

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, DEC. 31, 1915

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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A NEW YEAR WATCHWORD FOR SUFFRAGISTS.

“He seeks that divine thing called Liberty,” is Dante's description of one of his characters. Could suffragists find a better attitude towards life than that for the year 1916?

From Mesopotamia to the Falkland Islands our men have gone forth battling for a country whose best claim to their love is that through long centuries she has generally ranged herself on the side of freedom. England was the country which, with Switzerland, set all Europe the example of constitutional freedom. She curbed the power of tyrants; she gained control over taxation; serfdom decayed in her free atmosphere; she worked out the practice of representative government; later, as Great Britain, she emancipated Catholics and Jews; she emancipated slaves; she threw off the cruel Corn Laws in the teeth of the gloomy prophecies of the economists; she vindicated the rights of the individual to personal liberty and fair trial and has always extended a welcome to brave strugglers for liberty exiled from other lands. The Huguenots, Garibaldi Kossuth, Mazzini, the Belgians of today, have sought her hospitable shores. Byron, looking on Marathon, dreamed that Greece might still be free. Gladstone, Meredith, Swinburne, the Brownings are names that leap to the mind when one recalls Italy's grand struggle for her liberty and unification. Truly, allowing for all those lapses without which a nation would be superhuman, our country in her mighty youth has been one that we may dearly love. But emotion, undisciplined by will and knowledge into action, is shallow and futile. If we truly love our country we shall most of all love her in her highest aspect—her zeal for liberty. Our every action will be directed towards keeping that zeal alive, fostering it, and making it predominate over every baser element in the national life. We shall guard our

old Constitution as something sacred, and yet be ever ready to improve upon the past. We shall study it and deal with it with knowledge. We shall learn to love the lives of all those who helped to make it. Alfred Langton, de Montfort, Edward I., Hampden—their names should be music in our ears.

But has this been the case in 1915? In fighting Caesarism abroad have we fought it at home as we should? No! The change of the Constitution has been parallel to the change in the value of money in recent years. It takes a sovereign now to buy what eleven and tenpence-halfpenny bought in 1895. The value of money has declined; so has the value of a vote. That is, of course, in the constitutional sense, not in its supreme value as an assertion of the moral right of the governed to control the governors. It is obvious that if we allow our old constitutional rights to be whittled away, the value of a man's vote now, or a woman's in the future, is becoming unbecomingly less. The right to vote is all very well; so is the right to swim. The right to swim would be valueless if all water evaporated. The right to vote will tend to become valueless in proportion as the Constitution oscillates from liberty to man's tyranny. Before the war the signs of this were ominous. The increasing autocracy of the Cabinet and corresponding enfeeblement of the private member; the clause of the Insurance Act which substituted for personal payment of the tax the employer's right to deduct that part payable by the employee; the débâcle over the right to petition the Sovereign in person—all these things and others showed how the stream was flowing.

And since the war? How has freedom fared down Westminster way? Daily the members of the Commons pass by the statue of Hampden, pass by the picture of the members vindicating their rights against Charles I. by forcibly holding down the

Speaker in his chair whilst they passed their resolutions in flat opposition to the Stuart king. But one remembers with infinite sadness that the first "Defence of the Realm Act" was abolished *only* because distinguished Constitutionalists in the House of Lords (notably Lords Halsbury and Parmoor) directed the nation's attention to the odiousness of its attack upon our liberties. The people's members proved to be careless custodians of the people's liberties. Nor do they seem to care to court the people's verdict upon themselves by facing a General Election, as they ordinarily should have done this January. Rather do they hark back to the unfortunate precedent of 1716 and arbitrarily prolong their own parliamentary life—and incidentally the certainty of their salaries. Thus the right of the people to choose their representatives even in the one-sexed way it is still done becomes void. There is deep and bitter irony in the way Fortune's wheel has turned. Men denied to women representation. Parliament now denies them the right to change or endorse their representatives. Similarly men used against us the argument of their superior physical force. Now they are exhausting that physical force against each other—in so terrible a way that the mind dares not dwell on it. Men reproached women with breaking law in order to obey a higher morality. Edith Cavell became the outstanding woman of the year 1915, praised by all men, by breaking law in order to serve her conceptions of higher morality. And in all these ironies there is little cause for anyone to rejoice, but rather to mourn with that noble mourning which sows in tears to reap in joy. Every man

Women's Freedom League.

