

THE VOTE
Dec. 18, 1914.
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LÆSEFORENING
LACK OF VISION.

THE VOTE

THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOL. X. NO. 269.

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FRIDAY, DEC. 18, 1914.

Edited by C. DESPARD.

OUR POINT OF VIEW.

A Women's Hospital Sunday.

Miss Harvey is inviting those who are interested in Brackenhill Hospital to come to look over it next Sunday afternoon, December 20, and will be pleased to send invitation cards to readers who will apply to her at Brackenhill, Highland-road, Bromley, Kent. Each guest is asked to bring a Christmas gift—a toy for a child, a garment for a woman, or a donation—large or small—to the general funds of the hospital.

Mrs. Thomas Atkins and her moral adviser.

Reference will be found in another column to the miserable subterfuge—it is neither an explanation nor an apology—which has been issued to the Press respecting the benevolent intentions of the Government in regard to the police surveillance of soldiers' wives. Protests against these proposals have poured in from various organised bodies of women workers and other associations. The Women's Local Government Association, a *doyenne* among women's societies, has forwarded an admirably worded protest to the Prime Minister, Lord Kitchener and to Mr. McKenna:—

"We see," write the signatories, "that the revised circular issued by the Home Office directs that a woman who has got drunk once, or even oftener, on her Army allowance should not at once be arrested and charged, but should be warned, and that only when it is clear that no warning will be effective should a charge be proceeded with."

"We venture to represent that by these well-meant proposals an indignity is offered to a vast number of self-respecting persons who are in no need of guidance from the State as regards their personal conduct; for to entrust to the police investigation into the lives of persons who do not belong to the criminal classes is to deprive the law-abiding of a just distinction. In the case of individuals who are inclined to drink, it is questionable if it is advisable to suspend the operation of the ordinary law and thereby to remove an ordinary deterrent, and instead to bring into their lives a supervision which cannot but lower them in the eyes of their neighbours."

"The indignation so widely felt at the Departmental proposals here referred to would seem to indicate that they would check recruiting; and indeed most men would be loth to subject their wives or other dependents to police surveillance."

Medical Women.

Tribute has been paid in the French Press to the excellence of the work done by English women doctors in France, several hospitals in the war area being officered entirely by women. The Scottish Women's Hospital, initiated by the Scottish Feder-

ation of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, has left England for the Chateau Royumont, 12 miles from Chantilly, which has been gratefully placed at its disposal by the French Government. The unit consists of three surgeons, under Dr. Ivens, of Liverpool, two physicians, and a woman doctor specially qualified in X-ray work, and includes ten trained nurses, dressers, cooks, etc., necessary to staff a hospital of 100 beds.

It is not only at the seat of war that women doctors are wanted. Owing to the large number of physicians and surgeons who have gone to the front, there is a great demand for the services of medical women. Writing to the *Times*, Mrs. Scharlieb, who has been in the medical profession for nearly forty years, urges women to study medicine, pointing out that the demand for the services of women doctors is an increasing one and, at present, greatly in excess of the supply. The missionary societies are unable to obtain a sufficient number of medical women to staff their hospitals, while a similar difficulty exists in the case of various departments of the public service in this country. "I venture to think," she writes, "that no career could offer greater happiness and satisfaction to a woman, nor greater opportunities of practical usefulness, than medicine." It is not only to the girls who have just left school that she makes her appeal. "I should like to point out," she proceeds, "that women medical students need not of necessity be very young. The more mature woman has certain great qualifications for the task; her verbal memory may not be so strong as that of her juniors, but her trained mind, experience of life and general *savoir faire* are of considerable service to her as a student and still more as a practitioner."

In 1874, when the London School of Medicine was founded, there were only two women (Dr. Elizabeth Garrett and Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell) on the British Medical Register; there are now 1,000. In London alone, four hospitals are entirely staffed by medical women in addition to the Royal Free, which has a mixed staff. At the present time, owing to many young men, who, in normal times, would have begun their medical studies, being at the war, there is a shortage of men students, which will connote a shortage of doctors in five or six years. If women are to take their place in the medical service of the community of the future, they must prepare themselves for that career by becoming medical students.

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Degrading.

Suffragists have had some experience of the methods of Mr. Mead, the police-court magistrate at Marlborough-street. But we believe that there are others besides Suffragists who will strongly disapprove of his latest official pronouncement. A Belgian young lady was arrested for causing an obstruction by selling newspapers in the street, whereupon this Daniel came to judgment enquires why the girl's father "degrades" his daughter by allowing her to do so. The father replies that the heinous act of which his daughter has been guilty is not considered "degrading" in Belgium. We can assure this Belgian gentleman that neither is it considered "degrading" in England, and that girls and women quite as "respectable" as Mr. Mead's daughters (if he has any, which, for their sake, heaven forbid) have for years sold Suffrage papers in the streets, and have been honoured for doing so. And we feel that it is very "degrading" to the people of this country that one of the honoured guests of the nation should have been so insulted.

