

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW.

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THE NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR OPPOSING WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

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AT HEADQUARTERS.

WORK FOR WOMEN.

The National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage, in common with other organizations, has received from the Board of Trade a letter on the subject of the shortage of labour in the country. In order to meet this shortage and to secure the continuance of the essential national industries, it is pointed out that it becomes necessary to render available the whole labour force of the country. With this end in view it is proposed to form a Special Register of Women for War Service, that is to say, of women able and free to take paid employment of any kind, if called upon. The co-operation of the League was asked in making the intentions of the Board of Trade more widely known, by enlisting the support of branches and members in the work of distributing copies of the Board's circular and registration forms.

The Executive Committee decided at once to carry out the suggestions of the Board of Trade. Branch secretaries will receive a notice to this effect accompanied by copies of the circulars and registration forms, and the Executive Committee hopes that they will do all in their power to make these notices widely known in their neighbourhoods. It will be pointed out that useful work can be done by personal canvassing and by explaining the forms.

In order that the assistance given by the League should take the most practical form possible, two members of the Executive Committee, Miss G. S. Pott and Mrs. Colquhoun, met officials of the Board of Trade to discuss the question. It was pointed out to our delegates that help is most needed in agricultural districts. Accordingly it is hoped to put forward shortly, with the approval of the Board of Trade, a scheme for promoting the work of women in agriculture. In this scheme members of the League will be asked to participate,

THE INFORMATION BUREAU.

During the past month the ladies who have joined the working party recently formed at the Bureau have been busily employed in making hospital shirts, slippers, etc., for a hospital in France. Parcels of clothes for the S.S.F.A. have been sent to Bow and to St. Peter's, London Docks, and also to girls going into service, who are the daughters of soldiers and sailors. Comforts for the troops have been distributed among the R.F.A., the R.N. Division at Blandford, the 5th Middlesex Regt., recruits at the White City, and others. Gifts of clothing and comforts for the troops have been received from the R.E. working party at Weymouth, Mrs. W. F. Taylor and Miss Ermine Taylor, Mrs. Mould, Miss Martin, Miss Oakley, Mrs. and Miss Carson Roberts, Miss Whiteway, Miss Pott, Miss Gale, Mrs. C. Smith, Miss King, Mrs. Holt, Miss Cassan-Simpson, Mrs. Coxhead, and donations in money from Mrs. L. A. B. Drummond and Miss Nona Hill. If any of our members have boys' clothing and boots and shoes of all sizes to spare we should be grateful for them.

Contributions for the second Recreation Room for which the Bureau is collecting have been received from the following branches: Ascot, Fulham, Richmond, Beaconsfield (monthly donation), Crouch End, Ealing Dean, Leeds, Hampstead, Bromley, and also from Mrs. Shrubb (card), Mrs. Corbett (card), Mrs. C. Smith (card), Mrs. Slingsby-Tanner, Miss Oakley, Miss Towell (card), and Mrs. Godde-Smith. About £150 are still required to complete the sum of £500 originally asked for. Collecting cards can be obtained from the Bureau, and the Committee earnestly hope that the secretaries of those branches which have not yet contributed will ask their members to apply for them. Gifts of books and periodicals have kindly been given by Miss Martin and Miss King.

The Bureau will be closed for the Easter holidays from April 1st to 6th inclusive.

BOY LABOUR ON FARMS.

Although there are some who are inclined to urge that the subject of boy labour on farms has received more attention than the actual numbers concerned merit, no one who has followed the controversy can be sorry in all the circumstances to see the question threshed out. In regard to the political controversy with which this REVIEW is primarily concerned, the subject is fraught with considerable interest. Here was a definite problem, of particular interest, it might be supposed, to women, calling for careful handling. How would it be approached, and what solution would be offered by those who continually lament that they are prevented from giving the country the benefit of their advice? But before we discuss this aspect of the question it may be well to sum up the problem as it appears to have been left by the debate in the House of Commons on March 4th.

The main facts are clear. A serious shortage of labour in agricultural districts is alleged, and appeal is made to the Government to instruct the Board of Education to remove the embargo on the employment of boys under fourteen years of age, with a view to enable farmers to carry out at once the more urgent operations connected with the provision of foodstuffs for the country. The Government accepts the statement of a shortage of labour, but does not take kindly to the proposal that it should throw open indiscriminately to the farmers the services of the boyhood of the country districts between the ages of eleven and fourteen. At the same time it does not reply with an absolute *non possumus*. It admits that the times are exceptional, and that exceptional measures may be necessary. But it wants to avoid the use of boy labour where such labour is not imperatively necessary. The Government, therefore, urges the farmers to make as much use as they can of the Labour Exchanges, and of female labour, and it leaves it to the local Education Authorities to act at their discretion in availing themselves of the authority they already possess of exempting boys from school for agricultural work.

From the speeches of the representatives of the Government it was evident that, while agreeing that there was a general shortage of labour in agricultural districts, they did not believe that every farmer was seriously short-handed. They were able to cite cases, or at least one case, of a farmer crying out before he was hurt, and, in view of the agricultural wage difficulty, they feared that farmers would succumb to the temptation of getting work done at the lowest rate possible and would employ boys when other labour was available. Accordingly the Government took refuge in a middle course, which, while it may have satisfied its authors, will hardly have solved the problem with which the farmers were confronted.

