

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW.

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Telegraphic Address: "Adversaria, London."
Telephone No.: 1418 Gerrard.

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TO RULE OR TO SERVE?

A little while ago there appeared in a weekly publication a letter from someone who, though not a member of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage, was conspicuous as an Anti-Suffrage writer in the Liberal Press. He stated that in view of the work done by women during the war he was of opinion that the Liberal Party could no longer oppose Woman Suffrage. Few people stand absolutely alone in any views they may hold, and it is possible that others who find no cause to trumpet their opinions in the Press may be wondering whether the war has not in some way affected the question of votes for women. If this should be the case, it is important that Anti-Suffragists should take stock of the position, and examine the faith that is in them. First of all, let us see whether it is possible to make a dispassionate analysis of the circumstances in which the country is placed. We are engaged in a struggle for our national existence, with the result that a very large number of people of both sexes, profoundly stirred by the realisation of this fact, find themselves compelled to be up and doing. Now it cannot be regarded as a new discovery that our national life is made up of the activities of both men and women. In normal times four million women and ten million men are engaged in occupations. The remainder of the adult population, though classified in census returns as unoccupied, is not necessarily of the drone type. Certainly in the case of women, who form the bulk of those who are not credited with definite employment, the "drones" will be found to be comparatively few, if due allowance be made for woman's all-important rôle in the home. The outbreak of war makes an instinctive appeal to men and women to turn their energies into the one direction pointed out by the need of the State. Thus it comes about that all who are able to respond abandon their former work, men to join the Army, women to perform the supplementary work which a war entails. The country is proud

of its manhood which goes forth to fight; it is proud also of the way in which women have come forward to do their share. But there is no question of abandoning constitutional government in favour of a military despotism on account of the heroic deeds of Sir John French's Army and the troops on six other battle-fronts. Why then should there be any talk of feminine government, because women have shown themselves ready to serve the country in its need?

Those who adduce the work done by women during the war as an argument for Woman Suffrage must belong to one of two categories—if not to both—they must have ignored the value of women's work in peace time, or they must subscribe to the hopelessly illogical contention that willingness to serve implies capacity to rule. In the former category may be placed the Suffrage Societies, whose rôle it is to make light of what women do in existing circumstances, in order to emphasise the part that they could play, if they were given the Parliamentary vote. Those who have always opposed the grant of the franchise to women have been conscious of the value of women's everyday work, and have dreaded to see that work interfered with by the insidious lure of political activities. Such people have had their views confirmed by seeing the response made by women to the call of the war. They note the rational transfer of women's activities from domestic housekeeping to national housekeeping, from the sick-room to hospitals, or to hospital units for foreign service, from individual acts of charity to provision on a large scale for refugees or to interest in soldiers' and sailors' families. The list might be extended indefinitely. The war gave rise to a lot of work for women to do, and women have done it. Even where we talk of women doing men's work to liberate the latter for service in the Army, there is no new departure, though the circumstances may be different. From chain-making to mayoralties women and men have in individual cases been interchangeable within the limits of the physical capacities

of the former. The same restriction alone will determine their range of interchangeability in regard to making munitions of war, or acting as tram-conductors. No one, therefore, who in the past has weighed the arguments for and against Woman Suffrage, and has decided against it, can find in the conditions to which the war has given rise any reason for modifying the views previously held on this subject.

But, it may be urged by those who have been swept off their feet by the formidable list of women's activities during the war, there is a new factor, and that is the powers of organisation now displayed by women. Much might be said on this point. In the first place, there is no reason why women should not be able to organise. Secondly, the organisers are not always infallible judges of what constitutes organisation. But even if we grant that everything organised by women during this war has been a model of what organisation can achieve, how far does this fact take us along the road to Woman Suffrage?

The truth is that the war has dealt a very hard blow to the agitation for votes for women, and in place of the discredited appeals to our reason by which at first it was sought to obtain the franchise, we are now to have appeals *ad misericordiam*. Women, it is being urged on every Suffragist platform, have done so magnificently in this war, are they to be denied rights of citizenship when it is over? The answer, of course, is No; they are not denied the rights of citizenship at present, and there is no question of their being denied them in the future. Again, as women suffer so much more than men from war, are they not entitled to have a voice in decisions affecting war and peace? This appeal is not put so bluntly, for fear of emphasising the fact that the vote would give women the controlling voice in the State; but the sufferings of women in war time are enlarged upon, until some speakers persuade themselves and seek to persuade their audiences that suffering exists only at home, and is unknown on the battlefield, to the wounded or the prisoner. What the war has done is to lay bare certain elementary facts in regard to the State, which long years of freedom from any menace to our national existence had obscured. One of these is that, however much the national mind may be set on peace, the nation must be prepared to give battle at any time for its existence. It can, therefore, run no risk of allowing its virility to be undermined. This need of strength against the aggressor from without serves to emphasise the basis of physical force on which the whole State rests. In due course, we may hope, the nations of the earth will move towards greater righteousness, and the danger of wars will be diminished. But no thinking person seriously maintains that war in an imperfect world can be altogether eliminated, much as he would like to eliminate it. For a State, therefore, which has a position to maintain, and believes that it can do good in the world by means of the strength which it has acquired, it becomes a paramount duty to keep that strength unimpaired. The strength it needs for the eventual battlefield, or for the moral influence which speaks in virtue of the armed might behind it, can only be supplied by its men. For this reason the war rejects the claim of a few women that their sex should be allowed to rule the country, because it has shown a very natural disposition to serve it. As Agur the son of Jakeh has reminded us, of the three things for which the earth is disquieted the first is a servant when he (or she) reigneth.