Wednesday Afternoons at the Suffrage Club:

The subject of Mr. W. L. George's address last Wednesday afternoon was "Women and War." The speaker divided women into three classes—anti-Suffragists whom he did not wish to discuss, Suffragists, and neutrals. He considered that the question of Women Suffrage was more important than a European war. This war, like all other wars, will pass, but the woman question will not pass. Mary Wollstonecraft lived before Napoleon and raised the same questions which Suffragists were emphasising to-day. Mr. George confessed that the neutral class of woman filled him with despair—the woman who tacked herself on to men and knit her soul into the socks she was so busily making! But Women Suffragists were a thorn in the body politic; they criticised and protested against the Government's treatment of soldiers' wives. Mr. George thought that our national psychology would be somewhat changed after this war. There would be the return of the heroes to whom national and personal homage would be given and militarism would be in the air. The lecturer considered that it would be well for women to fight the spirit of militarism in advance, to steal a march on it and to demand at once from Parliament a Bill for Woman Suffrage. Suffragists were in possession of something good, for they were the only people in England who were not talking about war.

Referring to the war, Mr. George thought that Suffragists should take up an anti-war attitude. The present war had been arranged between thirty men; it was a conspiracy of diplomats. He hoped that this would be changed in future, and that women would work against our system of secret diplomacy, and would urge that war should be declared by Parliament only. The flag was a fine thing, but if we could purify the Empire first we should be more proud of it.

A discussion ensued in which some of those who took part dissented strongly from some of the views expressed by Mr. George. The chair was taken by Mrs. Huntsman, who declared that the Women's Freedom League was always glad to have Mr. George on the platform. The League did not necessarily agree with Mr. George's views, but the fact that he was such a staunch Suffragist made his opinions always well worth listening to.

Miss Anna Munro asks us to state that an error crept into the report of her speech at the "At Home" at Clapham last week. She protested against the insult to soldiers' wives, but did not say they should refuse to register as they are not consulted.

Women's Freedom League.

Offices: 1, ROBERT STREET, ADELPHI.

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AT HEADQUARTERS.**Mrs. Despard's Southern Tour.**

Our President will be in Bournemouth on Friday, January 15th, when she will speak at a meeting at Freedom Hall, West Cliff Gardens, which Mrs. Hume has very kindly lent to us. The chair will be taken by Mrs. Hume at 8 o'clock. The next afternoon, Saturday, Mrs. Despard will speak at a social gathering arranged by our Southampton branch. We hope that any of our readers who may be staying in the South in January will not fail to take this opportunity of hearing our President.

Our Belgian Party.

We strongly advise all readers who wish to attend this party at Caxton Hall, January 7, to purchase their tickets at once, as we cannot promise that they will be sold at the doors. We shall be entertaining three hundred Belgian refugees, and cannot, therefore, admit more than a certain number of our other friends. Mrs. Fisher will be glad to receive toys or other presents for our Christmas Tree, puddings, cakes, etc., for the buffet, and names of volunteers to help in children's games. A very attractive programme of musical and dramatic entertainments is being arranged, in which Belgian artistes have promised to assist us, another feature being a speech by a Belgian soldier on the present war. The party is from 3.30 until 10 p.m., and tickets for it can be obtained from the W.F.L. office at 6d. each.

Christmas Presents.

We have many charming presents left over from the recent sale at Eustace Miles' Restaurant. They can be purchased in our front office, where they are now on view. We have also a splendid assortment of goods in our merchandise department. This is in the charge of Mrs. Snow, who cordially invites readers to inspect this department at an early date, and to make their purchases before Christmas Eve, if possible.

W.F.L. Calendars.

The sale of the calendars has been so great that there are only a few left. Will those who wish to obtain a copy kindly let me know at once, as if the demand is sufficient I will order a reprint. All applications must be received by the first post on December 21.

Christmas Holidays.

The W.F.L. office will be closed from Thursday, December 24, at 1 o'clock, until Tuesday morning, December 29, at 9.30. The merchandise department, Room 28, will be open Monday morning at 9.30. F. A. UNDERWOOD.

IN MEMORIAM.

We regret to announce the death of Mrs. Lucy Smith, widow of Mr. George Frederick Smith, and mother of our valued sub-editor, Miss A. A. Smith, to whom the members of the Women's Freedom League will desire to offer their sincere sympathy.

OUR TREASURY.**NATIONAL FUND.**

Amount previously acknowledged: October, 1907, to December, 1913, £19,320 5s. 5d.

	£	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged ...	2377	10	5
<i>President's Birthday Fund.</i>			
Amount previously acknowledged 536	0	9	
Brighton and Hove Branch ...	5	0	0
Hornsey Branch ...	2	5	3
Middlesbrough Branch ...	11	10	
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Tufnell Park Branch (additional) ...	10	0	
Waterloo Branch (additional) ...	1	6	6
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Captain and Mrs. Walter Carey (additional) ...	2	0	0
Miss M. Watson Petty (collected) ...	13	6	
Mrs. Gandy ...	10	0	
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THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, December 18th, 1914.