The principle of making the local authorities the arbiters of the farmers' needs was essentially sound. For the rest it was probably a case in which the Government might have taken its courage in both hands. To those who expressed fears that the employment of children on farms was only the thin edge of the wedge for the re-introduction of child labour, and that what the farmers demanded to-day the manufacturers would demand to-morrow, there was a clear answer. The Government went some of the way towards giving it, when Mr. Asquith said: "I do not think we ought to be bound in a great national emergency like this by any pedantic regard for rules and conventions and usages which have prevailed, and rightly prevailed, when circumstances were normal."

On that principle it would have been easy to tell those who feared the worst that each problem would still have to be considered on its own merits. The farmers' plea was that there were only a few weeks left of seed time, and within those weeks they had to do all they could for the country's grain harvest. True, the seed once sown, the boys would not at once be sent away, but until the harvest the urgency would in due course become less pressing, and at stated intervals the justification for boy labour could be examined afresh. One Education Committee did consent to liberate boys between twelve and thirteen years of age for periods of two months at a time, subject to certain conditions. Again, to the argument that at the end of the war there would still be a shortage of agricultural labour, and that farmers would still urge the employment of boys, it could be replied that the case would be entirely different, for the plea of emergency could no longer stand. At the end of the war the need for expanding the home-grown grain harvest to the utmost limits will not possess the same urgency as it has now.

It is this urgency that is the crux of the whole question. If we appreciate the fact that this war is a struggle for our national existence, and admit that the provision of foodstuffs to the utmost capacity of the land is essential, then a shortage of farm labour is a serious matter, and requires to be met with heroic measures. Undoubtedly it is not desirable in ordinary circumstances that boys should be taken from school before they have reached a certain standard, in order to be at work all day. But when our national existence is at stake, who will pretend that the grant from two to four months' extra holiday to a certain number of boys this year is an evil comparable with a shortage of foodstuffs for the population. We must not lose our sense of proportion. The farmers of Great Britain did not intend to swoop down on every school in the country and hale off every boy between the ages of twelve and fourteen to work. The problem was local, and for that reason could only be dealt with locally. Where the farmer satisfied the local authorities that his need for labour was genuine and urgent, every effort should be made in the general interests to help him out of his difficulty. Naturally there would have to be safeguards, and these to be adequate ought to be adjusted separately to the conditions governing each case.

We may now turn to the manner in which Suffragists approached this problem of a shortage of agricultural labour and the demand for boys to be allowed to leave school to enable farmers to cope with their sowing operations. At the first mention of the question the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies adopted the following attitude in its official organ: "We look with extreme uneasiness on the widespread desire to get children exempted from school attendance. . . . There are women who could do farm work, and we hope and believe they would, if they were given a chance, rather than allow the children to become premature wage-earners now" (*Common Cause*, January 29th). Throughout the controversy this was the attitude maintained by the leading Suffrage society. A week later the *Common Cause* admitted that there was a serious shortage of labour in agricultural districts, but its next words were, "There are many women still out of work." It would matter not to the Suffragist mind that the "many women" out of work might be London dressmakers or Lancashire textile hands, while the shortage of agricultural labour was

being felt, let us say, in Oxfordshire or Devon. It does not seem to have occurred to Mrs. Fawcett's society that the farmer in asking for boy labour was asking for help which he knew to be available, and which could be supplied to him on the spot. From the neighbouring school he could obtain what he wanted. The boys would work on the farm by day and return home in the evening, just as the labourer who had left for the war had done. "There are many women still out of work." In how many cases will these women be immediately available for the farmer and their housing present no difficulties? Sometimes, no doubt; but if the shortage of agricultural labour is real and general, such cases will hardly touch the fringe of the need. And Suffragists, if they were honest with themselves or stopped to think, would have to admit the fact. It is right that women should be encouraged and helped to take up agricultural work; but if they have not already the experience, let them be trained sufficiently to do work at least commensurate with their adult ability rather than be pushed forward untrained to do work which the boy of twelve can do, and then claim the wages of an agricultural labourer. Before the women "out of work" for whom the Suffragists plead could reach the farms, the seed time would be over and the farmers, through no fault of their own, would have failed the country at a time of crisis.

What then of the handful of people who are convinced that they monopolize the intellect of the nation, that man is born only to muddle as the sparks fly upwards, and that the country will go to ruin if they are not consulted? In this question of boy labour they have been given an opportunity of substantiating their claims and of proving their worth in consultation. What has been their contribution to the problem? They admitted to "extreme uneasiness," which in itself is a confession of incompetence or failure to understand the issues at stake, and without examining the subject, proceeded to make a suggestion which offered no solution of the difficulty.

NOTES AND NEWS.

Work for Women.

After allowing the subject of work for women to be talked about for eight months, during which time various organizations have taken to themselves much credit for having coped with the national crisis, the Government has now stepped in to organize women's labour on more adequate lines. The measure is a necessary corollary to the powers taken under the Defence of the Realm Act for the State control of various industries. This point should not be lost sight of in any attempt to gauge the significance of the Government's action. The woman worker is a recognized institution in the State; but she is less regular than the male worker, and she drops out of work at a much earlier age. If the nation is to put forth its maximum effort in this war, the Government would be failing in its duty, if it did not encourage the women who have worked in the past or may care to begin now to do what they can in the present emergency. The fact that the Government is doing what is generally left to private effort need not alarm anyone in view of the issues at stake.

Practical Schemes.