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HEADQUARTERS NOTES.

New Year's Greetings.

To all our members and friends we send greetings and good wishes for the coming year. The experience of the past year has proved how necessary was the determination of the Women's Freedom League to keep the Suffrage flag flying. That determination will be adhered to in the coming year; and we urge our supporters to rally round us, to give us all the personal and financial help in their power, resolved to win the struggle for women's freedom at home as we are resolved to win the great war for freedom abroad.

Lecture on Poland.

The lantern lecture to be given on Mademoiselle Marie A. Czaplicka on Monday, January 24, will be of very special interest. We have arranged to hold it at the Ashburton Club, 28, Red Lion-square, W.C. (within three minutes of Holborn, Southampton-row corner), and the chair will be taken by our President, Mrs. Despard, at 7 p.m. Mlle. Czaplicka has very high qualifications, both as a scientist and lecturer, and we can promise all who come to hear her that they will spend a very interesting and profitable evening. Tickets for the lecture can be obtained from our office at 144, High Holborn, at 1s. (numbered and reserved) and 6d. each.

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who has died for liberty in 1915 is a ghostly monitor to us to maintain Liberty—not only for France, Belgium, Serbia, and so on—but in this sacred land. Our national songs assure us that we "shall flourish great and free," and that we pray Heaven for our king:

"May he defend our laws,
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice
God save the King."

Our very national anthems make us sing that greatness is founded upon freedom, and loyalty upon vigorous royal guardianship of popular rights. Therefore for 1916 our watchword should be "Freedom."

Freedom in the spirit of that beautiful old law "De Tallagio non Concedendo" of 1297 in which Edward I. said:—

"Also we will and grant for us and our heirs that all clerks and laymen of our realm shall have all their laws, liberties and free customs as freely and wholly as they have used to have the same at any time when they had them best and most fully."

Let us remember also that a beautiful old prayer tells us that the service of God is perfect freedom; for we best serve the Highest when least cramped by evil human fetters. Thus, with gallant spirit and noble motive, we shall fare forth to face the trials or triumphs of another year, strong and terrible as an army with banners—and on those banners the watchword

"FREEDOM."

HELENA NORMANTON.

Wednesday Afternoon Meetings.

We shall begin our new series of Wednesday afternoon meetings at Caxton Hall Wednesday afternoon, January 26, at 3.30 p.m. Further particulars of these meetings will be given in later issues of THE VOTE, and we hope our friends will make an effort to support us at these weekly suffrage meetings.

F. A. UNDERWOOD.

"OUR DAY."

We have all frequently heard it said that the 20th century would be the Woman's century, and that prophecy seems in a fair way of fulfilling itself to-day. This is "Our Day," not of realisation, but of opportunity and of responsibility. We used to have to plead for work (i.e., paid work); to-day work is being thrust upon us. We are being called upon from all quarters to leave our homes and go out into the labour market and help to keep up the trade of the country on which so much of our success in the war depends. We are being called upon as nurses and doctors to help to restore the wounded to health and strength; to make the munitions of war; as housewives to economise the nation's food and so provide Mr. Lloyd George's "silver bullets"; as mothers to build up the future race. In fact, we are being called upon to help in everything except the actual fighting.

If the great European war has proved one thing more conclusively than anything else, it is that in time of war, non-combatants are as necessary as combatants. At the beginning of the struggle, recruiting was carried on too vigorously in some of the skilled trades, and men have been brought back from the Front to resume their former work. In Mr. Lloyd George's phrase they were helping the country quite as much at the benches as in the trenches. Women to-day are called upon as non-combatants to help in practically all fields of labour. The timid, shrinking type of female, the "snow-white lamb bleating for man's protection"

of Keats' imagination, one fears would get scant courtesy in these days. Any woman who insisted on staying in "her proper sphere," the home, would be looked on as most unpatriotic.