NOTES AND NEWS.

The Women's Register.

The Women's Register grows steadily, and the daily Press speaks of women being drafted from it to actual occupation. Their numbers, it is to be feared, are small, for the Register still remains in the eyes of its originators a thing to fall back upon, rather than for immediate use. It is to be hoped that in the meantime those who have registered will not be content to leave the matter at that stage, but will turn their hands to the large amount of work that is always waiting to be done. In this issue we publish interesting accounts of the work at the Paddington Buffet, and of the activities of the Information Bureau. No one reading these accounts need fall back on the excuse of not having been called up. The call is all round and everywhere; there are innumerable ways of helping the country, and one does not need to go far before discovering one or more of them.

* * *

"Blind Mouths."

Controversy still rages in the Suffragist organs over the question of the Women's Congress at The Hague—a sure indication of the strength of the party which has seceded from the Executive Committee of the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies over the question. But neither in the letters that seek to justify the holding of the Congress, nor in the speeches made at a meeting to report upon it, do the apologists come to grips with the real point at issue. The proceedings, as far as can be gathered, were altogether vague and unpractical. There was no need for any one to go to The Hague to say that they preferred peace to war, or that war is a terrible evil. All that is granted, and it is granted also that one and all the belligerents want peace. What the members of the Congress and their Suffragist supporters in Great Britain do not tell us is whether they advocate that the Allied Powers should enter into negotiations for peace while the Germans are still in occupation of Belgium and Northern France, and whether they contemplate a peace before the power of German militarism has been broken. It is the old story: Talk, talk, talk—this time at 10s. a mouth—but all vague generalities.

* * *

A Straightforward Policy.

The difficulties that have arisen in Suffragist circles illustrate the wisdom of a society formed for a definite object not allowing itself to be allured to the right hand or the left in pursuit of some other object. To Anti-Suffragists this question is not without interest at the present juncture. The National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage was established for the express purpose indicated in its title. If it was difficult in peace time to resist the temptation to become interested in matters which seem to be the concern of all women, in this period of war, when propaganda work is in abeyance, it becomes a hundredfold harder not to associate the League in the public eye with some great philanthropic work, which might cover it with glory or advertisement. But the temptation in each case has been resisted. The League knows that its members are doing all they can for the country's cause, but it has set its face against any attempt to make profit for itself out of the war. It has lent its

organisation, as far as has been possible, for a worthy object, but in such a way that no glamour can possibly attach to it. Many members must feel that it would have been legitimate to have taken action on a more public scale, especially as Suffragists have sought to make their activities in war time a claim on the country for the grant of the vote. *Facilis descensus Averno*. The pursuit of advertisement has landed one society in adversity.

THE PADDINGTON BUFFET.

"They also serve . . ." and perhaps it is the more difficult part to stand and wait *patiently*. In any case, it is the willing duty of many women at this crisis of the world's history, not indolently, but with steadfast hearts and very busy hands, to help the sailors and soldiers who are fighting as much for their women as for their King and Country. Hundreds of these men pass through the great stations of London, and come to the buffets which have been opened for them, it may be for half-an-hour's rest between trains, or only a few minutes in which to drink a cup of hot coffee or tea.

One would not imagine that Paddington Station would see so large a number of the troops coming and going. But in one day of twenty-four hours over a thousand men have been served at the free buffet there, and the helpers are kept busy washing cups and saucers, and cutting plates of bread and butter, which vanish almost as soon as they are prepared. Good bread and butter pleases these "happy warriors" even more than cake or bun; they enjoy their food, and they are never downhearted. Perhaps their cheery optimism is their most marked characteristic. Occasionally one is touched by some unusual act of courtesy, such as the offering brought the other night by a sergeant who had been given a pass from Bristol to fetch fresh flowers from Covent Garden for the making of certain wreaths, and who had bought bunches of sweet-peas with his own money to present to the buffet, "to show that your work is appreciated, ma'am." The delicate blossoms of lovely pink and white peas were a symbol of a beautiful thought, and will long be remembered by the recipients. Sometimes one is amused. "You ladies must have got up very early?" asked a man at 5 a.m., and he was amazed at learning that they had not yet been to bed! It seems such a very small thing to do for these tired, thirsty, and hungry soldiers to keep the coffee hot and the tea urn going through the night, that one wonders how anyone can mind doing it, and one is glad to find that there is no lack of helpers to undertake this duty, and it is only the empty hours of the early dawn which are found trying, when there is "nothing doing." Then the busy knitters have the best of it, while the others must show their activity by polishing the spoons. Who could believe the interest and happiness there is in this very humble work of keeping a coffee-stall! And what adds greatly to the pleasure is the very perfect politeness of the guests towards their hostesses. How well this speaks for the discipline of the Army and the Navy, and how deeply grateful one is that this is so, needs no emphasis, for otherwise such work would be impossibly difficult.