All that the Government scheme holds out at present is registration, in other words it appeals to women to avoid unofficial organizations for women workers and to avail themselves more generally of the Labour Exchanges. As the latter are in existence, this has the merit of a sound step. With the Labour Exchanges well equipped with material, employers will have no excuse for shortage of hands, and if there should be a shortage of output the employees can be reminded that there are others ready in the Exchanges to take their places. To this extent the scheme will work in regard to trained women or unskilled work. There will remain, however, much work that could be done by women if they were sufficiently trained, and for training they must rely largely on the good will of private individuals. It is of no use to sit still and complain that women make excellent dairy maids, but are kept out of their own by man's wickedness or selfishness. Not every woman is fitted for dairy work, nor would it be sound to give the necessary training to a dressmaker or professional woman out of work, who would in all probability return to her former means of livelihood as soon as the war is over. A practical scheme is in working order in Berkshire, where suitable women are being trained under the auspices of a local committee at the Reading University College Farm. There is no golden rule to success. Everything depends on the capacity for practical effort of those in charge of the scheme. The Berkshire Committee has made a conspicuous success of the scheme, and other local committees will do well to follow on the same lines.

* * *

Norway and Boy Labour.

The debate in the House of Commons on child labour brought out an interesting fact about Norway, which having woman suffrage, is supposed not to be able to do wrong. "Norway," said Colonel Yate, "is a great agricultural country, divided up into small farms under peasant proprietorship. There, so effective is boy labour, and so absolutely important is it considered by the parents that the boys should have early education in agricultural pursuits, that in the summer time, while agricultural operations are going on, the schools are closed entirely." There seems to have been an opportunity lost of pointing out the merits of woman suffrage, which has enabled Norway to adopt such a practical measure. But our Suffragists elected to grind their own axe on the child labour question in their own peculiar way, before they had studied the subject, with the result that the grinding operations resemble nothing so much as the process of beating the air.

* * *

Our Women Volunteers.

The instinctive antagonism of women to war, about which we are hearing much nowadays, does not prevent some of them from establishing volunteer corps after the approved military pattern in the hope that they will be able to play their part, if there should be an invasion of these islands. We have repeatedly called attention to the wrongheadedness of this movement, which is entirely contrary to the instincts of civilization, and calculated, if it were connived at by the Government, to place Great Britain in a false light. In order that it may be realized how the women volunteer movement is apt to be viewed

abroad we give an extract from the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* of January 3rd, 1915. The article is from the pen of Miss Ida Husted Harper, a well-known Suffragist, who enlightens British Suffragists in the pages of the *Englishwoman* regarding things in America. This time she has taken upon herself to enlighten her own countrywomen about things in Great Britain—with exactly the same degree of accuracy and veracity as that with which she writes about American affairs. Miss I. H. Harper writes:—

"The universal militancy in Great Britain at the present time had almost effaced the memory of that of the Suffragettes, and people were partially forgetting their condemnation and punishment by the Government. All has been revived, however, by its recent action in calling to the front the flower of its womanhood, those between 18 and 40 years of age of highest physical efficiency, and arming and equipping them as a military force. These volunteer reserves are to be drilled by regular Army officers, and when sufficiently skilled are to become drill-masters themselves."

History in the Making.

The above extract affords a typical instance of the way in which the Suffrage movement is fed. When Miss Harper writes about America in a Suffragist publication her statements are believed by her Suffragist readers and quoted as unimpeachable authority. Since the war began articles by her have appeared in England which are just as veracious as her remarks about women volunteers in England. In the *Public Ledger* Miss Harper, Suffragist, goes on to talk of female telegraph operators "who have to work at night and overtime for the same meagre pay" as that which they received when they were not restricted to ordinary hours. "At the present moment women are far more humanely treated in Germany, which is finding a better use for them than drilling for army purposes." In this way Miss Harper returns to the Women Volunteer Corps, which no doubt conflicts with her Suffragist peace ideas, and she seeks to reconcile the anomaly of women militarists by making the British Government responsible for "calling to the front the flower of its womanhood." The women volunteer movement is, of course, entirely Suffragist.

Mr. Holford Knight's "Divine Right."

Mr. Holford Knight, to whom this League is indebted for a pamphlet on "The Liberal Case Against the Suffrage Movement," has written to *The Nation* to state that "this horrible war destroys the grounds on which Liberals have resisted the inclusion of women in the electorate." As Mr. Knight confines himself to the alleged new Liberal point of view, we are left to infer that his change of views is merely a political move, and has nothing to do with the merits of the case. If Euclid had dealt with politics he would have discovered some axiomatic certainty in a politician embracing woman suffrage, when a political committee had just previously refused to embrace woman suffrage and the politician. But to return to Mr. Knight, we would take this opportunity of thanking him for one sentence in particular in his pamphlet entitled "Liberals and Woman Suffrage." He wrote: "Suffragist advocacy relies in the main on what Matthew Arnold called 'the divine right and blessedness of doing as one likes, bawling as one likes, making a fool of one's self as one likes, with the rest of the world looking on.'" We hope Mr. Knight will like his new part better than he did the "looking on."

THE ROOT OF THE MATTER.

BY NORAH SEDGWICK.

I have been much thrown lately with a Suffragist of pronounced opinions and undoubted ability. It has given me much food for reflection, and as a confirmed "Anti" I offer the following notes on what I observe.

I hear a great deal of the viciousness of men, of the unequal standard of morality as regards men and women, stringent condemnation of any attempt at the "regulation of vice." I am told that, when women have the vote, these matters will inevitably be put right.

In the meantime I observe the training and upbringing of my friend's two sons, aged 10 and 16. Both are utterly self-willed, disobedient, undisciplined.

The younger is a big, over-grown, slow-brained boy. He is allowed to eat greedily, to have the last piece on the dish, though literally his elders may go without. He has never been taught the most elementary ideas of obeying any orders from his mother. He begins to ask, "Mummy, may I—" and, without waiting for the end of the petition, she often says, "Yes, darling, yes."