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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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"FOR LACK OF VISION."

In these days of stress and toil and national testing, the words of the ancients—the men who stood before the world fearless, with their fiery message to deliver—come back to us with a new significance.

"The people perish," said one, "and no man layeth it to heart," and another, trying to embody in words the reason for the nation's sorrow, "the people perish through lack of vision."

To the men who govern our national destinies today that may seem a strange statement. Unfortunately they know nothing about vision themselves, and therefore they despise it. The people may suffer—perish is too harsh a word—but they create their own suffering because they lack the elements that are essential to success, wisdom, astuteness, skill to conceive and industry to create material wealth, power to train and support vast armies of fighting men to protect it. This is what the superficial person, who makes a boast of being practical, will tell us. He has been preaching his gospel for ages. But all the time, the same quiet voice has been speaking in the ears of those who will hear: "You are miserable; you are oppressed; you perish now in your multitudes, shot down as you stand with your comrades on the battlefield. Again, in your twos and threes, day after day, by hunger, overwork, deadly care and preventable disease, and comparatively few of you taste life's full fruition." Why? Chiefly because you lack vision. And if we ask what this means, these vision-haunted will draw us a picture of a world as different from ours as the fabled heaven is from the fabled hell. We shall remember some of them—Isaiah, Christ, St. John, our own Sir Thomas More, and with these many a modern prophet.

This is what they see, for vision is only intenser and more far-reaching sight; and they know that when the world has learned the truth, through it may be bitter and prolonged suffering, that which they have beheld in dream will become manifest.

Let us see if it will help us, who are not seers, to take the word in its better understood form, and to apply it to the present situation.

Something is lacking amongst us. We are in the midst of a common danger. The bitterness of sudden death, of separation, of deadly anxiety for those who have gone out to battle is upon us, and there is no doubt that the immediate result has been to draw us all more closely together in the general desire to help one another to bear the burden that weighs so heavily upon us all. Men and women, in the ordinary walks of life, have forgotten for the moment that which has divided them; classes and industries, and even rival churches, have met together on a common ground as fellow citizens, ready to make even costly sacrifices for the sake of their country. We believe that if the authorities—the War Office and the Home Department, or those who control them—had possessed imagination

enough to seize this enthusiasm at its height, if they could have put themselves in the place of the suffering and anxious women who have been called upon for the cruelest sacrifice of all, if they had made proper provision for the soldiers' and sailors' dependents, in all events, if they had even given sufficient care and consideration to the young men who are offering themselves for service, recruiting would have been swifter, and the mingled fear and indignation which is spreading like living fire amongst the brave women in our towns would never have arisen.

Vision, the gift of seeing below and through ordinary appearances, would have given our statesmen a perception which, long ago, would have saved us from war, and which now might have averted the worst calamity—mutual distrust. As it is, one cannot look back over the emergency measures that have been taken since the war began without grave misgivings.

The order regarding soldiers' wives has, in obedience to a protest from the House of Commons, been revised; one or two objectionable words have been removed; a ridiculously futile effort has been made to show that the women themselves are being benefited—an upper class benevolently considering the trials and temptations of a lower class, and shielding them in their own interests. How comforting! But cannot those who see understand the inner meaning of the order? And its motive? Let us not ourselves make mistakes. It is not cruelty that actuates the authorities, it is not even disdain; it is that which was behind all the stupid efforts to repress protesting women in the past—lack of imagination.

The order must be rescinded; nothing else will satisfy the women of the country. Still more objectionable are the military regulations that have been issued at Cardiff, against which we hope the whole nation will protest. What gives wings to our bitter indignation is the evidence it affords that the men in power are so void, not only of imagination, but of knowledge, as to act as if they believed that men required protection from women, where morality and good manners are concerned. Had they a spark of vision they would recognise the falsity of such a position. Every woman whom Society brands as "fallen" has been led to her ruin by a man. Here again we see the fatal effects of lack of vision.

It rejoices us to know that the women of Preston have risen in revolt against the Home Office order. The soldiers' wives there formed themselves into a committee, took evidence and succeeded in triumphantly proving that they had been grossly maligned. The men of Merthyr Tydvil refused to carry out the order. This shows that there is still some vision in the land. We hope other towns will follow their example. It would be good also to hear that the women of Cardiff, by defying the colonel in command and refusing obedience to his illegal order, would make their protest against the indignity put upon them.

For we must never forget that if there is to be an awakening, it must come from the people. We blame the authorities; but they are what the nation makes them. Professing to lead, they really follow.

Let us—the men and women of the country—purging our souls from bitterness, keep the vision constantly before us. Let us judge of our public men as they approach or depart from the highest ideal we can frame. Let us, in all our efforts to help, remember that Society is one; that we are members one of the other. Let us, exercising the holy gift of imagination, learn how to put ourselves in the place of our sisters and brothers, and presently before tired eyes the vision of "that better Eden" will open out, and the dream we have cherished through years of sorrow will become a reality.

