases of difficulty, and every possible assistance will be given.

Points of Interest.

Among other points of general interest in the Act, which repeals or adapts 113 other Acts of Parliament passed during the last 489 years, and is set forth with schedules in 150 pages, are the following:—

It doubles the electorate, raising it from eight millions (roughly) to sixteen millions, of whom six millions will be women; it provides for all elections to take place on the same day; it reduces the cost of candidates' election expenses, and provides the returning officers' expenses out of public funds.

Men are enfranchised at 21, and if they have served in the fighting forces at 19.

The Act equalises the value of the vote by the redistribution of constituencies. Constituencies have hitherto ranged in size from 4,500 to 52,000 electors; 70,000 is now the general basis; counties and groups of boroughs will remain. The Act applies to Ireland, and if the Irish redistribution scheme goes through the number of Members of Parliament will be increased from 670 to 706.

"What the Liberal Party has to Offer Women."

Readers of THE VOTE will be interested to learn that Mr. Joseph King, M.P., has promised to speak at one of our Wednesday afternoon meetings in March on "What the Liberal Party has to offer Women."

Votes for Women Victory Celebrations.

An International Suffrage Rally will be held at Kingsway Hall, Saturday, March 9, at 3 p.m. Five minutes' speeches by Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Evelyn Sharp, Miss Chrystal Macmillan, Miss Margaret Macmillan, as well as women suffragists from other nations. Chairman, Mrs. Swanwick.

A joint Suffrage demonstration will be held in Queen's Hall, Langham Place, Wednesday, March 13, at 8 p.m. Speakers: Miss Maude Royden, Lord Lytton, Sir John Simon, and Mr. Arthur Henderson. Chairman: Mrs. Fawcett. The price of tickets, which can be obtained at the Women's Freedom League Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1, ranges from £1 1s. to 1s.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L.

LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, February 15.—Clapham

Branch Meeting, 46, Lynette-avenue,

Clapham-common, S.W., 6 p.m.

Sunday, February 17.—Herne Hill

and Norwood Branch Meeting at 69,

Danecroft-road, 4 p.m. Business: Resolutions for the Conference.

Wednesday, February 20.—Public

Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Hol-

born, 3 p.m. Speaker: Miss Helena

Normanton, B.A., on "The Worst

Despotism—Dress."

Friday, February 22.—Croydon

Political Meeting, 32A, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m.

Speaker: Miss Dorothy Evans, on "Enfranchised Women and their Opportunities."

Saturday and Sunday, February 23 and 24.—Women's Freedom League Conference, in the Library, Teachers' Guild, 9, Brunswick-square, W.C. (near Russell-square Tube, 10 a.m. each day.

Wednesday, February 27.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Aldridge, on "Serbia." Admission free.

PROVINCES.

Wednesday, February 27.—Work Party, 101, Festing-grove, 5 to 7 p.m. Hostess: Mrs. Owen.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Sunday, February 24.—North London Branch National

Secular Society. Open Debate. St. Pancras Reform Club,

15, Victoria-road, Kentish Town, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss

Nina Boyle, on "Women's Place in the World." Admission free.

We draw special attention to—

Miss H. Norman-on's Lecture on "The Worst Despotism—Dress," in the Minerva Café, Wednesday, February 20, at 3 p.m.

Women's Freedom League Dinner to Mrs. Despard.

Mrs. Fisher has arrangements in hand for a dinner to Mrs. Despard in celebration of the fact that 6,000,000 British women have recently won their political enfranchisement. All Freedom Leaguers, old and new members, who would like to be present at this dinner, please apply for tickets to Miss Dorothy Evans, c/o Women's Freedom League, 144, High Holborn, W.C. This dinner will be held on February 22, at Economy Hall Restaurant, 316, Regent-street (one minute from Oxford Circus, opposite the Polytechnic), at 7 p.m. Tickets, 3s. 6d.

Victory Poster Parade.

We announce Our New Policy.

Not to Parliament but to the People.

As we go to press a Victory Poster Parade is taking place in which several Suffrage Societies are co-operating. With posters announcing our new position and policy, and flying flags in the colours of the Leagues, the paraders are to pass along Kingsway, Holborn, and Oxford-street during the busiest part of the day.

Some of our messages run as follows:—

"The Women's Freedom League stands for Equal Political, Industrial, Social Rights for Women and Men."

"Women must have equal pay for equal work with men."

"Why not wages for wives and mothers?"

THE EDUCATIONAL OUTLOOK.

From the Woman's Point of View.

By Emily Phipps, B.A., President of the National Federation of Women Teachers.