It is "Our Day" of triumph, too. The present situation has proved how right those women have always been who insisted that women should not be prevented from fitting themselves for any career in which they could do useful work. What would have happened in this crisis if the women of former generations had believed that the only possible career for a woman was the domestic one, and had not tried to fit themselves for any other? The call to women would have come, just the same, but women would not have been capable of responding to it. That women to-day are capable of responding to that call is due to the pioneer women (and men, too, I am glad to say) of the past, who broke down the barriers that blocked women's way to a wider life. Their task was no easy one. They had to fight, as reformers always have to fight, against prejudice, ignorance and bigotry. Those who won for women the right to higher education and entry to the medical profession had a long and weary struggle. They met with opposition, with ridicule, even with persecution. They went on in spite of everything, because they *knew* they were right. We women of to-day know we are right in our struggle to obtain equal political rights with men. We feel moreover, that we owe it to those pioneers of the past to go on with our work. We owe it to them to put the coping stone on the building of which they laid the foundation.

One wonders whether it will ever again be said that women are too "emotional" for public life. Almost every appeal for recruits is an emotional appeal from men to men. The people who try to reason calmly on the present situation and to look at the international question from all points of view are called unpatriotic and pro-German. The nation is having an orgy of emotionalism. Not long ago, we had an attempt at what I can only call the organisation of emotionalism. A clergyman in the west of England tried to start a society for the marrying of men disabled in the war. He appealed to the instinct of self-sacrifice which is inherent in women, in order to persuade them to devote their lives to these men. He said it was "unthinkable" that men who had become crippled or blinded in fighting for their Country should be deprived of the joys of family life. This was a deliberate attempt to take advantage of the wave of pity that passed over the country on hearing of the terrible tragedies that have occurred in the war. There is no doubt that many girls would be ready to immolate themselves in the first rush of tenderness and sympathy caused by seeing strong men stricken in their prime. But surely one ought to take some account of the future lives of those girls. Surely it would be better to restrain them from taking a step too hastily in the first flush of emotion which they might regret for many long years. Its always tempting to sacrifice women in the interests of men! It is a pity there is not a more vigorous effort being made to force the State to make adequate provision for the men disabled in the war.

Miss Cavell's sacrifice is being used to stir up the very emotions of hatred and bitterness which she deprecated with her dying breath. Her noble and dignified words "I must remember that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred nor bitterness towards anyone," made very little impression on some of the people who are loudest in their denunciation of her execution. G. B. Shaw very cleverly showed up the hypocrisy of some of

Concluded on page 873.

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FRIDAY, December 31st, 1915.

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To the Advertising Manager—on advertising.
To the Secretary—on all other business, including Vote orders, printing, and merchandise, etc.
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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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SUSPENSE.

Once more the Parliamentary sky seems overcast, and the break-up of the Coalition Government freely discussed. These crises recur from time to time with a suddenness which is peculiarly Parliamentary; and while the Old Parliamentary Hand has, so far, proved equal to each emergency, and shewn himself to possess an unrivalled skill in the manipulation of his tricky composite teams (whether called Coalition or "Liberal"), at any moment some unforeseen development may bring the end of the present confederacy just as the end came for its predecessor. It seemed all smooth sailing; the holidays were in sight, the time was cut down to the minimum, the programme so full and so rushed, for the last three days, that disaster seemed out of the reckoning. Then came a series of "situations." The Minister for Munitions started the ball rolling with his very candid criticism of the War Office; and the tongues of other gentlemen straightway were loosened. There is likely to be some more of those edifying recriminations which seem to hover perpetually round any utterance from Mr. Lloyd George; indeed, Mr. Tennant has already fallen foul of him in the tarest possible manner—only to find himself embroiled in turn with the good knight errant, Sir Arthur Markham. Then came the Prime Minister's dramatic announcement of the secret withdrawal of troops from the Gallipoli Peninsula—an announcement made with so much of reticence as to set tongues buzzing their loudest. Next followed Mr. Runciman's rather plainly expressed coldness towards the Derby scheme and the demand for a million more men, and the unseemly wrangle round the married men and the Prime Minister's pledge. And finally came the refusal to make the Derby scheme results known in time for the debate on the vote for one million more men; and disappointed members suddenly discovered that they were being badly treated, kept in the dark, rushed for time over important matters after time had been frittered away on no sittings; and a great many more other things besides. So aggrieved were they that—quite suddenly and for no reason at all apparent, seeing that they should be used to it by this time—they also discovered that it was quite right and patriotic to criticise the Government; and at it they accordingly went *con amore*, and not a bit out of practice, in spite of their long abstention, and stayed at it all night—which eventually became another grievance.