C. DESPARD.

IN DITHYRAMBIC VEIN.

There are at least four books of war poems on the market, and so late as the present week I idly turned over the leaves of one of them, "Lord God of Battles," a war anthology, issued by Cope and Fenwick at 1s. Compiled by A. E. Manning Foster. The profits from its sale are to be given to the National Relief Fund, and I sincerely hope the sum thus earned will be considerable. The book contains many old favourites from Shakespeare's "This Realm, this England," down to Campbell's "Men of England who inherit" and Kipling's "Recessional." There are also poems inspired by recent events, such as Horace Vachell's

"Smite, England, to the tramp of marching men—

The rhythmic heart-beat of a world in pain.
Smite, hip and thigh, with flashing steel, and then

Unfurl thy peaceful banners once again."

And Henry Chappell's "The Day"—

"You boasted the Day, and you toasted the Day,
And now the day has come."

Both these have a fine martial ring in them, one that makes the reader see again the recruits drilling at Caterham Camp, on Hampstead Heath, and even in old squares in the heart of London.

But when some of our modern poets, Alfred Austin and Henry Newbolt, for instance, invite us to admire English laws, we must be pardoned if we exclaim "Anoint ye!" How can a man, a poet, a seer who sees to the heart of things, inform us, as does Alfred Austin, that "England's laws enfranchise half mankind." Mr. Newbolt is quite as far from the truth when he tells us of

"The race that strove to rule thine earth
With equal laws unbought."

When were the laws of England ever equal as between rich and poor, and even more notably, as between man and woman? It might be well for Mr. Newbolt to study our divorce laws before he makes so serious a misstatement. It makes one remember that old servant of the Carlyles, who briefly summed up poetry as all lies. Mr. Austin has passed over to the majority before English law has done much save benefit those who sat in the legislature. But Mr. Newbolt, we hope, has many years to live; he could scarcely do better than peruse the "Village Labourer," by J. L. and Barbara Hammond, and Miss O. Jocelyn Dunlop's "Farm Labourer." When he has studied these books he will then realize that our legislators by means of legislation euphoniously termed "Enclosure Acts," used their immense power to dispossess the English peasantry of their small holdings. This confiscation of the property of small holders, for practically it was confiscation, together with the growth of the great industry, is the real parent of our modern slums; our poets might as well call on us to admire the slums as admire their causes. Every poet should carefully study Dr. W. C. Earengy's "Woman Under the Law"; it is an eye-opener. If the writer had chosen as his title, "Woman Under the Heel of the Law," it might have been a trifle more appropriate. Then there are our shameful divorce laws, the worst that any civilised nation is afflicted with. Even Germany altered her marriage laws in 1900 and made them perfectly equal as between the sexes. I have myself written a small book, showing how infamous and shameless is English marriage law. I shall have pleasure in forwarding Mr. Newbolt a copy, so that he may understand why women object to English matrimonial law. It is well, too, to remember that there is no "equal

law" when it is so preposterously expensive that the poor cannot avail themselves of it, unless they are criminals; in that case they can enjoy law without being reduced to bankruptcy.

Most Freedom Leaguers know that the administration of the law, so far as women are concerned, has little to boast of. There are forms of justice; but in many cases, especially in the case of women, they are mere stalking-horses, pretentious humbug. The advancing of women's claim to citizenship has proved this up to the hilt. All civilised Europe has adopted the Code Napoléon except England; law has been cheapened, made more rational, based itself on great principles, on the public good. In England law is still almost feudal; it is intended for the rich and for men; it is administered by them as they understand justice. Their understanding takes for granted the submission of the poorer classes and of women. It is of good augury that women are wideawake at the moment, to such a point that further onslaught on their liberties is becoming more difficult. This has not, however, prevented the authorities instructing publicans this very month of November not to sell drink to women before 11.30 a.m. This ukase was the subject of a very clever cartoon in *Votes for Women*, in which the bloated *Drink Interest* laughs heartily at this new restriction; it will not diminish his profits, since men are his best customers. In almost every country a man's children have a right at his death to the legitimate portion, a certain proportion of his property to each child. In England this right does not exist; a man can disinherit his children and leave his wife with a pauper's maintenance, 5/- weekly. When next the divine afflatus visits a poet, I venture to hope it will not inspire him to admire English law, either as it stands on the Statute Book or as it is administered in the courts. Even the *Times* wants the Police Courts to be reformed.

How real, how heart-searching is G. K. Chesterton's "Hymn of War":—

O, God of earth and altar,
Bow down and hear our cry,
Our earthly rulers falter,
Our people drift and die;

The walls of gold entomb us,
The swords of scorn divide,
Take not Thy thunder from us,
But take away our pride.