Of course there are many problems of management not easily solved. How can one be economical where all wish to be lavish? How can waste be avoided where no average can be arrived at? A hundred or two hundred men may come in at one moment, while to-morrow only

a dozen, perhaps, in a whole hour. Some days are known to be busier than others, but next week all this may be changed. Your ten gallons of milk may hardly last you till the milkman comes in the morning, but another night it will have to be scalded to keep sweet. Cakes will keep fresh in tins, but bread becomes quickly stale, and no one is more particular about his bread than "Tommy." Again, tea that is flat is good for no man, but to throw away even a jug-full is wicked when one knows its present price. Like all other trades, this of keeping a coffee-stall needs care and forethought, and, above all, experience, to be successful.

Good will can do much, but common sense far more, and let no one take part in the business who is not physically fit and strong; for even to "stand and wait" requires good health and strength.

A WAR PROBLEM?

Rumour, we know, hath a thousand tongues, and a few weeks ago they were set clacking all over the country, and particularly in the Press, on the subject of the number of illegitimate births likely to result from the billeting of large bodies of men away from their families. After the first scare came a reaction; hasty enquiry produced indignant denials from many of the centres, and, as a matter of fact, the most reliable information to be obtained points to the fact that so far there have been very few cases which are directly attributable to war conditions. But, conversely, it has to be remembered that it is still too soon to base any conclusions upon what has actually happened.

A Conference called by the Women's Health Association on April 22nd was attended by Miss Pott, as representative of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage. At this meeting a resolution was passed that a Council of Investigation should be established, of which those present at the meeting should form the nucleus.

A further conference, at which Mrs. A. R. Colquhoun represented the N.L.O.W.S., was summoned on May 10th, and meanwhile the Archbishop of Canterbury had accepted the offer of Mrs. Creighton to form a strong committee for investigation. It must be understood that the terms of reference of this committee simply cover the alleged increase of illegitimate births as revealed by the returns of social workers, workhouse maternity wards, hospitals, and so forth. There is reason to anticipate that the result of the enquiries will be to negative the suggestion of an increase in illegitimacy, but for obvious reasons the data is extremely difficult to obtain. As Adelene Duchess of Bedford pointed out at the Conference, the maternity grant of 30s. now obtainable by insured women materially alters the position of the unmarried mother. Her own people will look after her in order to benefit by it, and maternity houses are springing up where women are taken in at these times with the prospective 30s. in view. The London County Council has just passed a Bill making such houses subject to registration and inspection, and it is desirable that provincial County Councils should follow suit. Unless the unmarried mother becomes in some way chargeable to public funds or private charity she is not, as a rule, traceable, nor is it easy to estimate what proportion of illegitimate children are really the offspring of soldiers.

At the same time the importance of protecting the children of the country is more paramount than ever at this time, and the moment may be opportune for some

efforts to secure greater security for illegitimate children, among whom the infant mortality rate is notoriously high. It seems likely that efforts to meet this evil will be the result of the present awakening of public interest in a question which is by no means new. The real novelty in the situation is the increased difficulty which unmarried mothers must experience in getting affiliation orders enforced. Moreover, it is well known that in many parts of the country marriage is customarily postponed until it is certain that a child will be born, and in these cases the expectant mothers will be frequently deprived of their chance of marriage by the departure or death of their child's father. Even should there be, therefore, no increase, or little increase in traceable illegitimacy, the incidence of it will be different.

A further conference of women's associations will be held after Mrs. Creighton's committee has reported, and will consider, in the light of that report, and of other information what action should be taken. The N.L.O.W.S. as a body does not take part in any work outside its own propaganda, but it will be represented on the conference, and should any individual members specially interested in the question be in a position to give information, it may be sent to Mrs. Archibald Colquhoun, c/o Miss Page, 515, Caxton House, Westminster. The class of information wanted at present is:—(1) Number of cases personally known, or reliably reported, of unmarried girls whose condition is credibly due to a soldier, with evidence upon which each report is founded. (2) Any cases of hardship due to difficulty in affiliating the illegitimate child of a soldier. (3) Existing machinery (i.e., hospitals, rescue homes, schools for mothers, etc.) for helping such cases. N.B.—Reports from London are not needed, as there has been no billeting in London, and information is easily obtainable in that area.

It is desirable that Anti-Suffrage women should interest themselves keenly and actively in the subject, because the whole question of marriage is closely bound up with the treatment of the unmarried mother. Attempts to minimise the disadvantages of being an unmarried mother are detrimental to the interests of the family, but at the same time much might be done to prevent the suffering and wastage of life which falls on the innocent offspring. The whole question bristles with difficulties, and can only be approached in a spirit of diffidence by those who appreciate it best. The present moment may not be a good one in which to attack the problem, but, since it has been raised, all those who hold strong views on the subject of marriage and the family must be prepared to take their share in the shaping of public opinion—the real arbiter in a question of this kind.

A STATEMENT issued at the end of April by the Agriculturists' and Horticulturists' Advisory Committee of the Lyceum Club announced that a resolution had been passed unanimously to the effect that the Committee were strongly of opinion that women's interests should have adequate representation on any body appointed by the Government to deal with land work. We are glad to think that, while the Committee was still wrapping itself up in anxiety for women's interests, more practical women had already accepted the Government's invitation, and were actually at work on rural committees.

Mrs. Pierson has a most comfortable house. She would be glad to receive officers or others. Terms moderate.—Baydale Church Circle, South Farnborough, Hants. [ADVT.]

THE WOMEN'S CONGRESS AT THE HAGUE.