Trouble seems to be "sticking out" for the Prime Minister in two directions—the disapproval of the

finance authorities over the question of withdrawal of more men from productive industry; and that unlucky "pledge" which has made history and which seems not unlikely to unmake the Government. Indeed, that is probably what those who exacted and exploited the said pledge desired and intended. With that strong sense of discretion of which he is such a master, the Prime Minister has once more decided to rely on his old motto, "Wait and see," and has kept all the Derby figures to himself until after the holiday. But the House is no longer so docile as it was; and the mutterings of something not unlike a storm are discernable in the discussions round the very important ministerial statements which preceded the rising of the House.

The helplessness of women was never more brought home to them, never more distressing and disheartening. What woman, trembling for the safety of husband or father, brother or son, could read these debates without sick foreboding? How not be moved to desperation by the plea of Mr. Dillon, that no matter what the Prime Minister might pledge himself to, there could be no moral right to send men compulsorily to the battlefield when no explanation had been given of what appeared to be glaring mistakes and criminal negligences; no undertaking that the men responsible for these negligences or mistakes would be removed from office! Or the bitter gibe of Mr. Ellis Griffiths: "The hon. member for East Mayo may have this consolation; that however many mistakes have been made, nobody has made them. There have been muddles, but there have been no muddlers. There have been blunders, but there are no blunderers." The bitter knowledge that we do not count in the nation or as the nation comes home to us with double and treble force when, in the words of our hon. member, we realise that "the failures of the Government have worked out in the lives of gallant men." Women have no means of gauging the truth of these statements, the best of all reasons for dreading it.

In the face of that helplessness, that bitterness, that knowledge, it makes one grit one's teeth to remember the smug statement of the Prime Minister on the question of franchise and registration. He opined that the "probability of a register being compiled which would really satisfactorily reflect the opinion of the whole country, including the returned sailors and soldiers, was at any rate problematic." We are sick of the boundless male egotism which dictates such meaningless phrases and such misuse of language. The "opinion of the whole country" will not be reflected in any registration of voters unless and until the voters are women as well as men. And the national anxiety and tense distress, on the eve of the New Year, that awaits us after sixteen months of war, has taught and is teaching us more and more fully the value of that share of political power and authority which is summed up in the vote.

C. NINA BOYLE.

"THE MINISTRY OF WOMANHOOD" was the title of a sermon preached by the Rev. W. J. Piggott at Stamford-street Chapel, Blackfriars-road, just before Christmas, under the auspices of the Free Church League for Woman Suffrage; it is reported at length in the *South London Press*. It was a fine declaration of the justice of woman's demand to share rights as well as responsibilities, and the need for her co-operation with man in all spheres of life.

"OLD CAMEOS."—Our readers who have visited "Cameo Corner," immediately opposite our office, in search of cameo rings, brooches, etc., have discovered Mr. Edward Good's wide knowledge on the subject. In a recent address on "Old Cameos" to the Clacton Arts and Literary Society he gave a most interesting historic story of the subject, and won enthusiastic thanks.

"OUR DAY."

Continued from page 871.

our anti-suffrage Ministers, when he suggested that the best monument to Edith Cavell would be the enfranchisement of her sex, and said a bill to that effect might gracefully be introduced in the Commons by Mr. McKenna and in the Lords by Viscount Gladstone.

It is "Our Day" in another sense. We are constantly hearing that the men of the country are fighting for our very existence as a nation. It is for us to try and keep our nation worthy of that sacrifice; but one by one the liberties which even the men of the nation used to enjoy, are being filched from them.

We have a fairly large class always with us whose one aim is to pile up profits for themselves. That class is making most unscrupulous use of the national crisis for their own advantage. To take only one instance, there is a greatly increased demand for child labour since the war began. Quite recently we had an attempt to get the age at which children were allowed to work in mills lowered. From the beginning of the war, farmers have clamoured to be allowed to have children on their farms under the age at which they are allowed by law to leave school. That age is criminally low already. To lower it still more would be to add another black page to the already dark record of the treatment of British children.

Mr. Pease who was then President of the Board of Education told a deputation which waited on him at the beginning of the year, that the demand for child labour came only from those farmers who paid a low wage. There was no such demand in districts where good wages were paid. One of the last speeches that the late Keir Hardie made in the House of Commons was on this very subject. He pleaded then with the Government to take a strong stand in defence of the children. As usual, his plea was in vain. The Government allowed the local Education Authorities to decide whether the law should be broken or not, instead of insisting that the regulations as to leaving school and the employment of children should be rigorously enforced. This is most emphatically a woman's question, because it is a race question.