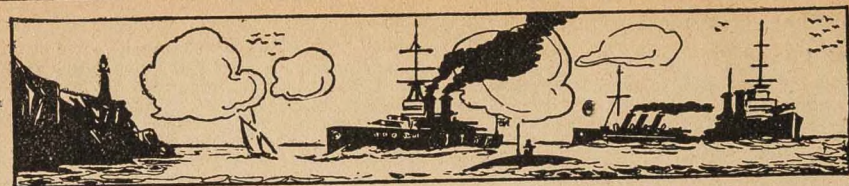
From all that terror teaches,
From lies of tongue and pen,
From all the easy speeches
That comfort cruel men,

From sale and profanation
Of honour and the sword,
From sleep and from damnation,
Deliver us, good Lord!

C. S. BREMNER.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE NATIONAL AID CORPS.

Through the kindness of Miss Harriet Newcomb, who wrote to the colonies on behalf of the Suffrage Societies at the beginning of the war, we have received another large packing case of clothes from Natal. The clothes in this consignment were all quite new, and bore the names of the Girls' Government School in Greytown on the various messages which were pinned to each article. A letter of acknowledgment and grateful thanks has been sent to the headmistress of the school. These clothes have been sent in sackfuls to Mrs. Perrimen for the Southampton poor, and Mrs. Terry for the poor of Croydon, and to Miss Townsend for the Finsbury district. Two families have been set up with warm underclothes for some time to come. A letter was received at the office on Friday from South Australia, where clothes have been collected by Mrs. Jeanne Young, advising us of eleven cases and bales of clothes which were on their way to our Corps, and two more cases are arriving shortly from Natal. It has been thought advisable to mark all clothes which are being distributed with the initials "W.R." to stand for War Relief, so that the pawnbrokers may be warned not to take any goods so marked.



Comforts for our Soldiers & Sailors.



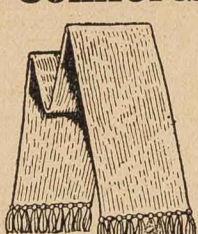
All-Wool Ribbed Seamless Half-Hose, Heather Mixtures, pair Post Free

Also 1/6, 1/5



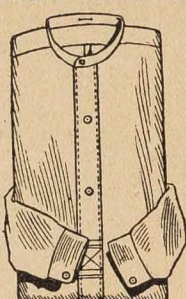
All-Wool Khaki Mittens, Post Free

Contractors to His Majesty's and the French Governments.



All-Wool Muffler, as Illustration, in Khaki or Navy. Post Free

2/6



Army Grey and Khaki Shirts, well cut Post free

4/6



All-Wool woven Khaki Cardigan Jackets, as illustration. A very useful Christmas Present. Post free

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All-Wool knitted Cardigan Jackets, as illustration. Thick and warm. Grey, Brown, or Khaki. Post free,

10/6



All-Wool Khaki Balacava cape, as illustration. Post Free

2/-



All-Wool Natural Colour Body-Belts as illustration. Post Free

2/- 1/6

We hold large stocks of these goods special prices for quantities. We can fit up a battalion completely, and at once, from stock.

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163, TOTTENHAM COURT RD., LONDON, W.

Any of these articles would be highly appreciated by our men at the front.

Write to-day for CHRISTMAS LIST OF PRESENTS.



MONTGOMERY BOROUGH'S CAMPAIGN.

Hon. Organiser: Miss Alix M. Clark.

The above campaign was continued with great success from November 24 to December 4. Miss Anna Munro spoke to a huge crowd in Newtown Fair on "Votes for Women." The chair was taken by Miss Alix M. Clark. On the evening of Nov. 24 the Wesleyan Church, Welshpool, worked up a splendid meeting for Miss Munro, who spoke on her work in London slumdom. She was listened to with rapt attention. Miss Alix M. Clark presided, and hearty votes of thanks were proposed by the Rev. R. V. Griffiths and seconded by Mr. Gledhill. A collection of £1 was taken on behalf of the Belgian Refugee Fund.

On Nov. 25 the Mutual Improvement Society organised a debate: "Should Women be Eligible for Parliament." The Rev. A. Davies presided. Miss Munro, in a fine opening speech, advocated that we wanted the wisest, sanest and most expert people in Parliament, irrespective of sex. A large number of people took part in the discussion, which became very animated. Miss Munro made a brilliant reply, and scored a big victory, winning the debate by 17 votes—40 being for and 23 against.

On Nov. 27, in Llanfyllin Town Hall, the Rev. L. Davies presided over a successful meeting in aid of the Belgian Refugee Fund. Miss Munro spoke on "Three Years in London Slumdom." Miss Alice Lowarch sang two songs, "Belgium" and "Land of Hope and Glory," in a charming manner, and Master Horace Evans sang the Belgian National Anthem. Miss Alix M. Clark spoke on the work of the National Aid Corps.

On Nov. 28 a very successful "At Home" was given to the members of the Mothers' Union and G.F.S. of All Saints' Church. A sumptuous tea was provided, which was much enjoyed, and Miss Munro spoke on "The Social Evil" and made a great impression. The chair was taken by the Rev. Evan Jones, and Miss Alix M. Clark made an appeal

on behalf of the Belgian Refugee Fund, which resulted in £2 12s.