University Scholarships for Men, 440; For Women, 34

The Association of Headmistresses of Secondary Schools, representing about 80,000 pupils, has drawn attention to the fact that facilities for University education for girls are much fewer than for boys. Every year the Secondary Schools send out hundreds of girls who are capable of benefiting by a University course, but cannot afford the time or the money necessary—the time, because they must begin to earn money to support themselves, and often also to help in the educational expenses of brothers and sisters. And the Association points out that while, at the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge in 1914 there were some 440 scholarships available for men, there were only 34 offered at the women's colleges.

David Staar, in "The English Woman" (translated from the French by J. M. E. Brownlow) points out that a similar state of affairs existed for many years with regard to schools, as distinct from colleges. He says: "Not until 1870 did woman's education profit by the considerable endowments left in the course of centuries for the instruction of English youth. Bequests were often vague, and the sex of the young people who were to be educated not very clearly defined, so with very few exceptions, the money had gone to boys, and the endowed schools for girls gave primary instruction only. This was remedied by the Endowed Schools Act, which must be regarded as a great national reform." Why should there not be an Act for the equal allocation of University Scholarships between men and women?

Legalising a Glaring Injustice.

Another educational association, the National Federation of Women Teachers, has been calling public attention to a recent minute of the Board of Education. This minute, dated January 4, prescribes that as from April 1 it will be a condition of the Supplementary grant that the salaries paid by an education authority throughout its area shall be not less than the following rates:—Certificated teachers—men, £100 per annum; women, £90 per annum; uncertificated teachers, men and women, £65 per annum.

Now this minute in one respect is a step forward. It is the first time that any amount has been stated as the minimum to be paid to a certificated teacher, and many rural authorities, and even some County Boroughs, have either raised salaries in their area or will have to do it very soon. There were certificated women teachers, even in large towns, receiving as little as £70 per annum, out of which £2 8s. was deducted for superannuation compulsorily. These young women were exempt from Income Tax.

But what must sadden, if it does not enrage, every thinking woman teacher is the sinister fact that while, in the past, the differentiation between the salaries of men and women with equal professional qualifications has been merely the result of tradition and custom, it is now for the first time legalised. It is idle to say that authorities are not precluded from giving what is popularly known as "equal pay," if they wish to. Of course they are not. But if any authority has not had a majority of its members in favour of this measure of justice when only tradition could be cited against it, is it likely that it will initiate a reform in such a matter when tradition is supported by the suggestion, to call it nothing stronger, of such a powerful force as the Board of Education, the premier education authority in the land? As a matter of fact, we know that by some authorities this suggestion has already been used as an argument for "equal pay."

Unreasonable "Reasons."

The "reasons" suggested in the past for sex differentiation in payment have been various. One was that it was harder to teach boys than girls (though boys were cleverer than girls); but this "reason" hardly squares with the fact that when men taught classes of girls, or when they were engaged in "mixed" schools, their salaries were not reduced on that account, nor were those of women teaching in boys' or mixed schools raised. This "reason" was often stated in the crude form "no woman can teach boys above a certain age" (generally 11 or 12). The answer to this is that it is not true, as both men and women teachers know perfectly well. Only, in passing, we must register a protest at the comparing of the teaching abilities of a girl of 21 almost entirely without experience with those of a man of 35 or 40, who has had many years' experience. This comparison has been made by those who wish to bolster up their contention as to women's lack of the capacity to teach boys.

Another "reason" one has heard—in the year 1914—was that it would cost too much to pay women the same as men. The writer was told, by a prominent woman teacher, that it would cost eight millions per annum! Suppose it would (and it would cost more now). Is expense a reason for continuing an unjust custom, a custom that is making many women sore and bitter, and thus preventing them from doing their best work? Expense, forsooth!

But the "reason" of all, the one most firmly entrenched in the minds of our opponents is: "Men have families to keep, women have not." This we dissent from on two grounds; first, that it is not the basis on which salaries ought to be paid; nor, in fact, are salaries paid on that basis as between men and men, for it is not the custom yet to pay bachelors less than married men, though a suggestion to this effect was made by a county authority a week or two ago; if, however, it should become general, it will be poetic justice; second, that the statement is inaccurate. Many, very many women teachers have relatives to support. The National Federation of Women Teachers has made investigations on this point in several areas, and has in its possession statistics proving how rare it is for a woman to have only herself to keep. And it is by no means true that every man teacher has a family to keep. The wife, of course, is not to be regarded as a dependant, if she keeps the house going.

The Lever of the Vote.

It is particularly remarkable that this suggestion to fix the salary of a woman below that of a man should be made on the eve of women's enfranchisement. It is to that same enfranchisement that we must trust to defeat this and all similar suggestions. We have to convert public opinion, and the vote will be a strong lever. Though many of us will not have votes at first, yet a small well-organised vote can do much more than a larger floating vote. As the suffrage societies have shown during the last eight or ten years, a small organised vote is often enough to turn the scale against one or other political party. If we vote merely with one or other of the old parties—some Liberal, some Labour, some Conservative—we shall accomplish little, if anything. We must vote together; we must be guided by the circumstances in each constituency as to where we give our vote; and we must keep our own counsel to the very last.