Finally, it is "Our Day" because it is the Mothers' Day. The nation is alive as it never was before to the great value of women in relation to the future life of the nation. We are constantly hearing that motherhood is woman's chief duty. Many women, however, are realising that before we can fulfil the great duty of mother adequately, we must have the means of making a better and happier world for our children to live in. It is in order to do this that we so insistently demand our fair share of political power. As Mrs. Perkins Gilman so beautifully expresses it:

"Not for herself, though sweet the joy of freedom;
Not for herself, though dear the new-felt power;
But for the child, who needs a nobler mother,
For the whole people, needing one another,
Comes Woman to her Hour."

KATHLEEN TANNER.

The German Chancellor and Women's Suffrage.

Mr. Krebs, the Boston lawyer, who recently visited Berlin in the interests of cable communication between Germany and the States, interviewed the German Chancellor. After abusing Britain, Mr. Krebs in his relation of the interview says:—Then suddenly the Chancellor changed the subject, saying, "Let us not talk about the war. Tell me how is woman suffrage coming on in the United States?" Mr. Krebs informed him that the cause was rapidly advancing, whereupon the Chancellor said, "Perhaps it will be the best thing for you."

Remember the Christmas Party at
THE DESPARD ARMS,
On Friday, December 31, 1915, 7—10 p.m.

A RUSSIAN EXILE.

This book is dedicated "to my comrades who are still languishing within the dreary walls of Akatui" prison. It is a moving, though artless, picture of the doings and sufferings of Russian women, and especially of Marie Sukloff herself, to attain the liberation of Russia. Born in 1885, Miss Sukloff very early became a convert to the Russian revolutionary movement and a member of a fighting league, which did not limit itself to mental activity. When in her teens, she was exiled to Siberia for life, for helping to set in type some pamphlets used in the cause. She escaped, and returned once more to help. Since agitators were wanted at Tchernigoff, she went there, and in a peasant's house, learned in the presence of the revolutionary committee exactly how Governor Khvostoff had "pacified" the district. The crime of the peasants had been to take some superfluous grain of the landlords, to which they understood the Czar's manifesto entitled them; this had happened after a very bad year. The Governor assembled the people in the square, flogged ten, and then ordered the Cossacks to shoot. There was profound silence after the story was told in detail. Next morning, Miss Sukloff made a proposal to the Committee. Khvostoff had suppressed the people; she would suppress him. The Committee accepted her offer. Comrade Nicholai was told off to assist her. She took a house near the Governor's and carefully studied his habits for a week. He was busy organising a pogrom against the Jews, but no time was given him to carry it out. He remained in his house a whole week, and then drove out in his carriage. Nicholai's bomb fell in soft snow and failed to explode. Miss Sukloff's hit the carriage; explosion, devastation and ruin resulted. Probably no one would have known she was the culprit, but for her own confession. Blood streamed from her face, for a time she lay unconscious on the ground. For more than seven days officials tormented her to reveal her accomplices; they refused even to let her sleep. Finally, she and Nicholai were sentenced to be hanged, and a youth of 18, who had tried to help her to escape, was exiled to Siberia for ten years. For another week they imprisoned her; she expected every hour that the gaolers were coming to escort her to the gallows, but imperial clemency was extended to her: the sentence was commuted to life-exile in Siberia.

Miss Sukloff's description of the regular prisons, forwarding prisons, of the hospitals, and of the Siberian *étapes* or stages, is depressing. They were overcrowded, built to accommodate perhaps 25, but from 70 to 100 were frequently thrust into them; all were filthy and verminous, evil-smelling, sometimes unheated even in the wintry cold of Siberia. And this in the year 1906. The revolutionary network seems complete: wherever the prisoners moved, they seemed to have friends, men and women who knew what they had done and why, and who rushed to demonstrate in their honour. Thus at Omsk, workmen knew from the railway authorities when the women prisoners were expected. Their car had been side-tracked, but workmen seized a locomotive and started a search for them. The prisoners' train was followed by thousands of people who shouted themselves hoarse; rich women took off jewellery and flung it into their car. The instructions issued to the military were to shoot the prisoners if a rescue should be attempted, but an officer informed the women they would not obey the order. Nevertheless, a conflict between the military and the people was imminent, and finally the women were per-

* *The Life Story of a Russian Exile.* By Marie Sukloff. London: Wm. Heinemann. 1915. 6s.