On Dec. 2, in spite of the most inclement weather, a very good audience assembled in the National Schools, Churchstoke, a place hitherto untouched by the Suffrage Movement. A good quantity of literature was sold, and Miss Munro gave a very forcible address. The chair was taken by Miss Alix M. Clark.

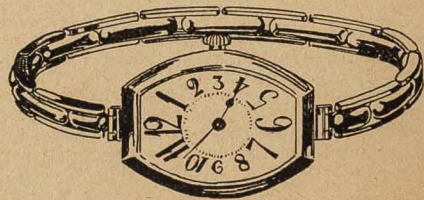
On Dec. 3 the Baptist Mutual Improvement Society invited Miss Munro to speak. The subject was "Woman, the Peacemaker." Mr. Percy Jones presided, and a successful meeting held.

Extract from *Montgomeryshire County Times*:—Upwards of £8 has been given to the Belgian Refugee Fund as the result of the campaign organised by Miss Alix M. Clark, hon. secretary for the Montgomery Boroughs Branch of the Women's Freedom League. Miss Anna Munro was the speaker throughout the campaign, and her lucid and illuminating addresses on various subjects have elicited the warmest admiration, and we hope Miss Munro will pay a return visit in the near future.

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



DARE TO BE FREE.

Friday, December 18.—W.S.N.A.C. Executive Committee Meeting, 3 p.m. Sunday, January 3.—REGENT'S PARK, noon. CLAPHAM COMMON, 3.30.

1915. Thursday, January 7.—CAXTON HALL. W.F.L. Party to Belgian Refugees, 3.30-10 p.m. Christmas Tree, Buffet, Musical and Dramatic Entertainments; many other attractions. Admission 6d. Get your ticket from W.F.L. Office.

Wednesday, January 13.—PUBLIC MEETING, 3, York-street, Jermyn-street, Piccadilly, 3.30. Speakers: Mrs. Despard and Miss Boyle. Chair: Mrs. Tanner.

PROVINCES.

Monday, December 21.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Formal opening of "Suffrage Centre." Musical programme, arranged by Madame Richardson. Short speeches: Mrs. Schofield Coates and Miss W. M. Jones. Refreshments; collection.

Wednesday, December 23.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Christmas Tree Party, organised by Juvenile Suffragists, at Suffrage Centre. Tickets 6d. In aid of W.S.N.A.C. funds.

Tuesday, December 29.—MIDDLESBROUGH. Suffrage Centre, The Arcade, Linthorpe-road. Whist-drive, 7 p.m. Tickets.

1915. Friday, January 15.—BOURNEMOUTH, Freedom Hall, 8 p.m. Public meeting. Speaker: Mrs. Despard. Chair: Mrs. Hume.

Saturday, January 16.—SOUTHAMPTON. Social afternoon. Speaker: Mrs. Despard.

BRANCH NOTES.

Brighton and Hove

At Lewes Assizes, which opened on Thursday, Dec. 10, under Mr. Justice A. T. Lawrence, we have seized the opportunity to vindicate women's right of entry to the public court. Two or more of us have attended every day, in mufti and in the uniform of the Women Police Volunteers. We caused considerable alarm on refusing to leave during the hearing of a certain case, and in subsequent cases the order became a request, and again a mere suggestion, and we had the satisfaction of being asked for information about court matters and about the W.P.V. by men, women and officials, both in and out of court.

It was noticeable that one or even two wardresses accompany female prisoners in the dock; the matron of the gaol was at hand on Saturday, spoke to us at the end of the session and wished the Corps all possible success.

Mr. Justice Lawrence made great efforts to dispense justice, but his discrimination between the relative values of life and property was of the usual distorted kind, and we heard a man who stole a clock from his lodgings given two years' hard labour, whilst a case of criminal assault on a child of 13 years—which the judge commented on as the worst case of its kind that he had come across—was punished by only 18 months.

There are still cases coming on that need our presence in Lewes, so there shall we be found until the conclusion of the catalogue, looking forward to the time of our official attendance at that court.

Croydon—Offices, 36a, The Arcade, High Street.

In spite of very wet weather, there was a fair attendance at the Social on the 9th inst. Mrs. Baker, of Purley, provided refreshments, and her daughters brought their cello and violin, and with their friends provided music and recitations. All enjoyed a delightful evening, and expressed their hearty thanks and appreciation.

A rainy afternoon on the 11th prevented a good attendance at our last public meeting before the holidays. An interesting subject, "Joan of Arc," was treated in a very interesting way by Mrs. Baillie. Miss Becher presided, and Miss Jessett acted as hostess.

On the 12th inst. the second whist drive of the season was held at the office. The object of these drives is to help our National Aid Corps work. Miss Becher, Mrs. Loveday and Mrs. Whyatt formed a committee to make all arrangements, with the result that all went very successfully. We thank them for their work, and are grateful to members for contributions towards refreshments. Two new members have joined this month.