It often takes half-an-hour to get that boy to start for bed!

The elder boy, a good looking, well developed lad with plenty of ability, comes and goes as he likes (in holiday time); bullies his mother for money (she is a widow), and speaks to her in a way which would shock any thoughtful outsider; he is frankly selfish and self-centred.

I maintain that the seeds of viciousness and lack of self-control are being sown in those boys now. Greediness ends in lust, disobedience leads to a self-indulgent, lawless life. At what age is all this to be checked? How can any "votes for women" undo the tendencies already implanted or prevent those boys from developing into the very type of man which Suffragists rightly abhor and decry.

Now for my conclusions. Instead of talking and writing about the undoubted sins which prevail (and which in my opinion will not be cured by any legislation), why do not the Suffragists go to the root of the matter and attack the home training of our boys and girls? We have the first important years of a boy's life entirely in our hands. I think it was Lyttelton who first brought home to me that greediness unchecked becomes later on unlawful desire. It is at any rate fairly obvious to a student of human nature also that obedience and self-discipline are the first necessities in the life of the individual as in the life of the citizen.

Again, incidentally, if the spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice and kindness are not inculcated and practised in childhood, I cannot understand how anyone can expect such virtues in the grown man—and this surely includes a proper treatment of women and of all questions pertaining to sex.

Yet one more thought. My friend is an exceptionally gifted woman, highly educated, keen on all questions of social reform, a good speaker, and much addicted to writing pamphlets and letters to the newspapers. If she can so little grasp the duties, responsibilities and opportunities of "home service," how is she fit for a wider scope with a vote, and possibly later on a seat in Parliament?

MISS DORMER MAUNDER, Secretary of the Ewell Branch of the N.L.O.W.S., to whose hospital work in Flanders and France reference has been made in this REVIEW, has received the Order of Leopold for services rendered to the Belgian Army.

MISS M. ROYDEN'S VIEWS ON THE WAR.

BY G. S. POTT.

Miss Maude Royden has published a pamphlet setting forth what in her opinion was the duty of Great Britain when Germany declared war upon France and Russia in 1914. As Miss Maude Royden was editor of the *Common Cause* in 1913, and that paper is spoken of in the annual report of the N.U.W.S.S. of that same year as their most valuable asset with regard to propaganda, we may suppose that Suffragists take her views seriously. It is difficult to believe that any thinking woman can be found holding the opinions expressed in Miss Royden's pamphlet; but inasmuch as the authoress not only was at the time editor of the chief Suffragist organ, but also a member of some standing of the N.U.W.S.S. Executive Committee, and one of their most constant speakers, it is not unreasonable to regard her as a representative of Suffragist opinion.

At the outset of her argument Miss Royden states plainly that "we were pledged to the defence of Belgium, and Belgium was attacked by Germany. We had arms and must use them. To refuse meant national dishonour, and dishonour is worse than the worst of wars." So far all Anti-Suffragists will agree with her. But observe what follows. In spite of the fact that dishonour is worse than the worst of wars, Miss Royden opines that the duty of the British Empire was to disarm, to disband both Army and Navy directly Germany had refused overtures for peace. "We could have called forth the peace-lovers," writes Miss Royden, "to fling themselves in front of the troop trains, . . . and if not men we could have called out women . . . nor would they have been slow to respond." Can anything be more ludicrous than the idea that such imbecile conduct on the part of the inhabitants of Great Britain would have prevented Germany violating the neutrality of Belgium? That neutrality which even Miss Royden admits we were bound to defend. Nor have Anti-Suffragists so low an opinion of most women's intellects as to agree that they would have obeyed Miss Royden's call and laid themselves in millions of rows across the German railway lines for trains to pass over them. Had they done so, who would have been the better? Even the authoress of this extraordinary gospel is constrained to admit that the line of conduct recommended "might have failed" in preventing war. Most sane individuals would substitute the word "must" for "might." Our Empire rests upon freedom, says Miss Royden, and straightway advocates the course which inevitably leads to the enthralment of that Empire by a brutal military despotism. Miss Royden, in concert with the preacher of every extravagant folly since the Christian era, of course appeals to isolated texts from the Bible in support of her fantastic doctrines—carefully selecting extracts to the exclusion of all others which might contradict her translation of the import desired. She appears to be complacently ignorant of such texts as, "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword," or the Psalmist's eulogy of "He that sweareth unto his neighbour and disappointeth him not, though it were to his own hindrance." Miss Royden's view of the British aim in this war is that "we seek to put a nation (Germany) to the torture," and she puts forward a plea on behalf of mothers and children who die of "anxiety, fear

and overwork" in consequence of the war. She does not seem to realize that the vast majority of British women and men would infinitely prefer the extinction of themselves, and all dear to them, than allow the dominion of Germany over their children. Better they think utter extinction of the Anglo-Saxon race than submission to the Teutonic military caste.

If Miss Royden represents the views of her fellow Suffragists, how doubly important is it that such pusillanimous women should not be given more direct political power. "Sir Edward Grey," she admits, "in going to war had behind him the whole weight of the nation." Had she and others who share her opinions been able to exert greater influence we may suppose their weight would have been cast in the opposite scale, and pressure brought to induce our statesmen to take that course of national dishonour which she tells us would be "worse than the worst of wars." One may be devoutly thankful that at the critical period when British honour was hanging in the balance Miss Royden had not the power of the vote, and one may hope that she may never have the opportunity of putting into practice her overwhelming desire to destroy our every means of defence both of Empire and honour.

PEACE MOVEMENTS.