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mitted to address the crowd, whom they asked not to attempt a rescue, as they desired to avoid bloodshed. For miles the people followed the train on foot, waving red flags and singing revolutionary songs; peasants left their fields and flung flowers into the car; night was far advanced when the demonstration ended. At other cities there were similar proceedings, but alas! the train carried the women into the long winter and darkness of Siberia.

British people are mostly very ignorant of Russia, and the impression usually conveyed by officials is that the revolutionaries are mad, the women a species of hooligan who hardly deserve to be counted. But who were the six who had achieved or attempted assassination, whom the people acclaimed as heroines? One was a daughter of a general; she had attempted the life of the Chief of Police at Minsk during a Jewish pogrom. Two were teachers who had shot generals busy suppressing peasant revolts. Another was the wife of a mayor, who attempted a wicked Governor's life. One was a dressmaker in charge of a bomb factory at Odessa. The sixth was Miss Sukloff. She has precise facts to give us touching the state of affairs in Siberia. Women prisoners are often violated by degraded soldiery; they are murdered when they resist. The money that ought to be spent on the upkeep of prisons and on prisoners' clothing and food, is frequently stolen by prison officials.

The way of social reformers in every land is hard; not least so that of women reformers. It is difficult to believe that after the present war, governments can continue with the disabilities of women crying for removal, their wrongs urgently demanding redress. We may console ourselves with the reflection of Mons. Jean Pinot, that very slowly the State begins to reconcile itself to justice. It is not impossible that one result of the present disastrous war may be a fuller recognition, even on the part of Russia, of the needs of the people and that the word people must be taken to include both sexes. Miss Sukloff effected her escape from Siberia a second time; she still considers the cause of the Russian people one for which to live and die; the book closes with the expression of her desire to continue the fight for freedom. Every year the fight against it increases in difficulty. We learn incidentally, that when Plehve, Minister of the Interior, was assassinated in 1904, after he had vowed to wipe out revolution in Russia, the prison authorities were greatly elated at the death of their chief. Miss Sukloff has the appearance of an exceptionally fascinating woman; it assisted in her numerous escapes. On one occasion a Colonel and several officers lent her valuable help, the former remarking, "I do not agree with your ideas, but as a man, I highly value heroism in people, particularly in women." A growing sense of justice is undermining authority. It may be compelled ere long to base itself on the people's will. May the Czar be able to add *Le roi le veult*.

It is well for us to remember that Russian bureaucracy is riddled with German influence, which fights hard against reform and increased liberty. It works to prevent the realisation of constitutional government as embodied in the Duma. Three provinces in particular, Livonia, Courland, and Esthonia, supply the worst of the aristocratic and Junker element. The Russian Court has suffered from German influence. The fact that the Czar has placed himself at the head of his armies must be taken to mean that he now stands for the liberation of Russia; that he accepts the Duma and all that it stands for. It is for women to note the great contribution their sex is making to the realisation of Russian freedom.

C. S. BREMNER.

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CHRISTMAS AND GOODWILL TOWARDS WOMEN.

Christmas comes and goes, and brings messages of goodwill and otherwise. Foremost in all hearts is the desire to prove in some practical fashion how deep is the public sympathy with the men who are suffering so much hardship and danger in the nation's service. We read of entertainment lavishly supplied, money and food collected, arrangements made where possible to supplement the cold hospitality of officialdom; and foremost in all this wealth of endeavour we find women. Women of all ages and all classes, all creeds and all parties; women organised and isolated; women of leisure and those whose lives are struggling and busy; but all animated with the same desire—to show goodwill towards men.

There is very little evidence of a similar tendency on the part of the other sex. Crime and vice of various kinds have largely decreased since the outbreak of war; but the dreary tale of women murdered and assaulted, of children outraged, of magistrates inflicting sentences for these acts which are a studied official affront to every member of our sex, shows little diminution. Indeed, one might almost say an increase; for, as a set-off against the tendency to regard every man in a sentimental light, as a potential wounded hero, magistrates and judges are adopting an extra degree of severity towards women.