The International Women's Congress at The Hague has come and gone. Owing to the misfortunes of the British women who were desirous of attending, the Congress secured the maximum of advertisement. Its proceedings were also reported sympathetically in the columns of the *Times*, and we may conclude from the various references made to it that those who were present considered that the Congress had justified its existence. According to the correspondent of the *Evening News*, the gathering came to an end "with an open row," and he adds that a "Stop the War" resolution to send delegates to foreign nations, to demand immediate peace was also adopted. The statement of the "open row" has been denied, and we are not concerned with the accuracy or inaccuracy of the remainder of the *Evening News* report.

Of more interest is the fact that just at a time when our enemies were perpetrating their worst horrors, in the use of poisonous gases and by sinking the "Lusitania," some 184 British women considered the moment opportune for meeting the women of the countries with which we are at war, on a footing of equality in regard to responsibility for the war. Persistent efforts have been made to throw dust in the eyes of the public in regard to this gathering. But no amount of quibbling will get over the fact that the essence of the Congress—as proved by the "general rule of debate," which vetoed "discussions on the relative national responsibility for or conduct of the present war"—was that *the members regarded all the belligerent countries as equally guilty in regard to the war.*

It would be well worth the while of the public to bear this fact in mind at a later date, when these self-same people, who tried to attend the Congress, and styled themselves the "British Committee of the International Women's Congress" become prominent again with their nostrum for the country's ills. In the ninth month of the struggle for our national existence, their mentality, to say nothing of their patriotism, could rise no higher than to regard the war as a senseless proceeding, for which Germany and Great Britain were equally to blame, and which might be stopped at once, if only the two Governments would consent to an amicable exchange of views. Even if they were to deny that this was their conception of the Congress, the repudiation would only in part rehabilitate their patriotism at the expense of their intelligence.

The significance of the Congress did not consist in the circumstance of a number of women meeting to discuss or demand peace, but in the fact that it originated with British Suffragists, and was carried through with the support of most of the leading Suffragists of Great Britain. In the hope of covering up their traces, the legend was started of the Congress being called by "the women of Holland" (letter to the Press from the British Committee). This particular untruth has been nailed to the counter in the *Common Cause* by a correspondent, who asks, if the Congress was arranged by "the women of Holland," for what purpose did the Honorary Secretary, the Parliamentary Secretary, and the Press Secretary of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and Miss Macmillan hasten to Amsterdam immediately after the National Union council meeting to consider in an "informal conference of women the possibility of holding an International Women's Congress"? So far from the Congress originating with "the women of Holland," it

has been shown by one woman of Holland, quoted in the *Nation* (May 8th) that the idea was conceived by "the indefatigable" Miss Chrystal Macmillan, a member of the Executive Committee of the National Union, who did not allow the matter to rest until the Congress was a *fait accompli*. The extent of Miss Macmillan's dis-service to the National Union may be gauged from the fact that the secessionists from the Executive Committee include, with the exception of Mrs. Fawcett and Lady Frances Balfour, the most prominent members of the Union. On the British Committee of the Women's Congress were the following, who represent most of the motive power of Suffragedom:—Miss Margaret Ashton, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Lady Courtney of Penwith, Miss K. D. Courtney, Mrs. C. Despard, Miss I. O. Ford, Miss Eva Gore-Booth, Miss Emily Hobhouse, Miss Susan Lawrence, Miss Emily Leaf, Miss Mary Macarthur, Mrs. Eva McLaren, Miss Chrystal Macmillan, Miss Eva Macnaghten, Miss Catherine E. Marshall, the Hon. Lily Montagu, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, Miss A. Maude Royden, Miss Olive Schreiner, Lady Margaret Sackville, Miss Evelyn Sharp, Miss Mary Sheepshanks, Mrs. Philip Snowden, Mrs. F. T. Swanwick, Mrs. Charles Trevelyan, Miss Pictou-Turkervill, Muriel Countess de la Warr, Dr. Ethel Williams, Mrs. Zangwill, Miss Alice Zimmern.

Little wonder, therefore, that the controversy aroused by the Peace Congress in the ranks of the National Union should be somewhat bitter. If the remnant of the Executive Committee has taken no steps to fill the places of the secessionists, it must be because it knows that without them it will be nothing, and can do nothing. For this reason we may expect that, when the bickerings have died away, Mrs. Fawcett will adopt measures for bringing the wayward ones back to the fold. Possibly she will be assisted in this step by the realisation on the part of the secessionists that the Congress, however magnificent the panegyrics poured on it, was particularly fatuous, even if it was not actually a huge mistake. Overtures for a reconciliation have been made, and with a fine disdain which does Suffragedom credit, the secessionists publish the terms on which they are prepared to allow themselves to be re-elected *en bloc* to the Committee. One of the faithful remnant has already appealed to Suffragists to face facts, by reminding them that "the unity of Suffragists on Suffrage is wonderful; their unity on any other subject is not calculable. When other questions (however vitally connected with Suffrage they may seem to us) are submitted to the Union, a decisive voice from the oracle proves, as Uncle Remus would say, to be 'powerful lackin'.'" (Mrs. C. C. Osler, the *Common Cause*, May 7th, 1915.)