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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.

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REVOLUTION!

The word Revolution is being bandied about these days in a dangerous manner. Irresponsible persons mouth it with glee; ignorant and hopeful reformers pray that they may see it come; disgruntled politicians and agitators use it as a threat. Few of the chatters to whose lips the red, dread word comes so easily have any notion of what Revolution really is or what it would bring. Yet there is little excuse for ignorance.

The Revolution which has dismembered the great, unwieldy empire of Russia, and which has reduced her disunited provinces to a condition of civil war, should surely carry some stern lessons. Two, at least, are worth studying. There is a sharp lesson to tyrants and to those who fawn on tyrants and carry out their inhumane instructions. This lesson should have been taught by the French Revolution; but obviously it was not properly understood; for people still talk of the Reign of Terror, in which some 3,000 persons perished, as if it were more dreadful and more wicked than the nameless infamies in which it was bred and nurtured during four evil centuries. That lesson has been taught again by the little States of the Balkans, whose martyrdom down the ages is being avenged by the inferno now established in Europe. And the barbarous and cold-blooded butchery spreading through Russia is the natural, though none the less hideous, result of centuries of cruel oppression and injustice, in which the sense of decency has been blunted and familiarity with horror has bred contempt.

But the other lesson is for the reformers. If tyrants need look to it, so should those who by violent appeals to the idea of Revolution let loose passions which are merely the reflection of the tyranny they pretend to abhor. In the reckless scouring which they advocate and uphold, the fine polish is worn off humanity; and humanity loses more in a revolution than in a war. Those whose ideals were the guiding light in the struggle towards freedom are generally the first to perish in the storm of violence. Kerensky, Brusiloff, the noble and high-minded Countess Panina, and others whose staunch determination helped Russia in her evil hour have been swept away; and drenching floods of massacre are threatened by those who fail to secure enough voluntary support from "the people" to make themselves in their turn tyrants. The reaction to autocracy after such episodes is inevitable; and the hands of the clock of progress are put back.

Women, of all people, should be careful how they deal in such dangerous and irresponsible propagandum. Firstly, because in the upheaval of revolution by violence they are liable to suffer those forces

of outrage which the unchaining of masculine passions invariably lets loose. Unbridled sexual fury has been an accompaniment not only of war but of all those convulsions in which revolution has been sought by violent infractions of social order. And while no one—least of all militant suffragists—will argue that it is better to tolerate unlimited injustice than to face, if necessary, violence and bloodshed, yet the responsibility is heavy on those who advocate such measures unless they can prove them to be unavoidable.

This brings us to the second reason why women, and more especially British women, should set their faces against any appeals to violent revolution: the enfranchisement that has been conceded on a scale unprecedented places in their own hands the constitutional means of securing justice, freedom, and well-being for the people, without appeal to anything more deadly than their own selves and the ballot box. And this is not only the case in Great Britain, the circle is steadily widening.

With the memory hot in our hearts of the stern fight from which we have just emerged victorious, we should guard carefully against loose talk that is calculated to belittle that success. What we have won is so great, is of such overwhelming importance and effect, that we who took part in that memorable struggle should feel bound by a common bond of honour and comradeship to let no word be uttered which shall make it seem as if some or any of us despise the goal now it has been won. In the ferment of unrest such times as those in which we are living are bound to produce, it is for us ever to point to the right and constitutional means by which "revolution devoid of violence or disorder may be achieved." The majority in our country will no longer be an artificial one of men only; it will also represent some millions of women. The women who light-heartedly look forward to any revolution other than a constitutional one are, consciously or unconsciously, shutting their sex out from power to affect the decisions of any such revolution.

That this is so must surely be plain. In France the Terror owed much of its terrorism to implacable women. But what did they get out of it? Nothing at all, until the autocrat Napoleon established for them certain property and other rights concerning their homes; none of which rights have been widened in the smallest degree by successive revolutions, republics, or manhood suffrage. The French woman to-day has not even the municipal vote. The bloody arbitrament of civil war in the States denied to white women what was granted by that apostle of freedom (in the masculine sense), Abraham Lincoln, to negroes. In Russia, where women exercised the new franchise as freely as men, the Constituent Assembly which that franchise returns is not allowed to meet or to govern; and as it does not appear that women are represented on the Soldiers' and Workmen's Councils, or are members of the all-powerful Red Guard, it will be seen that the Revolution has snatched away with one hand what it had given with the other. The longer the reign of violence lasts, the more difficult it will be for them to recover the rights which they have been forcibly prevented from exercising.