The office will be closed on Wednesday, December 23, and re-opened on Monday, January 18th. During the vacation Miss M. Stericker has kindly promised to be at the office on Friday mornings from 11.30 to 12.30 for the convenience of those who wish to purchase copies of THE VOTE and merchandise.

The Wednesday socials for the wives of men on service will be continued.

Swansea.

Miss Nina Boyle has been conducting an energetic campaign this week-end in Swansea and the district around. On Friday evening, December 11, Miss Boyle spoke in the Central Hall. Councillor David Williams took the chair, and introduced Miss Boyle, speaking himself in cordial sympathy with the Women's Movement. Before the address, he announced Miss Boyle's other engagements, and described how the evening meeting had been made known. Much interest had been aroused in Swansea on the Tuesday and Wednesday of last week by the passage through our streets of a barrel-organ gaily decorated with the British and Belgian National colours. It was the advertising plan of Miss Dorothy Barrs, the organiser staying in Swansea at present, and she was helped by Mrs. Ross, Mrs. Wheatley, Mrs. Hutton, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Cunningham, Miss Lillian Phillips and Miss Jessie Kerr. While one helper played others distributed leaflets about the meeting or collected for the Mayor's Belgian Refugees' Fund. It was a very successful enterprise in the last respect, £6 17s. 9d. being handed over to the Mayor's Fund. Miss Boyle's address was listened to with close interest. She spoke of the special way in which this war is coming home to us, being so near, only 12 hours' journey away. Women had to pay the cost of war, too, in a very poignant sense, and yet to do so in a dreary, unromantic, undramatic way bearing the suspense and waiting. In a time when all were being asked to help the National cause, the Women's Freedom League was doing its part to help to stem the tide of distress, but it was keeping the Suffrage flag flying. Was not Sir Edward Carson proud to offer the help of his Orangemen and Mr. Redmond his Nationalist Volunteers to the nation? Was there not a Labour legion offering its support to national defence in South Africa? So the Women's Freedom League offered the patriotism of tried workers for the cause of freedom. They had been careful to avoid overlapping in the kinds of help given. They did not want in any way to hamper trade or interfere with employment. Miss Boyle gave a detailed and vivid account of the way in which the Freedom League, through the National Aid Corps, was filling gaps amidst the many forms of social service undertaken at the present time. First, the effort to supply good, sensible and well made clothing at a small cost to the children of the very poor. A great deal of this work had been done. In some cases garments had been given away, in others bought, sometimes by degrees, by the parents. Then there were the cheap restaurants for poor people, especially working mothers, where a really good meal could be secured for a penny or two. And then the Women Police! (Miss Boyle, of course, spoke from her direct experience.) They have a certain amount of training—in self-defence, in police-court procedure, and in knowledge of public affairs likely to be useful to a woman policeman. Miss Boyle showed how they have already been useful in many difficult and delicate situations, and are likely at an early date to receive official recognition. Miss Boyle indicated the many insidious ways in which women's freedom tends to be encroached upon in what is regarded as in the interests of the "defence of the realm," and urged that women should stand against such encroachments. She ended on the note of freedom for all—for both the sexes, for the small nations as well as the great.

Miss Boyle was ably supported by the second speaker, Mrs. Wheatley. The meeting passed off pleasantly, and though the attendance was not very large it was good considering the public pre-occupations.

On Saturday afternoon, December 12, Miss Boyle addressed an open-air meeting in Clydach, where, earlier in the week, Miss Barrs had arranged a meeting. Miss Boyle spoke from a lorry, and received an attentive hearing. She spoke very pointedly on the extravagance and shiftlessness of men in the domestic aspects of the nation's affairs. The various members who went to Clydach in support of Miss Boyle sold THE VOTE, Mrs. Soars being especially successful. The Branch is very grateful to Mrs. Soars for taking Miss Boyle out to Clydach in her car.

On Sunday afternoon, in a room at the Elysium Hall, Miss Boyle addressed another meeting, the chair being taken by Councillor Colwill. There was a good attendance, extra chairs having to be taken in from another room. Miss Boyle again received an attentive hearing. She is to speak again on Monday outside the docks.

Everyone has been struck by the vigorous personality of Miss Boyle. We have had notices of the Friday meeting, and of the street collection, in the local papers, and in Swansea, to quote one of Miss Boyle's most telling phrases, we feel that a demonstration has been given of how women "may be patriots because they are Suffragists, and Suffragists because they are patriots."

NINE ELMS RESTAURANT.

Will all those who have so kindly promised plum puddings and mince have them delivered at 1, Everett-street, Ponton-street, by December 18?

Glasgow Suffrage Shop: 70, St George's Road.

Once more one of our most valued members has had her furniture seized and sold because she has refused payment of taxes. At this time, when some timid souls advocate entire cessation of hostilities to the Government, we, of the Glasgow Branch, would thank our fellow member for her courage in continuing to hold our banner aloft and refusing to acknowledge, even in this emergency, the right of a male Government to tax unrepresented women.