Great is truth, and it will prevail. Women are to be given votes in order that their "point of view" may be represented.* Anti-Suffragists reply that there is no such thing as a women's point of view, any more than there is a man's point of view. Both men and women view things from a variety of points of view, and any woman's point of view will be shared by some men, whose interests may be identical with hers. Now we learn that although "the unity of Suffragists on Suffrage is wonderful" (most people would have regarded it as natural, but they can only judge from the outside), "their unity on any other subject is not calculable." What then becomes of the chief argument for the vote?

* "They (women) demand the vote in order that their special point of view may be brought into the service of the State."—(*The Common Cause*, February 20th, 1914, p. 884.)

HARMONY AND CONFLICT IN THE STATE.

By LADY GRISELDA CHEAPE.

There was a splendid article in the *Times* on this question, which showed that even Patriotism could be debased, as it has been by the Huns. I do not say the Germans, for I feel sure that in that country there are still good men and women who deplore the savage ravages of their countrymen who have gone mad and are causing such sorrow and misery in the world. But our countries are at war and we certainly do not see eye to eye.

Yet the one redeeming virtue of the Hun is his Patriotism, but this is leading him to do things which angels turn and weep at. "Gott mit uns," written by an undergraduate of Harvard University, U.S.A., who gained the Poetry Prize this year, shows the want of practical religion.

No doubt ye are the people: Wisdom's flame
Springs from your cannon—yea from yours alone.
God needs your dripping lance to prop His throne;
Your gleeful torch His glory to proclaim.
No doubt ye are the people; far from shame
Your Captains who deface the sculptured stone
Which by the labour and the blood and bone
Of pious millions calls upon His name.

No doubt ye are the folk; and 'tis to prove
Your wardenship of Virtue and of Lore
Ye sacrifice the Truth in reeking gore
Upon your altar to the Prince of Love.
Yet still cry we who still in darkness plod:
"Tis Antichrist ye serve and not your God."

This striking poem shows how without practical Christianity a nation of learning and of bravery can be misguided. Had the true practical Christian spirit been the lodestar of Germany, this war would never have been.

Men and women's views will always be divided, every individual needs different spectacles, but let all foci be directed to the Cross. Let Britain not be ashamed to recognise God. When Francis Drake came back it was a gala day and the village was *en fête*. Those were glorious days. We are proud of our past, but all the people turned out to go to church to thank God.

Miss H. Page (Assistant Secretary) would like to bring again to the notice of members the great need in some parts of London for visitors on behalf of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association. She would be very glad to hear of any one who would promise at least one day a week for this work.

A pattern of the gas helmets now used by our soldiers at the front can be seen, and directions as to making them given on application to the Assistant Secretary, 515, Caxton House, Tothill Street, Westminster.

THE LATE MRS. E. M. CASS.

It is not too much to say that by the untimely death of Elizabeth M. Cass the country has sustained a grievous loss. The plan she devised for the early relief of the wives and other dependents of soldiers and sailors has been widely noticed in the Press, and was very properly characterised as "a stroke of genius"; but it is doubtful if the rank and file of the Army and Navy are even yet fully aware of the great service she rendered them when she inaugurated the system which secured to every family immediate funds pending the later receipt of the separation allowance due from the War Office. In a vast number of humble homes her name has been blessed; and the least her sorrowing friends and assistants can do is to pay this last tribute of respect to her memory.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN NEW ZEALAND.

Last September Woman Suffrage attained its majority in New Zealand. Partly owing to the war, but partly also to the absence of any cause for enthusiasm, the anniversary did not attract much attention among Suffragists. But the country has recently been visited by a prominent Suffragist, Mrs. Philip Snowden, who sums up her impressions in the May number of *Jus Suffragii*, while another writer, Mr. J. T. Paul, contributes an article on the New Zealand woman and her vote to the *Socialist Review*. The two articles are interesting for the apologetic note struck in each.

"If it be true to say to the inquiring and sympathetic visitor to New Zealand," writes Mrs. Snowden, "that no special results of the women's vote are evident there, except in the one matter of the liquor traffic, there is probably a sufficient reason." Mr. J. T. Paul says:—"Looking back over the franchise period it is apparent that no revolutions have taken place, neither the fears of opponents nor the early hopes of supporters have been fulfilled." Mrs. Snowden finds the reason in the lack of "definite political idealism" on the part of the women, and adds that the men are in the same state. It is not a matter of surprise to learn from both writers that the women have no political party of their own which is not a "mere phonograph" of one or other of the political parties, "and quite useless for improving women's knowledge of social and political science," bluntly adds the writer in the *Socialist Review*. Women's influence on industrialism has not been remarkable, he states. "Many improvements have certainly taken place. . . . But it is a little astonishing to know that New Zealand has not one fully-employed woman factory inspector." It will be of interest to learn how Suffragists reconcile this fact with their frequent assertion that we can never hope for ideal industrial conditions in Great Britain until women are enfranchised.

Naturally, readers will turn to both articles for illumination on the problem of infant mortality, which forms the stock subject of all Suffragist platform references to New Zealand. They will be disappointed. The subject is not mentioned by either writer. The reason is obvious. Lady Selborne and others may delight ignorant audiences by the statement of what Woman Suffrage has done for New Zealand in the reduction of infant mortality, but anyone acquainted with the country and its conditions knows that Woman Suffrage does not enter into the question at all. Mrs. Snowden writes:—"The climate is delightful. . . . There is no poverty apparent, except such as is caused by drink and vice. Everybody can have work, and well-paid work, if he or she will go where the work is, and nobody need starve. It is verily a land flowing with milk and honey." It would be insulting to Mrs. Snowden's intelligence to expect her in the same article to mention infant mortality under such conditions as being comparable with the problem as it is presented in Great Britain. That specious argument she leaves to the intellectual charlatans who hawk Suffrage wares up and down the country before gullible audiences.