The right, the proper, the safe way for civilised communities to secure even the most revolutionary changes is by means of the ballot box. If we organise effectively, act honestly, and vote according to our convictions, all the best results of revolution, without the horrors that the word inevitably suggests, will be ours. It is for this, for these, that we fought for the franchise; it is no true woman's business to give voice or place to any propagandum that is going to rob our conquest of its value.

C. NINA

POLITICAL NOTES.

Wanton—or Merely Foolish?

In the Address from the Throne on the re-assembling of Parliament no smallest allusion is made to the great reform—Votes for Women—just consummated. Neither was it mentioned in the prorogation of the Parliament that achieved it. We do not know if this be wanton affront, or mere foolishness, on the part of the advisers to His Majesty. Having enfranchised women, they now pretend to believe it is of not sufficient importance to call for the most ordinary courtesies. Women, however, may be counted on to let them know these things with the least possible delay.

The Political See-Saw.

The masculine politicians, having very little sense of the ludicrous, are tumbling over each other to invite our support and provide inducements for our adherence. Such is the power of the vote, and such the fulfilment of all our prognostications. The Liberal Party, according to Mr. Runciman, is going to put its strength into securing the removal of all inequalities; the Unionist associations (in spite of Mrs. Humphry Ward) are offering equal terms of membership; the Labour Party is going to guarantee 20 per cent. of representation to women. What one wants to know is, why did they not all do it before?

The Bench.

The scandals connected with the Bench are not all in relation to the administration of the law. Some of them are connected with private conduct. We are forcibly reminded by recent events of the passionate indignation of Mr. Justice Lush when Mrs. Pankhurst made her forceful allusion to the death of a judge on circuit in a house of ill-fame, which was the first thing that roused her to indignation at the conditions under which "justice" is administered. Tax resisters, also, will remember the case of the woman sentenced severely for refusal to pay unjust levies for Government purposes, by a magistrate who had just sentenced, to the same term, a weeping girl for solicitation. Her tears, she explained, were due to the fact that she had not expected such a sentence from the man who first led her wrong. When men with records such as those are allowed to administer the law, it ill-becomes any gentleman on the Bench to assume the hypocritical attitude in regard to the virtue of women, which has given rise to the recent disgracefully inadequate sentences on the murderers of wives.

W.A.A.C.

We deeply regret that the Government has merely put up the Archbishop of Canterbury to deny the abominable attacks made on women patriotically serving their country, instead of rigorously prosecuting those who make or spread the defamatory reports. In so far as the difficulty for the War Office is concerned, we have little sympathy. We do not forget that the War Office joined in the equally abominable campaign against soldiers' wives, and aided the campaign by every imaginable insulting circular and regulation. Now that it wants the help of women, it is being made to swallow its own gruel; and instead of the Commander-in-Chief, or the Secretary of State for War, taking up the cudgels for the girls, they hide behind the lawn sleeves of the Archbishop and expect him to undo the harm they themselves helped to heap up in 1914 and 1915. The W.A.A.C. is entitled to all the sympathy that we gave to the maligned soldiers' wives; and we offer it to them very heartily; but the War Office is the real source of the whole trouble.

VICTORY CELEBRATIONS.

Thanksgiving Services.

St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.

At St. Martin's-in-the-Fields (by kind permission of the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard), Saturday, February 9, was devoted to thanksgiving and dedication. There was Corporate Communion at 8 a.m.; Choral Eucharist at 11, with an address by the Bishop of Stepney; a Thanksgiving Service at 2 p.m., at which the Bishop of Willesden gave an address, and Evensong at 6 p.m., when Dr. E. Lyttleton was the preacher. The Church League for Woman Suffrage invited all suffragists to join in the services, and there was a splendid response by all the societies, irrespective of creed. At the afternoon service the banners of the suffrage societies formed a beautiful and significant decoration, and the reading of the Roll of Suffragists who have passed on was most impressive. The list furnished, by request, by the Women's Freedom League, included Jessie Ellen Snow, Mary Fitzsimons, Rose Hyland, Mrs. Bastian and Dorothy Le Lacheur. The excellent singing was a notable feature of a notable day. Miss Emily Davies, veteran, was present, also Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, and Miss Abadam. The Rev. F. M. Green read the service specially written for the occasion.

At the City Temple.

On Sunday evening the City Temple was crowded to its utmost limits for the special Thanksgiving Service, which had been preceded by a short Consecration Service, likened by the Rev. Constance Colman, B.D., who conducted it, to the knight's vigil before putting on his armour. The special music included the Rev. T. G. Crippen's hymn with its downright lines:

"Let 'Each for All' our watchword be,
And every vote be cast for Thee."

Miss Maude Royden's impressive thanksgiving sermon was based on the text: "Wherefore, seeing we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." (Heb. 12, 1.) She rejoiced that obstacles had crumbled and at last, with the goodwill of the men, women were welcomed as friends and fellow-workers in the political sphere.

