

THE VOTE

(THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE).

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SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1911.

ONE PENNY.

NOTICE.

Letters relating to editorial and business matters should be addressed to THE EDITOR and SECRETARY respectively. Applications for advertising spaces to be made to the ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER.

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EDITORIAL.

The Editor is responsible for unsigned articles only. Articles, paragraphs, or cuttings dealing with matters of interest to women generally will be welcomed. Every effort will be made to return unsuitable MSS. if a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed, but the Editor cannot be responsible in case of loss.

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WHAT WE THINK.

Our "Humane" Home Secretary.

Most of us remember the incident of the Dartmouth shepherd and the tears of pity wept by the Home Secretary and his colleague Mr. Lloyd George over the incarceration of this lovable vagabond, to whose calling the sheep responded with mute alacrity. Most of us also remember that the tears were electioneering tears and for political purposes, and that hardly was the gentle shepherd at large when it became known that the only times of his life that were honest were those that he spent as the guest of His Majesty. Now, while we are extremely glad that this light-fingered old gentleman is at large (and incidentally in a different county to ourselves), it is with a feeling of indignant perplexity we compare the action of the Home Secretary in the recent case of Annie Woolmore with his treatment of the elderly ne'er-do-well. The case of Mrs. Woolmore was dealt with at considerable length in *The Daily News* of last week. This young woman, stated to be both feeble-minded and ill, was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment because, owing to the fact that the water-supply was a quarter of a mile distant and every drop used in the house had to be fetched, her cottage and children were not clean. Medical evidence proved that the five children were exceedingly well in health, and as there was a baby which could not be left and had to be dragged by the woman, who was both ill and feeble-minded, to and from the water-supply, it was small wonder that she went as seldom as possible.

Thirteen-and-six (the husband's wages) was the amount available for seven people, out of which 2s. 6d. had to be paid for rent, which pans out at less than 2s. a week each, to include food, clothing, necessaries, and soap. The Home Secretary was asked to restore this wretched, poor creature, who had done her best under barbarous living conditions, to her young children. But this humane and all-knowing young man would do nothing of the kind. In his reply he gives as one reason for refusing to set her free that "The medical authorities show that the woman is weak-minded and indifferent to her imprisonment, . . . and I have decided that I would not be justified in interfering with the sentence." He further hopes, with the sneer that we know, that those benevolent persons who have taken such an interest in the case "may be able to make such arrangements for the family which will prevent them reverting into the same miserable conditions as before." What this country is coming to when power is put into the hands

of a man like this it is hard to say. "The mills of God grind slowly," we are told, "but they grind exceeding small"; and perhaps the day of this Oriental-minded despot may not be far off. But meantime he seems to be allowed to juggle with barbarity and mercy in a way that seems strange in a civilised country.

Conciliation Committee's Memorandum.

The Home Secretary has in front of him one of the gravest and most difficult inquiries that any man in his position has been called upon to face. He cannot refuse to grant it, for the indictments contained in the memorandum referring to the conduct of the imported police on November 18 and following days, forwarded to him by the Conciliation Committee, contains 135 plain and lucid statements attested by eye-witnesses and sifted and tested by persons of whose probity there can be no doubt. Under the headings, "Unnecessary Violence," "Methods of Torture," "Acts of Indecency," "After Effects," "State of Mind of the Police," "Plain Clothes Men," are given very reluctantly by the women concerned details of outrages which cause one newspaper to observe that they would like to think that Mr. Brailsford in drafting it had "mixed up some of his notes on the Macedonian atrocities with his material in support of the Conciliation Bill." Referring to the charges of acts of indecency upon the part of the police (and the details substantiated by medical evidence are enough to make any decent-minded human being, man or woman, sick with horror and disgust) *The Manchester Guardian* says: "It is this part of the memorandum which demands the most thorough and searching investigation, and, should the inquiry substantiate it, the most severe and decisive action on the part of the authorities. We look to the Home Secretary to see that justice is done."

In the interest of the discipline of the police it is imperative that Mr. Churchill shall grant this inquiry; if he does not he leaves us to form our own conclusions as to the moral retrogression which is possible in what was previously, as far as we could judge, an honourable body of men, when once it comes under the disciplinary influence of a man of his calibre.

Male Ambition and Female Drudgery.