At Clerkenwell Police Court recently, Mr. D'Eyncourt (whose record in regard to women is well known to suffragists) gave an elderly man who pleaded guilty to being drunk and disorderly, and who had a long list of convictions, the chance of finding sureties to be of good behaviour. No word of rebuke was administered to this man, who was an impudent humbug of the whining class. A woman, charged with the same offence, of previous good character and never before in trouble, was addressed by this model of judicial propriety in the most insulting manner, and told that if she came before the Court again she would be very severely dealt with.

A woman, living in one room with three children, was brought up, apparently, on account of the dirty condition of the children. The doctor who reported on this case had, it appeared from his evidence, been to the woman's room to make his observations on her habits of living. He stated that the children were not clean, one was verminous, they were poorly nourished, the woman had not got nice ideas of personal decency, as she was not properly clad, and her moral tone did not seem to be very good. There were dirty clothes tossed on the bed, and accumulations in corners.

Now, this woman lived in one room with three children on 17s. 6d. a week. We do not know whether the doctor went alone to pry into her arrangement and find fault with her attire and object to the dirty clothes on the bed. We wonder what other accommodation she had for dirty clothes; if put out of the way in corners, they become "accumulations." We protest against any man, be he doctor or not, being allowed to intrude on a woman's privacy in this way, and would like to know whether any other woman was present and whether the woman had notice of his coming? As for the children being poorly nourished, we wonder what is expected on 17s. 6d. a week to keep four persons? The money came from the woman's father, who is with the troops; and it subsequently transpired that this man was the father of two of his daughter's children.

Result:—The woman declared to be feeble-minded, the children taken from her, her liberty taken away. The evil beast who debauched and

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Friday, December 31. — DESPARD ARMS, 123, Hampstead-road, N.W. Christmas Party, 7-10 p.m. Admission by "Pound" gift for restaurant. Music, games. Mrs. Despard will welcome guests and Miss Boyle will speak on "All Sorts of Things." 1916.

Monday, January 24. — LANTERN LECTURE, on "Poland: Past and Present," by Mademoiselle Marie A. Czaplicka, at the Ashburton Club, 28, Red Lion-square, W.C. (within 3 minutes of Holborn, Southampton-row corner). Chairman, Mrs. Despard. Tickets, 1s. (numbered and reserved), and 6d., from W.F.L. Office, 144, High Holborn, W.C.

Wednesday, January 26. — PUBLIC MEETING at Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., 3.30.

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. Re-opens January 8.

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PROVINCES.

Saturday, January 1. — PORTSMOUTH. Whist Drive, at 17, Lombard-street, 7.30 prompt. Tickets, 1s. each.

January 11. — PORTSMOUTH. Members' Meeting at 17, Lombard-street, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Speck.

Christmas and Goodwill Towards Women. (Concluded from Page 874).

ruined her, still at large to pursue his vile course, and to pose as a hero. What amount of vice is necessary to divide it from "feeble-minded" and make it a plea for freedom has yet to be decided. We fear it is a question of sex, as usual; and, so far, all our forebodings in regard to the administration of the Mental Deficiency Act have been justified. It will never be used against men. It is another weapon for the coercion of women.

A servant girl left an illegitimate child out at nurse and could not pay for it. The woman in charge handed it to the Guardians. The mother was found, working at a job that just paid for her food and keep, and with one penny in her possession. She got two months. A husband who deserted his wife and children and left them, for all he cared, to starve, is run to earth in the Army; and because he had not been doing his duty and maintaining his family at the time of his enlistment, and had evaded the law so that a maintenance order had not been made out against him, he not only got no punishment, but the wife was denied the separation allowance.

At the Sussex Assizes Private Boyd, married, and Kate Grinstead, were brought up on a bigamy charge. The girl knew Boyd to have a wife, but married him. Mrs. Boyd read of the affair in a letter to someone else; and the case was brought. Boyd "promised to become teetotal," and was bound over. Kate Grinstead was sentenced to a month's imprisonment! The judge remarked, with that good taste which characterises judicial utterances, that she seemed to be one of those young women who had gone crazy about soldiers. It is, unhappily, not women only who have done this. The epidemic has reached even to the Bench.