"Our thoughts are with those great pioneers who compass us about like a cloud of witnesses. For all our dead are with us to-night. We realise that but for their work the war itself would not have brought us where we now stand. Other women in other countries have done not less for their fellows, but the work, long and hard, of those who went before us is the cause of our victory. We think of them with a thankfulness and gratitude which will live in our hearts as a consecration. . . . Shall we ever in the years to come know so good a fellowship—better we cannot know—as we have known in the past? To those of us who are fellow-workers in the suffrage cause it has been a great time—such comradeship, such a surge of life, such a sense that each of us was much greater than herself, because she stood for so great a thing, because every speaker spoke for so many women, because everyone who worked in this cause was, in a sense, the preacher of the cause. It has been a mighty fellowship. . . . Nothing that you have suffered will be in vain, you will grudge none of it, far less resent any of it, if it has given you the key to the suffering of the world. But if it has not, if women should ever forg t what it was like to be oppressed, laughed at, derided, scorned, insulted, then our fight would indeed have been in vain, though very woman in the country had a vote. It is the fellowship of all who are oppressed that we have won. . . . Let us pledge ourselves that no race, no class shall be exploited for the convenience of another. It is a great task, a tremendous task, but a task which shall make us feel that the struggles of those who went before us have not been in vain, and that we have indeed found the work to which to set our hands."

[The sermon appears *verbatim* in this week's *Christian Commonwealth*, 1d., from the W.F.L. Literature Dept.]

FURTHER INCONSISTENCIES.

Before Mr. Lloyd George became Prime Minister he declared that strong drink was a worse enemy to this country than the Germans. It "restricted output" and "wasted food." Since he became Prime Minister he has done nothing, or practically nothing, to stop the sale of intoxicants, although foodstuffs to the extent of 5,000,000 tons, including sugar and wheat, have been used in their making since the war began. For every sixteen pints of beer the materials for a quarter loaf are consumed. Wheat is prohibited from being sold for pigs' food, so necessary now to the nation, but within a mile of where the pigs are doomed to hunger wheat is delivered for the making of beer. Between five and six thousand miners are employed day and night producing coal for the consumption of breweries and whisky distilleries; ships and railways are being utilised for transporting intoxicants, at a time when every ship and every train is required to carry food. Even last week a ship of wheat carried from one English port to another was torpedoed and lost. The excuse for carrying this precious cargo by sea was that the railways had no available trains. Are whisky and beer ever held up for want of railway space?

Why did Mr. Lloyd George do nothing when he became Prime Minister? Whatever his reason may have been, he sheltered behind the working man, and declared that "The workers would rise if beer and whisky were taken off the market."

Tea is quite as important to the working woman as beer is to the working man; 1½ ozs. per head per week is a very inadequate allowance, yet we do not hear that because of the working woman the tea allowance must be increased. Tea is a necessity to many a weary worker. The married woman is urged more and more to go out and work. She has no one at home to prepare and cook her meals; a cup of tea when she comes in is the easiest and most comforting form of refreshment for her. If more room were found in ships for tea than for intoxicants it would be a real boon to the country.

It is to be feared that it was not the working man but "vested interests" which prevented the Prime Minister taking drastic action long ago. We are short of bread, sugar, and tea, yet brewing goes on. Let the women of Britain rise and demand tea in preference to beer. Their wants must be considered as much as men's. It is a national matter, and ought to be attacked by a united people, who will demand with one voice bread instead of beer, tea instead of whisky.

EUNICE G. MURRAY.

OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

Mrs. Zangwill's "Good-bye to the 'Darlings.'"

Last Wednesday afternoon one of the most fascinating lectures suffragists have ever had the privilege of listening to was given by Mrs. Zangwill in the Minerva Café. "The Start and the Finish" was the title she chose, and it covered the ground of women's effort for their enfranchisement from 1867 until the placing of the present Reform Bill on the Statute Book, although Mrs. Zangwill declared that she herself would not really believe in Votes for Women until she had come out of a polling booth without being arrested by a policeman! With much sympathy and great charm Mrs. Zangwill described the "Darlings" of fifty years ago, and the general position of women at that time. "And they were darlings with their crinolines, and ringlets, their pouts and dimples, looking up from their Berlin work!" In those days there were no women in Cheapside, no women reporters, who, Mrs. Zangwill declared, would have seemed as impossible as a

male wet nurse, although she understood that today the very printer's devil had taken on the feminine gender! References were made to and quotations given from Dickens, Thackeray and Ruskin as to the position of women of that period. What a contrast to the women of to-day, "women in oilskins and knickerbockers, and in close caps and overalls (munitioners) engaged on a different kind of Berlin work!" Mrs. Zangwill waved an affectionate farewell to those mid-century damsels, but said we were proud of our W.A.A.C.s.