Suffragists have closely identified themselves in connection with this war with every variety of peace movement. In London on August 3rd, 1914, they stood for peace at any price; since then they have coquetted with "stop-the-war" ideas, and the international suffragist congress to be held in Holland this month takes the form of a protest against the war and demands an "immediate truce." American Suffragists have been conspicuously active in the matter, and to the United States went Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence to urge the summoning of "a parliament of neutral countries" in order that the belligerents might find out what they were fighting for! The Women's Peace Movement in America, in which Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence are playing such an edifying part as British subjects, aims at "early peace" and proposes *inter alia* "the further humanizing of governments by the extension of the franchise to women."

In all these movements the outstanding feature is that Great Britain is tacitly regarded as equally guilty with Germany for the outbreak of hostilities, and for such horrors or excesses as have been connected with the war. This aspect is well brought out in the following "Address to the Women of the Neutral Powers" issued in connection with the American Suffragists' peace movement.

The address, signed by the Women's Political Union as one of the societies mothering the movement, reads:—

In the cataclysm which has overtaken Europe we are seeing the shifting of heavy economic burdens from the shoulders of men to those of women. Toil is the woman's war toll.

In the cataclysm which overshadows civilisation, the chief sufferers are children. Terrified, weary, and unfed, harried they know not why, they are driven they know not whither. In every battle zone the cry of children goes up to women.

War, with its horror and waste of wealth, waste of the lives of men, of women, of children, is the big fact to-day. War exists not primarily because of international hatred, not because of commercial rivalries, not because of the spirit of aggression on this side or that, of brutality in this nation or that, but because the governments of men have failed to establish any appeal other than that to arms by which questions of national honour can be settled.

To the women of neutral nations we turn with confidence, and

appeal to them to embrace with enthusiasm the realisable ideal that humanity can devise an arbitrament other than that of battle to compose the differences between nations.

While we recognise the indomitable spirit shown by men of all nations in laying down their lives, because of the burden laid on women in time of war, because of the suffering of children, because of the breakdown of the guardianship of civilisation by men, we urge women to redouble their efforts to overcome the assumption that men alone are equipped to rule the world.

And we appeal to women to urge on neutral governments the calling together of official representatives, men and women, to discuss and lay the foundations of a permanent international commission, with an international police to enforce its decrees.

This circular, sent broadcast to neutral countries, has found its way to Italy. A reply has been sent from there to the President of the Union issuing the appeal from someone in a favourable position to gauge Italian opinion. The letter deals so fully with the whole bearing of the appeal, in addition to giving the Italian point of view, that it may well be quoted at length.

The W.P.U.'s circular published preliminarily under the pretence of being an endeavour to further the interests of peace, when examined is nothing but a propaganda issued in the particular interests of the Union itself, and therefore will not strike outsiders as *bona-fide*.

Loaded with egoism, the egoism of sex, there is no real regard for the pressing necessities of the moment—the succour of a whole population, men, women, and children, decimated, ruined, outraged, and slaughtered by an invading army, an army poured on a peaceful country to destroy and terrorise at the dictates of the grossest military despotism that has existed since history began.

Under cover of being neutral there is no attempt in the propaganda to distinguish between a country defending its territory and an attacking military horde, no word of protest against the barbarities committed, no word of sympathy for the victims, no investigation into these horrors, no call on the women of neutral powers to help and assist the overwhelmed nation. The impression remains that the Union sees in such a crisis the opportunity of furthering its own political views.

The argument that "war exists not primarily because of international hatred, commercial rivalry, or the spirit of aggression, but because the governments of men have failed to establish any appeal other than that of arms by which questions of national honour can be settled" is not confirmed by history.

From the invasion of the Goths and the Huns, the conquests of Cyrus, Alexander, and the Roman Empire, the Spanish Conquests of America, to those of Napoleon, to to-day in the attempted destruction of Belgium and the annihilation of France, in none of these has the question of national honour or equity entered, but invariably either national or personal greed.

That such is the case to-day is sufficiently evident if one reads Bernhardt—official exponent of the views of the German Emperor and military party.

Twenty years ago was the destruction of Belgium planned as the first step towards the domination of the French and the elimination of England as a nation.

It has been a closely calculated scheme to which some of the finest intellects of Germany have devoted themselves.

The gradual formation of strategic railways to the frontier lines, the infiltration of the country beyond with paid German colonists, the planting of commercial houses, heavily subsidised, and of the most complete system of spies which has ever existed, and to which all classes, disregarding any sense of personal honour while accepting the kindness and hospitality of nations thinking themselves at peace with Germany, lent themselves, are all proof of the long standing intention.

No wonder Bernhardt entitled his book "World-wide Empire." Is it surprising that the nations outside Germany who claim nationalities and civilisations of their own, as useful and as good as those of Germany, who do not aim at universal Empire, should combine to kill the military madness which is running amok in the fairest provinces of Europe?

What is the remedy that the W.P.U. offer?

They say: "We appeal to women to urge on neutral governments the calling together of official representatives, men and women, to discuss and lay the foundations of a permanent com-

mission, with AN INTERNATIONAL POLICE TO ENFORCE ITS DECREES."

So the final appeal will be to arms all the same?

So far on general grounds. As to the reception the proposal will be likely to receive in Italy, I hold it on good authority that it will not be a very flattering one.

In the first place, because absolutely contrary to the feeling of the very largest majority, Socialists included (who have divided on the question of Italy's neutrality, the most conspicuous and best minds being against non-intervention simply on the score of national safety, and as a protest against the unnameable and too authenticated horrors in Belgium)—and because in such a grave matter the putting forward, however indirectly the sex question would militate against it. It would in public estimation be ranked with any eccentric oddity got up by people who wish to come before the eye of the public—which has more serious occupation.