We hear a great deal about "scraps of paper" these days, and about the sacredness of a pledge given by the Prime Minister. No account was taken, however, of the pledge to women "married on the strength" and entitled to military quarters. They were bundled out of quarters and left to the mercy of rising rents, very soon after the outbreak

of war, i.e. when they most needed the protection of quarters. Now Mr. Long, who protects the babies by postponing the application of the Pure Milk Act, has instructed Boards of Guardians to "modify" the arrangements made for the British-born wives of alien enemies. A "pledge" was given—just as sacred as the pledge to Lord Derby and his married men—that these women, so basely robbed by male legislators of their birthright, were to have certain allowances when their husbands were interned. Now, Mr. Long says that they are not to have these allowances if work can be found for them. They are not to be allowed to look on this pledge as a provision for their need; they are to be driven out to work, if work can be found; they are not to be allowed to refuse it; indeed, the allowance may be disallowed if the Guardians think the women are not making enough effort to find it for themselves! Verily, a pledge is a pledge," as Lord Derby said; but only when it is made to men and voters.

The Camberwell Borough Council appealed to the Local Government Board against the district auditor's refusal to pass certain allowances promised (and paid) to the wives of employees on active service. The ex-Mayor reminded the Council that Mr. Long, in the House, had said that all promises in relation to allowances would be faithfully kept. We fear the Camberwell Borough Council has a rude awakening before it, seeing that it is the wives of absent men who will be the sufferers. Mr. Long will most likely treat them as he treated the others; and the Prime Minister will smile approval. The only thing likely to touch the political heart of these gentlemen is the sad plight, not of the poor wives, but of the Camberwell councillors, who will have to pay up the amount paid out, if Mr. Long throws them and their promises overboard.

We have yet to hear of any widespread desire on the part of men to lighten the sufferings of women and to spare them injustice and indignity. The national provision—or want of provision—for maternity cases, and the hideous death-rate among babies, is proof of this, if proof beyond the ordinary laws and their machinery of administration were needed. In the *Daily News* of December 28, dealing with holiday matters, we find the heading: "Holiday Season and Drunkenness: Large Percentage of Women Charged." In the third of a column devoted to this matter there is not a tittle

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of fact to back up this statement. The only remote reference to it is that at Woolwich (where there was heavier drinking than on previous holidays), "the principal offenders were soldiers, women, and visitors to the district." The false suggestion made to the public is undefensible, and only to be explained by the fact that the case against women is to be prejudiced whenever and however possible. Whatever else this sad Christmas has brought us, it has brought no change of heart towards women on the part of men. Peace and goodwill are empty words where we are concerned.

C. NINA BOYLE.

WOMEN IN WAR TIME.

Dentists in Demand.

The Royal Dental Hospital, Leicester-square, London, is marching with the times in its recent decision to open its doors to women students. Hitherto the National Dental Hospital (Dental Department, University College Hospital) has been the only dental hospital open to women. Women may obtain the Licentiate of Dental Surgery conferred by the Royal College of Surgeons; the necessary qualifications are matriculation, two years' mechanical work, and two years' hospital practice; the Royal Free Hospital (London School of Medicine for Women) is open to them. Women dentists are in demand, as many practitioners have already received commissions in the Army and many dental students have enlisted. Women have

shown keenness and ability in dentistry. The gold medal for the best student of the year has been won by a woman two years running, and, according to an account in the *Times* of women's increasing success in the profession, "in a recent examination in histology a woman student obtained 98 per cent. of marks, the men students' usual average being between 70 and 80 per cent." In their practical work the women have established an excellent record. Women dentists are being sought for school clinics; the advertised salary for these posts is £250 per annum.

Dairy Work.

To encourage more women to take up dairy work the Agricultural Committee of the Somerset County Council offers ten dairy scholarships tenable at the Midland Dairy College, Derby, or the Lancashire Dairy School at Hulton.

Police Officer.

Mrs. Alice Monaham has been appointed first police officer in the City of New Orleans.

Women and Political Economy.

Berlin costumiers are protesting vigorously against the new sumptuary law which forbids women to wear wide skirts owing to the waste of material, amounting in some instances to 60 or 80 per cent. "It is absolutely untrue," says one of the leading costumiers in a letter to the *Tageblatt*, "that the extra material used is 60 per cent. At most it is only 25 per cent." He adds that a return to last year's narrow skirt would spell ruin to costumiers and to large numbers of women whose livelihood depends on a revival of the business.

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