Mrs. Zangwill briefly reviewed the history of the various Suffrage Bills since 1887 and men's queer reasons for their opposition to women's enfranchisement. How vigorously some of them fought against "the thin end of the wedge!" She would remind those stalwarts that

If you will not when you may,
You'll catch it worse another day!

for already there were 6,000,000 women on the register. Previously, men had to be convinced that their common manhood was greater than class distinction, but now we were realising that our common humanity was greater than sex distinction.

In taking the chair for Mrs. Zangwill, Miss Dorothy Evans pointed out that at present it was only proposed to give women over 30 the Parliamentary vote, but suffragists must continue their work until women had complete political equality with men. The State needed women's care and organising capacity. In the home women safeguarded the interests of the ailing, the weak, the erring, and the helpless; in the State men shut them up and were very slow to realise that they should be given a chance of recovery for the mutual benefit of themselves and the community.

THE WAY TO THE WOOLSACK.

The Women's Freedom League is pressing for equality of opportunity for women and men in all spheres of activity—in political and public life, in the Government, in education, in industry, in the Law and the Church. We congratulate our gifted member, Miss Helena Normanton, B.A., on her attack on the close preserve of the Law. It is not Parliament in this case, but the all-powerful Benchers of the Inns of Court who exclude women from the practice of the law. Miss Normanton, a university graduate, a university extension lecturer, a well-known speaker on woman suffrage and other important questions, has applied to the Benchers of the Middle Temple for admission as a student of the Inn. Her sponsors are two barristers, Mr. Holford Knight, once an anti-suffragist, but now a convert of some years' standing, and Mr. J. Wells Thatcher, who has always been a champion of women's enfranchisement. We await the result with keen interest, and hope that the Benchers will be wise enough to open the door of the Law to women, and so make it possible for a woman to reach the Woolsack as Chancellor.

Writing in last month's *Fortnightly Review*, on "The Lawyer and the New World," Mr. Knight observes:—

"The rejection of competent women cannot survive among the changes the war will bring. Such an exclusion is indefensible in logic and experience; it is prejudicial to the national life, for it restricts the employment of available capacity, and it must needs meet the approved fate of an absurd anachronism.

"I feel sure this view is becoming general at the Bar. Opinion has naturally changed since I first raised the question at the annual meeting of the Bar in 1913, with the help of Lord Robert Cecil. As the public knows, the legal profession has hitherto moved away from old habits with difficulty. But the days have gone by when an obstinate rump of lawyers can successfully prevent reasonable changes on which the nation insists."

THE VICTORY FUND.

Blazing in the sky to-day we see the glorious sun of Freedom. The Victory Fund with which we greet it is mounting up, further contributions are urgently needed, and I should be grateful to receive them as soon as possible, that we may have a goodly sum by the date of the Conference.

A NEW WAY TO HELP.

The Women's Freedom League is taking part in the unique and historic Women Suffragists' Celebration at Queen's Hall on Wednesday, March 13th, at 8 p.m. A combined appeal for funds will shortly be issued, contributions may be ear-marked by the donors for their own Society, otherwise the whole profits from the Collection and the Sale of Tickets will be divided among the 16 Societies joining, in proportion to the value of the tickets sold by each.

So every ticket that is bought from this office will, besides ensuring to the buyer a delightful evening, help to swell the Victory Fund of the Women's Freedom League.

Please order your Tickets at once. 21s., 10s. 6d., 5s., 2s. 6d., and 1s.

144, High Holborn,
W.C. 1.

E. KNIGHT.

THE CASE OF JULIA DECIES.

Readers who noted the comparison last week between the cases of Julia Decies and Stephen Canham will be interested to hear of the effort which Mrs. Cobden Sanderson is making on behalf of the imprisoned woman. She writes as follows:—

May I appeal to the sympathy of your readers on behalf of a typical case of prison discipline prolonging punishment beyond its purpose, and separating mother from child to the injury of both?

Four years ago a young woman, Julia Decies, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for a murderous assault—as it was termed—upon a man with whom she had been living as his wife, and who was about to leave her for another woman. She had bought a revolver for her own destruction, but in a moment of a passionate quarrel had pointed the revolver at him, fired, and wounded him, but not seriously. She was pregnant at the time, by him, and four months after her sentence a boy was born to her, in prison.

For three years, according to rule, the mother, in prison, was at intervals of three months allowed a visit from her child. At the end of three years the prison rules automatically stopped the visits. Outside the prison the child was in the charge of a sister of the prisoner.

Last summer I by chance came into touch with this sister, and found her very anxious that the mother should be released from prison and come and live with her, that they might help one another and together look after the boy—a bright, intelligent little fellow—to whom both mother and sister were, and are, devoted.