Both writers agree that the prohibition vote is largely the women's vote, and—most noticeable—both confirm the impetus given to log-rolling by a female electorate. Mr. Paul speaks of the potency of the women's influence consisting in "the politician's knowledge that women are

most easily influenced by an appeal to sentiment, and the astute political leaders have always been quite alive to the fact that nearly half the electors are women." Mrs. Snowden states the same thing somewhat more naively. "What is supposed the women will think is considered beforehand, and politicians eagerly rival one another in proposing political schemes which they think will please the women. This political spoon-feeding is not an un-mixed blessing."

Certainly in these statements regarding the women's vote in New Zealand, we fail to discover a single point which could reasonably be held to justify or even call for the constitutional change that would be involved in the United Kingdom. Perhaps nothing better illustrates the quandary of Suffragist apologists for New Zealand than two sentences in Mrs. Snowden's article:—"The value of the simple possession of the vote by women is illustrated over and over again. Men of notoriously profligate character do not venture to evoke the criticism of the women's vote." This statement is quite pointless, unless we are to suppose that Mrs. Snowden, in telling the New Zealanders of the disadvantages of only a male electorate in Great Britain, has informed them that the House of Commons is composed of "men of notoriously profligate character."

Strangely enough Mr. Paul adverts to the same line of thought, and here Anti-Suffragists must be content to find themselves out of their depth. "If Parliament is not yet composed of angels," he writes, "it is equally certain that its moral standard has not receded." If the House of Commons wishes to lose what the wife of Mr. Philip Snowden, M.P., seems to regard as its "notoriously profligate character," with the prospect of possibly becoming "composed of angels," it will have no excuse for not adopting Woman Suffrage.

THE Empire's Roll of Honour last month contained the name of Lieutenant G. R. Mitchell Innes, 19th (Royal) Hussars, who died on May 14th of wounds received near Ypres on the previous day. The heartfelt sympathy of all members of the League will be extended to the Chairman of our Executive Committee and to Mrs. Mitchell Innes in the terribly sad loss which they are called upon to bear "for King and Country."

THE Sidmouth and East Devon Branch of the League has lost a valued helper by the death of Mrs. Richmond White, who had been a member of the Committee since 1908.

Speaking at a meeting of the Ulster Centre of the Irish Women's Franchise League, held at Belfast on March 20th, Miss Dowling, of Dublin, made the following announcement:—

"Women Suffragists were entirely opposed to war of any description; they stood for peace. It was a shameful thing that men in the prime of life should be set like dogs at one another's throats" (*Belfast News Letter*, March 22nd).

It is, perhaps, not surprising that the only matter in regard to which women Suffragists are described as being in absolute agreement, apart from the demand for the vote, should, like that demand, prove them to be in direct conflict with the opinion of the country as a whole. The men and women of the Empire, as a whole, are unanimous in their support of this war and in their belief of the righteousness of our cause, and therefore of the necessity for our participation in the war.

To those who wonder that the perfervid zeal of our Suffragist friends leaves the country very cold we would commend Miss Dowling's subsequent remarks:—"She herself had refused on principle to volunteer for any kind of work under the Government scheme for women. If she was not to be trusted to put a mark on a ballot paper, she should not be considered fit to drive a motor 'bus or to do any other physical work." To Miss Dowling the franchise means just as much or just as little as driving a motor 'bus.

THE INFORMATION BUREAU.

The Bureau Committee report that at the May meeting of the Branch Secretaries and Workers' Committee a proposal was brought forward and approved to the effect that an effort should be made to secure a representative from each of the London and Suburban Branches, who should make it her business to go to the Bureau regularly, with the purpose of keeping her Branch in touch with the work carried on there, and so save the Honorary Secretaries any extra work in connection with it.

By the kind permission of Sir Bartle and the Misses Frere a meeting in furtherance of this project was held at 67, Westbourne Terrace on May 19th, which the London and Suburban Branch Secretaries were invited to attend. Mrs. Harold Norris took the chair, the other speakers being Mr. Chamberlain, of the Y.M.C.A., Mrs. Macdonald, and Miss Gladys Pott.

In an able and forcible speech Mrs. Norris described the work done by the Bureau since the beginning of the war; saying it was of high excellence, and suggesting the Bureau should be made a centre of expert work for providing the hospitals with various necessaries, such as swabs, padded splints, etc., etc., of which they are urgently and will be increasingly in need. To accomplish this, however, a band of regular workers would be required; ladies who would undertake to attend on a certain day or to send a substitute. The workers should be properly organised, under a competent head, so that the work turned out might be of the finest quality. Should this plan be put into practice, the Bureau could be made a working centre of real national value, and practical assistance to the country in its present desperate need, if the Branch Secretaries, or their representatives would give their active help in the matter by bringing it to the notice of members of their respective branches, and pointing out the vital and intensely necessary character of the work.