The following is what an Italian—not a soldier, but a scientific man—writes:—

"We cannot now deviate our attention from our supreme duty; in these hours of destiny we have not the right to think of the codification of the peace of the future, when between that peace and the present stands the almost certain necessity of war for our country.

"We cannot be neutral like Spain and other nations, both large and small, that have no reason imminent to fight; we stand armed waiting, speeding the hour that must come.

"This is what every Italian feels, and who in this hour would come here with proposals such as your friends' would meet with a poor reception.

"Also, you will understand that when peace comes the terms of it for the future safeguard of Europe will by rights be dictated by those who have fought for the right—the neutrals (and Italy must not forget it) will have no voice in the matter and will have no right to have any.

"Only those who have fought can be allowed to say, 'We shall prepare for peace.'"

D'YE KEN JOHN BULL?

Written for Those at the Front.

I.

D'ye ken John Bull, with his smile so gay,
When the Kaiser announces the dawn of "The Day"?
"Oho!" says John, "I'll have something to say
About that, so I give you fair warning."

Chorus.

For the whirr of the Zeppelins overhead,
And the boom of the guns brought him from his bed.
"Come along then, boys, to the front," he said,
"And we'll all hunt the Hun in the morning."

II.

D'ye ken John Bull in his khaki suit,
Rifle in hand and spur on boot?
For John can ride and John can shoot,
And he's after the Hun in the morning.

Chorus: For the whirr of the Zeppelins overhead, etc.

III.

D'ye ken John Bull on his bed of pain—?
But he knows that his wounds have not been in vain,
And soon he'll be up and at 'em again,
A-hunting the Hun in the morning.

Chorus: For the whirr of the Zeppelins overhead, etc.

IV.

Will ye love John Bull when he's back from the war,
When the boom of the guns is heard no more;
And the brave tale is told the wide world o'er,
How he hunted the Hun in the morning?

Chorus: For the whirr of the Zeppelins overhead, etc.

Gwladys Gladstone Solomon.

REFORMS BY BALLOT?

The "Morning News," of Savannah, U.S.A., last January published the following letter over the pseudonym "Independent." The War has had the effect of sending many of us back to first principles, and it is possible that some of those who have accepted Suffrage views without subjecting them to careful examination may be glad of the opportunity of checking the details of their creed by "Independent's" dispassionate arguments.

"Independent" writes:—

"Will some of those who are advocating equal Suffrage leave out all incidental arguments and answer this one question, viz.: How is the final attainment of the ballot by women going to bring about the reforms that all right-minded men as well as women so earnestly desire?"

"I was one of the comparatively few men who attended the recent lecture given by Mrs. Breckenridge, attracted there, first, by the desire to learn from her argument whether, if women were given the vote, the reforms asked for by Suffragists would be realised, and, second, because I was flattered by a message sent to me by an influential member, that she hoped I would attend the lecture, because she believed me to be a fair-minded man and would give all arguments unbiased consideration. I listened to the lecture attentively for two hours, and was truly sorry when Mrs. Breckenridge concluded with Kipling's beautiful verses about 'Mother of mine.' If it had been intended as a lecture on civic improvement, it could not have been better, and I agreed with every word that was uttered, but I came away with my question, as above, still unanswered.

"The only general answer that I have ever seen to this question is that States which have adopted Woman's Suffrage show immediate all-round improvement. As a matter of fact, none of the more prominent or older States have 'let down the bars,' and only ten of the Western States have granted the franchise to women. Mrs. Charlott Perkins Gilman stated to a gathering of college women that Women's Suffrage, where it exists, has not purified politics, or done anything like the good that was expected. From Colorado, where Women's Suffrage was adopted in 1892 by a small majority, comes this letter written recently by Mrs. Francis W. Goddard, president of the Colonial Dames of Colorado, viz.:— 'I've voted since 1893: I've been a delegate to the city and State conventions; a member of the Republican State Committee from my county; I've been a deputy sheriff and a watcher at the polls; for twenty-three years I've been in the midst of the Woman's Suffrage movement in Colorado. For years I believed in Woman's Suffrage, and have worked day-in and day-out for it. Now I see my mistake, and would abolish it to-morrow if I could. No law has been put on the statute books of Colorado for the benefit of women and children that has been put there by women. The child labour law went through independently of women votes. The hours of working women have not been shortened. The wages of school teachers have not been raised. The type of men that go into office has not been improved a bit. As for the effect of the vote on women, I have known personally scores of women who worked for the Republican party one year and worked for the Democratic party the next year, telling me frankly that "the Democrats gave us more money." Plainly, the experiment is a failure. It has done Colorado no good. It has done woman no good. The best thing for both would be if to-morrow the ballot for women could be abolished.'

"If the reforms pointed out by Mrs. Breckenridge could unquestionably be realised by the granting of Suffrage to women, everyone would cheerfully do all that was possible to advance the cause. Women are welcomed and their efforts are supported by the governors who appoint them as independents, and by the men who work with them, because they stand outside of the polls, and have no 'axe to grind.' Outside of politics they can have but one object: the advancement of the cause for which they work. When, however, they go, ballot in hand, to demand of the powers that be support, moral or financial, for their hospitals, their widows' and children's aid societies, new school buildings, and playgrounds, or for a movement in the direction of cleaner markets, streets, back yards, etc., will not the ballot defeat their desired end, by the mayors, governors, or even legislatures, simply asking them whether they are Republicans or Democrats? And whichever party they belong to, will it not be said that that party must help them? And then will they not have to soil their hands, bodies and minds by lobbying and doing things that have already so thoroughly disgusted the better class of men voters?"