I bestirred myself. I went into the case and, with the assistance of the counsel who defended Julia at the trial, a petition, addressed to the Home Secretary, was drawn up, setting out all necessary particulars and asking for a remission of the unexpired portion of the sentence, that the mother might be united to the child. The petition was brought to the notice of a number of distinguished people interested in women's welfare, and, in October last, the petition, signed by them and myself, was presented to the Home Secretary by Sir William Bull, who had been interested in the case at the time of the trial. The result, after a delay of two months and a half, has been the removal of Julia Decies from Aylesbury Prison to a "home"—where she is still a prisoner—just one fortnight earlier than she would have been removed had no petition been presented, there to be detained, till the expiration of her sentence next November.

Her good conduct in prison had already reduced her terms of imprisonment to four and a half years, so that in November she will be free. But why not now, at once? Why not take into account the judgment of the petitioners on the case, the merits of the case itself, the devotion of the mother and sister to one another and to the child, the saving influ-

ence of this devotion, and the assistance promised by myself?

The prisoner is still a prisoner, subject to prison discipline. My own offer of assistance has been refused. I am not even allowed to visit her at the "home," nor is her sister oftener than once in two months, and correspondence is limited to once in six weeks.

I appeal to your readers to bring such influence as they may have to bear in support of a better and more merciful adjustment of the Home Secretary's power of control to the modifications which the prisoners and their circumstances may undergo after sentence, and to ask the Home Secretary, and in Parliament if need be, for the immediate release of this prisoner and mother, Julia Decies.

One other thing I would ask. The child's birth certificate is marked "Born in prison." Cannot this be deleted? Was it the child's fault that he was born "in prison"? Need such a misfortune be the child's own through life?

BRANCH NOTES.

Chester.

At an afternoon public meeting at the Holborn Restaurant, on February 6, Miss Boyle gave a most able and comprehensive address on "The Women's Vote" to a deeply interested audience. The chair was taken by Mr. J. Barstow, one of the leading Unionists in Chester, and a sincere friend to the suffrage cause. Miss Boyle enlarged upon the many new ways in which enfranchised women could use their weapon, the vote, not only in domestic politics but also in Imperial and International decisions. She dwelt specially upon our heavy moral responsibility for seeing justice done to the wronged women in the Allied nations and to the native women in British dependencies. The same evening Miss Boyle gave a delightful account of her experiences in Macedonia at an informal drawing-room meeting arranged by Mrs. H. F. Brown.

Croydon Office, 32a, The Arcade, High-street.

Members of the Croydon Branch of the Women's Freedom League are invited by the local Branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies to rejoice with them at Mrs. Allen's, Coombe Cliff, Coombe-road, on Monday, February 18, at 4.30 p.m. Committee members are asked to meet the Committee of the N.U.W.S.S. an hour earlier at Coombe Cliff to discuss details of a public demonstration. Will members, who have not paid this year's subscription, please do so as early as possible? Subscriptions may be sent to Miss Heslop, hon. treasurer, 37, Dingwall-road, or to the hon. secretary. Our next political meeting will be on February 22. All members are urged to attend the Annual Conference of the League on February 23 and 24. See notice in THE VOTE. The first political meeting, held on February 8, was well attended. Mrs. Ackroyd presided, and expressed the satisfaction felt by all suffragists on the recent enfranchisement of about six millions of women, and the possibilities that now opened up to women. Mrs. Corner spoke of the duties and responsibilities of citizens, and urged women to study local as well as national affairs, and be ready to serve on municipal bodies. A good discussion followed.

Dundee.

A Branch meeting was held on February 7, Miss Husband presiding. It was decided to ask Miss Eunice Murray to represent the Branch at the forthcoming Conference in London, and the various resolutions for the connection were considered. To celebrate the victory of the passing into law of the Representation of the People Bill it was agreed to ask the various Women's Societies in town to co-operate by forming a joint committee to decide on a common line of action.

Middlesbrough.

After many disappointments through the non-appearance of our speakers on the advertised occasions, we were delighted to welcome Miss Boyle to the Suffrage Club on Monday and Tuesday, February 4 and 5. The audiences were keenly interested in Miss Boyle's address on the political situation and the women's vote, and in her account of her experiences in Macedonia. On the Tuesday afternoon we had the pleasure of including Miss Anna Munro amongst the listeners. We could have done with a better distribution of our good fortune.

Jumble Sale for Funds.—Members and friends kindly note that we require funds to pay large bills. Money and goods will be very acceptable at once. Our united efforts have achieved a huge success, so let us wipe off arrears of debt.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

On February 6 a public meeting was held in the I.L.P. Institute, Gallowgate. Dr. Ethel Williams, from the chair, paid splendid tribute to Mrs. Despard, President of the Women's Freedom League, and her realisation of the spiritual significance of the Woman's Movement. Miss Anna Munro, who was warmly welcomed to Newcastle, spoke on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, held up by the watchfulness of women on the ground that it was based on the

FRIDAY,
FEB. 15,
1918.