Mr. Chamberlain spoke of the work the Y.M.C.A. was doing for the troops, both overseas and in England, and expressed his indebtedness to the N.L.O.W.S. for their substantial help in this good work. The League, through its various branches and individual members, has given no less than six recreation rooms to the Y.M.C.A., of which the Bureau undertook to raise the money for two. One is already in use at Blatchington Camp, Seaford. About £110 are still needed to complete the sum necessary for the second; and it is hoped that the Secretaries of those Branches which have not yet contributed will ask their members to apply to the Bureau for collecting cards for this purpose.

Mrs. Macdonald gave an account of the interesting work she is carrying on in the East-End among the very poor, and expressed herself indebted to the Bureau for the help she had received in the way of clothes for her more destitute cases. She is, for the present, living at Bow, and she will heartily welcome any helpers—especially the younger members—who may be able and willing to devote some of their spare time to this work, which is of real value to the community, and therefore to the nation.

Miss Pott, in proposing a vote of thanks to the speakers and the Misses Frere, endorsed Mrs. Norris's remarks as to the work to be done at the Bureau, and said that spade work was the most important work, though not the most pleasant; but there was a great re-

ward in carrying something thoroughly through for the benefit of other people, and that having put out hands to the plough of patriotic work, we must not withdraw them till the need for it no longer exists.

On May 17th Miss Lindo-Henry gave a tea-party at her residence, 111, Walm Lane, N.W., with the object of collecting books for the Blatchington Recreation Room. Miss Henry invited her personal friends, and each was asked to bring a book or a shilling. Two hundred books were contributed, besides magazines, and in addition £3 in money. A member of the Bureau Committee, who happened to be among the guests made a short speech on the work and aims of the Bureau and its need of workers, with the happy result that several ladies came forward at once and offered their services. These ladies have already given most valuable help to the Bureau, and though not yet members of the League have expressed a desire to be enrolled as regular workers for and at the Bureau. The Committee would be grateful if any other members would follow this very successful example by having a book or games tea, the result of which would certainly add to the further attractions of the Seaford Recreation Room, and be of great assistance to the men.

An official appeal for the making of mackintosh bags for respirators was responded to at once by the Bureau, which has been able to turn out from 60 to 100 per day, including Sunday, May 16th, when the need was most peremptory. The output might have been greater but for the lack of workers on some days. From May 15th to May 22nd 700 bags were sent out from the Bureau, and had more workers been forthcoming, that number might have been doubled. This one incident alone will show the great need for more help, and the Committee are issuing a circular letter to Branch Secretaries embodying suggestions and asking their assistance in organising workers, in order that the Bureau may carry out efficiently the other work of like importance the Committee wish to undertake. The Committee are glad to state that all the bags sent out have been pronounced entirely satisfactory.

In addition to the above-mentioned work the Committee have pleasure in reporting that, at the requests of officers of two of the Battalions at Seaford Camp, 7 dozen pairs of socks have been sent to recruits stationed there. To the Church Lads' Brigade 1½ dozen pairs of small socks have been sent, which, the Chaplain writes, "will be of the utmost service." A large parcel of gloves, socks, and other comforts for mine-sweepers was sent to Lieut.-Commander Hart, who writes:—"They will be of great use and value, and are greatly appreciated by the men." A similar parcel was sent to Miss Agnes Fox.

In addition to Miss Lindo-Henry's contribution, generous gifts of games and books for the Blatchington Recreation Room have been received from Mrs. Wentworth Stanley, Mrs. Eardley Wilmot, Mrs. Whittick, Miss Godwin, and Miss Martin.

The Committee also desire to thank Mrs. Charles Smith and Miss King for their kind help in cutting out and preparing children's and girls' clothes. Miss King kindly provided the material for a print dress and aprons for a soldier's daughter going out to service. The Committee will be glad of further help towards this excellent work, and they will also be glad of more socks, for which there is a constant demand.

BRANCH NEWS.

Richmond.—Mrs. Dumergue, President of the Richmond Branch, writes: "Through the kindness of Mrs. Dalgarno Robinson, the Richmond annual business meeting was held at her house, Marshgate House, Sheen Road, on April 26th, at 8.15 p.m. Between 40 and 50 members were present in her large handsome music-room, including several members of the Kew Branch, with their Hon. Secretary, Miss Amy Stevenson, who never fails to show her sympathetic interest in anything concerning the Richmond Branch. The chair was taken by Mr. Jesty, our Hon. Treasurer, and the proceedings, once begun, went briskly, resulting in the re-election of our Committee *en bloc*, to the general satisfaction. Also I am glad to say our Hon. Secretary continues to be Miss Cassan-Simpson, and Mr. Jesty is still our Hon. Treasurer.

"For myself, I am proud to be re-elected President, and I trust I shall have opportunities of proving this and my zeal for the Cause during the Branch year just begun.

"It was indeed a boon to us all to welcome Miss Gladys Pott. She did us a great favour by her presence on this occasion, especially as she enhanced that favour by offering to come and address us. Her words gave us fresh spirit, encouragement, and guidance. Truly we can record a bright and successful evening, and we can look forward hopefully to the progress and welfare of our Branch, which entered its seventh year on St. George's Day.

"ANNE T. DUMERGUE,

"President, Richmond Branch, N.L.O.W.S."