"Beyond all things, do we believe that capable women should be in public affairs? Put them on boards of education, school

committees, public charities, prison wards, lunacy commissions, factory inspections—but keep them out of caucuses or primaries. Refuse to make them liable to the same suspicions, the same ambitions, and the same intrigues as men.

"Women can secure reforms outside of politics which they will never accomplish in trying to get representation, from the fact that the vote of any intelligent, educated, thoughtful woman would be nullified by the votes of from one to fifty women who are neither educated, thoughtful nor refined. As a matter of mathematics it takes but one vote to nullify or cancel another. The number of intelligent, educated and thoughtful women is to the number of uneducated women as one to ten. To the uneducated can be added the semi-educated, often more dangerous than the ignorant, on the principle of 'a little knowledge.' Add to both of these the indigent and those who are not respectable, and, obviously, the votes of this element, controlled by various interests, will far outnumber the votes of the earnest, intelligent, thoughtful women.

"We are told of the scenes of Wyoming, where women bring their babes to the polls in perambulators, and children, with their teddy-bears, play peek-a-boo among the booths! But the whole population of Wyoming is only about twice that of Atlanta, and the population of the four Suffrage States, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado, is only about one-third that of New York City!

"Congress will have to face the Woman Suffrage movement within the walls of the Capitol before long, and it is safe to predict that few will oppose it, if it can be proved that equal suffrage will bring relief to corruption and woman's wrongs, but one of the most tenable arguments against votes for women is that women, as a body, do not go to the polls even when given the chance, and, moreover, the ward politicians in the larger cities are able to control the votes of the undesirable elements more easily in the case of women than of men. Recent elections in Chicago pointed in that direction.

"Many women in whom the people have confidence do not desire nor seek public office. The State of Minnesota has a minimum wage law, which provides for a board made up in part of ten female wage earners. Only two real working women could be induced to serve, and the other nominal workers included two welfare workers and six club women who did not work outside of their own homes, if at all. Here was a chance to serve the public and their fellow workers in an honourable way, but there was no proper response to the call. As far as the right to vote is concerned, any vote that is not representative is dangerous. However, let the Suffrage advocates answer simply the one question at the beginning of this letter, and prove it by argument if they can, for after all the ballot is only the ballot. Many believe that if women could vote they would close saloons, they would solve the divorce problems, they would settle the trouble between labour and capital, abolish the white slave traffic, drive out tuberculosis, ruin the trusts and close the prisons. What can the ballot in the hands of women do that it has not done for men? A woman would be subject, just the same as a man, to the political boss, who would dictate how the vote should be cast. And, furthermore, all wrongs would pass into insignificance when compared with the dangers into which Suffrage would thrust a woman. Should the Suffrage delusion ever become a reality, then those who suffer most would be, not its instigators, but its helpless tools, the working women. The Suffragist, the sentimental philanthropist, and the would-be reformer would do well to look below the surface, and try to see just what is the substance of the thing they are trying to force on society under the name 'Votes for Women.'

INFANT IMMORTALITY.

"The Milton-next-Sittingbourne Guardians have decided to withdraw a two-year-old child from the custody of its mother, who is an inmate of the Workhouse, because it uses bad language freely, and when offered milk asks for beer or whisky."—*Extract from The Press.*

We feel that there must be some argument in favour of Votes for Women in the above, and therefore commend it to the notice of the Suffragist press.

THE Assistant Secretary of the N.L.O.W.S. has received some very nice woollen comforts for the mine-sweepers and airmen in response to her request in the March REVIEW. She now hears from the Royal Flying Corps Aid Committee that *socks* are wanted for the airmen more than any other woollen articles, therefore if any members have any socks to dispose of will they send them to her at 515, Caxton House. Other comforts for the mine-sweepers are also very welcome.

BRANCH NEWS.

Marylebone.—The annual meeting of the Marylebone Branch of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage was held on March 12th, at 17, Montague Street, by kind permission of Lady George Hamilton.

Lady George Hamilton, who was in the chair, said that at the present time the war takes up everyone's thoughts, and no one has interest in anything connected with other subjects, therefore the meeting that afternoon would be addressed by two speakers who would speak to them on subjects in connection with the war.

Miss Luck presented the balance sheet for the year, which was most satisfactory; and the annual report was given by Mrs. Jeyes. This report showed that the Marylebone Branch had done excellent work for various patriotic organisations since August; a splendid response had been made to the Queen's appeal for comforts for the troops; many visitors had given their services for work in connection with the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association; and the Branch, through Mrs. Jeyes, had made itself responsible for the erection of a Y.M.C.A. recreation hut at Warlingham Camp. The Committee were then re-elected.

Mrs. Womack gave an account of a visit she had recently paid to Millbank Hospital, where she had talked to many of the English prisoners lately returned from Germany and Belgium. She urged the great need there was for parcels of food, clothing, and remedies of all sorts being sent to the internment camps in Germany, as from the evidence of these men, she had learned that ordinary provisions from England were more than luxuries and were greatly needed.

Lady George Hamilton then introduced Mr. Donnithorne, who was in charge of the Marylebone Branch hut at Upper Warlingham, the first hut to be erected by the efforts of the N.L.O.W.S.