THE VOTE

ONE
PENNY
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

old fallacy of compulsion, and was not likely, even if amended, to secure the objects in view. A strong resolution demanding the withdrawal of the Bill was passed unanimously. On February 8 a branch meeting was held at 106, St. George's Terrace, by kind invitation of Mrs. Blanche, when the agenda for the Conference was further considered.

Portsmouth.

The monthly public meeting held at the Suffrage Rooms on February 6 was very successful. Miss Habershon, editor of *The Russian Quarterly*, gave an illuminating address on Russia. She spoke in sympathetic terms of the Revolution, and said she thought Co-operative Socialism would be the ultimate form of Government best suited to the Russian temperament and ideals. Mrs. Whetton presided. The next Work Party will be held on February 27, at 101, Festing-grove, by kind invitation of Mrs. Owen.

Scottish Scattered.

When Miss Boyle was in the North we had two excellent drawing-room meetings. One at Moore Park, Cardross and one in Helensburgh, by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Ure. At both meetings Miss Boyle charmed the large audiences who had gathered to hear her, with her experiences in Macedonia. Miss Eunice Murray spoke last week at two meetings, one at Gowan and one at Clydebank, upon "What we have Won." The women were anxious to know how to qualify as voters, and Miss Murray explained the new Act. At all four meetings liberal collections were taken.

Women's Freedom League Settlement, 93, Nine Elms-lane, S.W. 8.

Gratefully acknowledged: Mrs. Delbanco, Mrs. Thomas, provisions; Miss Rodger (per Miss Cole), Mrs. Walter Carey, Mrs. Despard, clothing; Miss Baker, lace curtains; Mrs. Thomas, flowers; Captain Walter Carey, £1; Mrs. Despard, £3, and Miss Wood, £1, both for the milk depot; Mrs. Carey, Christmas Cards. Two guest-children owe an afternoon at the Zoo to the kindness of Mrs. Bennett, and Mrs. Delbanco treated another to a Picture Theatre. Mr. and Mrs. P. H. Miller have promised us another Sale at their Studio in the spring, and we shall be glad if our friends will set to work for the Settlement Stall, which we should like to stock as far as possible with clothes for the poor; these, if unsold, are greatly appreciated at Nine Elms. Other wants are a waste-paper basket and some ten-inch gramophone records.

Despard Arms,

123, Hampstead-road, S.W. 1.

Screens! None have yet come to hand, but we hope our repeated appeal will induce some kind sympathisers to supply our urgent need of four screens for use in the bedrooms. A cosy single bedroom is now to let, with electric light, 9s. a week; large room, with one or two single beds, 13s. Apply Manageress.

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NEW BLACK VELVET HAT, fashionable; 10s. 11d.

PORTABLE CHICKEN-HOUSE, with three separate hurdles for enclosed run, 6ft. by 4ft. by 6ft.; good condition; on view at 83, Earl's Court-road, S.W.; £3 10s. 6d.

FOR SALE—cont.

THREE PINK BAY-WINDOW SEAT COVERS, with valences; 10s. 6d. the lot.

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SMALL REAL PONY-SKIN COAT; 25s.

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NEW BROWN VELOUR COAT; 37s. 6d.

NEW CERISE VELOUR VELVET REST-GOWN; 2½ guineas.

NEW SMALL SIZE FAWN MACKINTOSH, shop-soiled; 19s. 11d.

NEW MODERN BLACK SILK and VELVET HAT; 10s. 11d.

COPPER SPIRIT TEA-KETTLE and STAND; £2 10s.

ANTIQUE GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK; £8 10s.

MISCELLANEOUS.

64-PAGE BOOK ABOUT HERBS AND HOW TO USE THEM, post free 2d.—TRIMNELL, The Herbalist, 144, Richmond-road, Cardiff. Established 1879.

GUESTS RECEIVED; manor house, beautiful orchards, tennis, bath (h. and c.), picturesque country, station 1½ miles; from 30s.—BAYLISS, Noke Islip, Oxford.

LESSONS in PIANOFORTE and SINGING by Mrs. Silvester Sparrow; engagements solicited as Accompanist at Concerts, Dances, &c.—43, Black Lion-lane, Ravenscourt-park, W. 6.

THE HANDICRAFTS, 82, High-street, Hampstead, N.W.—Hand-weavings, Hand-made Laces, Home-spuns, Jewellery, Basketwork, Pottery, etc.

HOUSE FOR SALE, pleasantly situated in Dulwich; 12 rooms.—Write for particulars to MRS. LEWIS, c/o "THE VOTE" Office.

The Articles for Sale are on view at the Minerva Exchange, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1, 10 to 5.30. Saturdays, 10 to 12.

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