"You will never make your Café Chantant a success at this time," so predicted the pessimists, but our energetic committee paid no attention to their gloomy forebodings. It was well that they turned a deaf ear to such sayings, for Friday's and Saturday's Café Chantant and sale was a brilliant success from start to finish. Both days a steady stream of people flocked into the amusements, and patronised the many stalls in the sale room to such good effect that by the end several stalls were sold out. Goodwill and enthusiasm prevailed from beginning to end, and everyone was determined to make her department a special success. The tea room was entirely run by our kind friend, Mrs. Hey, who, with her band of assistants, had no light task to perform. Everyone wanted tea, and so well were they pleased with what they got that they were generally to be found later on having a second cup. Our very grateful thanks are also due to Mrs. Miller, who entirely organised the entertainments. One after another, actor, singer or player, delighted the large audience. We, of the W.S.N.A.C., would like to acknowledge the deep gratitude we feel to those ladies and their assistants, both the artistes and the girls in the tea room, for their most invaluable help. Another lady who deserves our hearty thanks is the palmist, who was so busy that many were turned away disappointed, as the oracle could not receive them. The Café Chantant was opened on Friday by M. Verbuggan in place of Miss Cecily Hamilton, who is off to the front with the Red Cross sent out by the Scottish Federation of Women Suffrage Societies. Mrs. Wilson presided, and in a few words described the object of our Café Chantant, which was to raise money for our workroom at 70, St. George's-road, which employs women who have lost their employment owing to the war. M. Verbuggan expressed his pleasure in being there, and said how much, at this crisis, he sympathised with the women of all nations, because upon them must especially fall the burden of suffering and sadness. On Saturday, Provost Deane was in the chair. He said how deeply, at this time, he felt for these women who were fighting for their own special cause of Votes for Women, and knew temporarily they had to acknowledge that their Cause was in the background, but he admired exceedingly how they had risen to the occasion and, while not forgetting their Cause, came forward to serve the nation in its need, and this later would not be forgotten by the nation. He especially liked the idea of women helping other women to live by means of these workrooms. He then introduced Miss Murray, who delighted her audience with her bright and racy speech. She also heartily congratulated the Women's Freedom

League in the double work which it was doing, and said what pleasure it gave her to be there and to be able to do her share in such a noble work. At night, when the sale was over, much joy was felt when we heard that we had made at least £200. Our treasurer has worked incessantly, and we are all delighted to know that her work has been such an unqualified success. The Café Chantant owes much of its success to her and the energetic secretary of this committee; and to one and all who helped, we tender our thanks. We hope as many as can will visit our workroom and see for themselves what we are doing.

Edinburgh. Suffrage Shop.—90, Lothian Road.

At the last Branch meeting a discussion on "The Economic Independence of the Married Woman" was introduced by Dr. Aimée Gibbs, and taken part in by many of those present. This discussion centred mainly round the question of the desirability and the practicability of the married woman continuing to exercise her profession or trade. It was generally agreed that such a change involved many others, probably on the lines foreshadowed by Mrs. Gilman.

In order to help the Workroom Rent Fund, a portion of the window is now set aside for comforts, etc., given for sale. Contributions will be gratefully received, but socks, etc., will still be dispatched to the troops, if donors desire it.

Paisley.

On Tuesday, December 8, Miss Ada Broughton was invited to speak to the Renfrew Co-operative Women's Guild on Women's Suffrage. THE VOTE sold well, besides other literature.

A very successful parlour meeting, arranged by Miss Pirrett, who kindly lent her parlour for the occasion, was held on Friday evening, December 11, at Clydebank. Over a dozen women were present, and Miss Broughton explained the legal position of women. Two new members were made, and Suffrage literature was distributed and sold. Gratefully acknowledged:—2s. 6d. from Renfrew Women's Guild.

Hampstead.

On December 11 a drawing-room meeting was held in aid of the Women's Suffrage National Aid Corps at 2, Chesterford-gardens, by kind permission of Mrs. Sudd Brown. We had the great pleasure of having Mrs. Despard to speak for the Corps. By her inspiring address she gained much support and sympathy for the admirable work which she has instituted. Miss Munro explained the effect of the war upon women generally, and showed how necessary it is for Suffragists to take up the cudgels for the working women during this war, and to protest against their liberties being unjustly encroached upon. Mrs. Saul Solomon very kindly took the chair, and said how glad she was to find the Freedom League keeping the Suffrage flag flying at such a time as this. She had had the Cause at heart for many years, and she felt this was certainly not the time to let our Movement sink into the background. We are glad to announce that a substantial addition was given to the funds of the Corps.

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POSTPONED till December 18, at 7.30 p.m., Concert by Hope Squire and Frank Merrick, in the Memorial Hall, Manchester. Unfamiliar Works for Two Pianofortes. Tickets available or money returned by Messrs. Forsyth Bros., 126, Deansgate.

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