Mr. Donnithorne gave a short sketch of Y.M.C.A. work abroad, and then spoke for a few minutes of the work in camp in England. He said that on his way to town that morning the sentry had asked him where he was going, and when the reply was "To report about the hut to those who gave it," the man had said, "Please tell the people who gave this hut that it is much more useful than they can ever think." Mr. Donnithorne said that since the hut had been opened in January, 16,000 letters had been posted in the hut letter-box, £80 worth of stamps had been sold, and over 5,000 gallons of tea and coffee had been provided; there was an excellent library, largely supplied by Mrs. Jeyes; concerts were given every week; and a young Belgian had a class of 40 or 50 men for French lessons, every night. "I can assure you," he said, "that your donations to this hut have been admirably spent, and have made the life of the men, who have a very difficult time, less hard and, may I say, more sunny."

A vote of thanks to Lady George Hamilton and to the speakers was proposed by Miss Godwin and seconded by Mrs. Alexander Scott; tea was then served.

Woking.—The fourth annual meeting of the Woking Branch of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage was held at Morrisburne House, on the afternoon of the 23rd February, the Hon. R. C. Grosvenor presiding.

In their report, the Committee stated that in addition to £8 5s. collected by members, £7 had been contributed by the Branch to the Central Office. Sir Arundel and Lady Arundel having removed to Guildford, the latter had resigned from the Committee, but had consented to continue as a Vice-President. Mrs. Johnstone Higgins and Miss Angela Pearce had been elected on the Committee. The war, which had led to an informal truce between the supporters and opponents of Female Suffrage, had given prominence to the doctrine insisted upon by the latter, that all government rested upon physical force. It was reported that certain nurses in some of the hospitals had been asking men to interest themselves in the question when they recovered from their wounds. Such requests, in the opinion of the Committee, were greatly to be deprecated, but it did not seem likely that they would have much influence hereafter on the political life of the nation. Reports were also rife as to the existence of a kind of competition to demonstrate that supporters of Woman Suffrage were much more active in their efforts for the general good of the country in these critical times than their opponents, and consequently that votes ought to be given to women when the war was over. Anyone who offered such service, in the hope or with the object of attaining any personal or political end, did so from a very mean motive, which could only react most unfavourably upon all who allowed such feelings to influence them.

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the accounts and report, said it seemed to him that when hostilities came to an end

the question of Woman Suffrage would undoubtedly become active again, and it was therefore advisable to be ready, with renewed energy, to resist the proposals which would then be brought forward.

Sir Edward Clayton, C.B., seconded the proposition, which was unanimously carried.

Thanks to the Chairman and Mrs. Grosvenor for lending their house for the meeting terminated the proceedings.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Delia Blanchflower. By Mrs. Humphry Ward. Ward Lock and Co. 6s.

Mrs. Humphry Ward has added yet another to her gallery of studies of contemporary English women. In time to come these studies will certainly be regarded as valuable records of types and social conditions, and it is an extraordinary reflection on the pace of social evolution to think that the latest of these types is already out of date. *Delia Blanchflower* is a beautiful, well-dowered, well-born girl, who, in defiance to the wishes of her invalid father, becomes a militant Suffragette. On his death he leaves his money tied up as far as possible to prevent her from spending it on the Suffragette propaganda, and as guardian he appoints a middle-aged but fascinating bachelor friend, who resolves, in *Delia's* own interests, to carry out his directions. It is a foregone conclusion that the guardian will fall in love with and subdue his wilful charge, and the story would have gained in human interest had both *Delia* and *Winnington* been less superlatively endowed with personal charms; but the story is, in the main, a study in values, and Mrs. Ward conveys with subtle skill the gradual change in *Delia's* mental horizon caused not only by the dawn of love, but by association with normal, healthy, busy people, who see life in true perspective. All who are interested in the Suffrage question should read this book, where they will find, despite Mrs. Ward's well-known views, not one word of Anti-Suffrage propaganda. On the contrary, the most sympathetic persons in the book are Suffragists, and they bring forward all the stock arguments in favour of women's votes. The answer to these are implied, rather than stated, but the controversy is not allowed to interfere with the story. The picture of militants and militancy is true and striking, and the study of the arch-militant who tries to capture *Delia* is the real achievement of the book, and quite free from convention. She is no insensate fury, but a real woman, warped and twisted by circumstances. I have said the story is a study in values, and that, after all, would be the only way to write the history of the Suffrage movement. The relation of the vote to real life—that is the crux of the question, and at the present moment it needs no argument.

The Full Price. By Lady Charnwood. Smith, Elder and Co.

Lady Charnwood has given us a clever study of life, for it is in the sketches of character that the interest of her book lies, rather than in the actual plot of the story. The temptation of a brilliant marriage with its natural attractions to an inexperienced girl is well set forth, and the authoress has made her novel the pleasanter reading by drawing individuals with that mixture of fault and virtue that we are accustomed to meet in every-day life, instead of falling into the too common fault of laying on the black or white colouring so thickly as to produce unnaturally good or offensive characters. The wise counsel given to the heroine that "Pleasure is not happiness, but neither is happiness pleasure," might well serve as the motto of the story. The description of Lady Saintsbury, who had allowed her physical trials and sufferings to become a cloak of self-deception, covering great personal selfishness, is admirably true to nature. Few people have the courage to admit the great selfishness often found in invalids. But many a young life has been stunted or shadowed by the thoughtlessness of an elder whose self-pity, justified in the first instance by circumstances, becomes pure self-absorption. Illness or suffering may be the reason, but should never be regarded as an excuse for selfishness, at any rate by the patient herself.

A NEW marching song with a good swing entitled "Kitchener's Boys," has already passed through numerous editions. The words and music are by Miss Constance Olive, Assistant Secretary of the Worthing Branch of the N.L.O.W.S. The price of the song is sixpence. Ten per cent. of the profits is being devoted to the funds for disabled soldiers and sailors.