LOGIC

Suffragist logic never fails us. It has been peculiarly active during the war. "We urge, as we never urged before," say the United Suffragists in *Votes for Women*, "that the first step to be taken by the new Coalition Government, if this is formed, shall be a non-party suffrage measure to secure the alliance of the nation's women and the utilisation of that mass of reserve force that we know women are, in war as in peace, passionately anxious to place at the service of the State." The thoughts to which this profound utterance gives rise require to be enumerated:

- (1) The coalition of the Liberal and Unionist Parties affords a suitable opportunity for introducing a measure to which both are officially opposed.
- (2) If a suffrage measure is "to secure the alliance of the nation's women," how do these stand at the present moment? Are they enemies or neutrals?
- (3) The coalition is solely for the effective prosecution of the war. In the interests of this effective prosecution it is desirable that there should continue to be no contested elections, *i.e.*, that if women had votes, there should be no opportunity of using them. If the mere grant of votes, without occasion to vote, is going to secure all that the United Suffragists contend in the passage quoted above, would not the same results be achieved by an order empowering every woman, or at least Suffragists, to write V.F.W. or any other letters after their names?
- (4) How many women "passionately anxious to place at the service of the State" their reserve force are being deterred by not having been allowed to register their vote for a Member of Parliament at the General Election five years ago?

It is unfortunate that those who often thoughtlessly subscribe to Suffrage doctrines are not compelled to study Suffragist literature. The confusion of thought over the word "non-party" as applied to Woman Suffrage, because it cuts athwart the existing political parties, by drawing advocates and opponents from each, is, we may hope, intentional. If it were not, it would afford a strong argument against any further extension of the electorate.

But what is to be said of another line of argument very common in the Suffrage press these days? There have recently been instances of employers being prosecuted for keeping women or girls at work beyond the statutory hours. The law forbids the practice, and punishes offenders. But now comes, among others, *Votes for Women*: "If women had votes we doubt if some girls would be kept at work night and day until they maim themselves through exhaustion, while other girls are starving for want of employment." Wonderful! No factory laws will be required when women have votes, for even the worst employers will then become model men, and sudden pressure of work will never be known.

It is all very logical. The final reflexion no less so: "Are men patriotic who continue to refuse women the protection of the

vote and a voice in the decisions of peace and war?" It must have been a Suffragist in war time who went into the garden to cut a cabbage leaf for an apple pie on the historic occasion when the Great Panjandrum was there, and the absence of soap caused such hilarity that the gunpowder ran out of their heels.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTEER RESERVE.

To the Editor of THE ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW.

SIR,—May I be allowed as a Branch Secretary of the N.L.O.W.S., but at the same time as one who is already working as Organising Secretary for the W.V.R., to write in answer to your article on that Corps in the January issue of THE REVIEW?

The Reserve is a body of trained and disciplined women, fully instructed in nursing, first aid, signalling, telegraphy, despatch carrying, and camp cooking, and regularly drilled by an N.C.O. of the Army.

You speak of the "unlikely contingency of invasion," but surely you have overlooked the actual bombardment of the East Coast in December last? If a Branch of the W.V.R. had already been established in Scarborough on that occasion, the members could have rendered excellent and useful service by conveying the children and old people to a place of safety, caring for the wounded, cooking for the soldiers, and carrying messages, thus enabling the men in the trenches to attend only to their proper work. The Mayor of Gateshead, speaking on the subject of the raid, announced that if such a thing happened at Gateshead he should call out the local Branch of the W.V.R. and use them at once.

The London Battalion now numbers fully 500, and branches have already been formed at Birmingham, Derby, Worcester, Guildford, Walthamstow, Blackpool, Gateshead, Leicester, Newcastle, Romford, Stanley, Tunbridge Wells, Bournemouth, Brighton and Loughborough; while an average of at least 30 letters of enquiry from all parts of England are dealt with daily at headquarters. The total of members in England up to date is about 4,000.

As regards the shooting, which you seem to think has been abandoned, we have realised from the first that the Corps could of course only be armed by the Government, but meanwhile the members, if they care to do so, practice at rifle ranges, and many of them are excellent shots. The question of combatants and non-combatants has in this present war assumed a totally different aspect, and the lesson taught to our poor friends in Belgium shows us that the Germans draw no dividing line.

The W.V.R. is of inestimable benefit to women, teaching them co-operation, which is sadly needed by our sex, and the social side is by no means neglected, recreation clubs and classes being held in every district, where the many business girls who join our ranks find friends and interest. We have no politics, no class, and no religious restrictions, and we welcome all who wish to help others in this time of national trouble.

I feel sure you will insert this letter, and be glad to know what the scheme of the W.V.R. really is.

Yours truly,

E. D. SMITHETT,

Hon. Sec. Barnet Branch.

Women's Volunteer Reserve, 8, York Place, W.

[The expression "in the unlikely contingency of invasion," to which our correspondent refers, appeared as a quotation in our January issue. It was taken from the prospectus of the Women's Emergency Corps, 8, York Place, W., in which it is stated that "The object of the W.V.R. is to organise, train, and drill suitable women to form disciplined bodies all over the country, who will, in the unlikely contingency of invasion, etc."]

THE inclusion of our President in the Coalition Cabinet is a matter of the liveliest satisfaction to members of the League. Lord Curzon's driving power and masterly grip of affairs will be a special asset to a National Government at this crisis in the Empire's history.

THE report that the venerable President of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, owing to her hostility to the Peace Congress, is now known in certain Suffragist circles as Mrs. Physical Fawcett, is indignantly denied by the secessionists from the National Union.