That a woman has no right to look forward to a well-paid future has been demonstrated empirically from time to time. Mr. Samuels did it recently at the Post Office when he substituted girl messengers for boys that the latter might have a chance of entering occupations which held out prospects to them. On the Metropolitan Water Board the same question cropped up over the employment or non-employment of women clerks in connection with a card-index installation. The suggestion was put forward by the General Purposes Committee, and in the discussion that ensued—which resulted in the decision to employ women being carried—the fact that women were *cheap* labour was frequently insisted upon, only one man having (according to the published reports at least) the courage to protest against the employment of women at a less rate than men. Some of the statements made were of the following illuminating character:—"If males were employed permanencies would be looked for," and "it would not be right to employ a male staff because if boy clerks were put on to the work *they would have the very proper ambition to move upwards in the Board's service, and the work was of such a type that frequent changes were undesirable.*"

PROPAGANDA.

Success is our watchword, and we rely on the co-operation of all our members to bring it about speedily. Within the next fortnight we want voluntary organisers in each district of London to work up the Census protest, and voluntary Census agents throughout the provinces.

Trafalgar-square Meeting.

Every Suffragist in London and all sympathisers with the women's cause should make sure of being in Trafalgar-square on Saturday, April 1, at 3 p.m., when it is hoped that Mrs. Despard, Mrs. How Martyn, Mrs. Francis, Mr. Laurence Housman, and a number of other first-rate speakers will explain to the people of London the attitude of the Women's Freedom League towards the Census. All our members are urged to do everything they possibly can to advertise this.

Sunday "At Homes."

In future these will be held monthly, the two next falling on March 26 and April 23. Mrs. Despard has promised to be with us on both these dates, and London members will have the opportunity of getting first-hand information from members of the N.E.C. of the work done by our provincial members.

Thursday "At Homes."

The next two afternoon "At Homes" to be held at Caxton Hall will be of a specially interesting character. On March 2, our friend, Mr. G. O' Dell, will deal with a much-discussed subject, "Woman and War." Will all sympathisers bring their friends to hear what Mr. O' Dell has to say on this matter? March 9, Mrs. Despard will give her lecture on "Mary Wollstonecraft." In Bournemouth, when our President gave it on the anniversary of this author's death, the subject and the way in which it was treated aroused the greatest enthusiasm, and was universally described as an intellectual treat. Mr. Laurence Housman will also speak on the Census, so that Caxton Hall ought to be crowded to overflowing on this occasion.

We are delighted to receive news of our colleague, Mrs. Holmes, who in the tiny Swiss village of Blouay spoke for more than an hour on the question of Woman's Suffrage to an audience in which the army, navy and Church were well represented. An animated discussion followed, most of the questions being asked by men. We look forward with pleasure to seeing Mrs. Holmes amongst us again, perfectly restored to health and strength and vigour.

From Wellingborough we hear that Mrs. Despard and Miss Sidley addressed two successful public meetings last week, at both of which "The Awakening" was sung, good collections taken, THE VOTE and other W.F.L. literature sold. Altogether the work of our League seems to have been very encouraging during the past week. F. A. UNDERWOOD.

The Hard-Up Social.

A "Hard-up" Social will be held Saturday, March 25, 6.30 to 11.30 p.m., at the Small Holborn Hall. The invitation reads: "Bring a basket of food and any article you don't want for the sale.

You provide the supper, we provide the fun; A shilling will admit you, we're sure you won't be done! All known and unknown folks will be there, so of course we can count on you.

Attractions will be:— Miss Cicely Hamilton's Wax-Works, conducted by herself; Suffrage songs, by Mr. Frank Witty; Suffrage meeting, with interruptions; "How the Vote was Lost": a story; vocal and instrumental solos; infant prodigies; side shows; supper; dancing. Old clothes optional.

TREASURER'S NOTE.

As will be seen in the accompanying list, we are beginning to receive good donations for the Political and Militant Department, and I hope all members and sympathisers who have not yet been able to send us a contribution will remember that the Census Protest Scheme will be a heavy expense, if it is to be carried out on the large scale which we have good reason to

hope will be the case. Judging from the enthusiasm with which the idea is being received wherever we hold meetings, we are extending our activities as much as possible all over the country, and are already working in places where we have no branch to help us. If everyone will remember this and collect where and whenever they can and send even the smallest sums, this Census resistance ought to be the greatest protest suffragists have yet made. CONSTANCE TITE.

NATIONAL FUND.

Branch and District Funds Not Included.

Amount previously collected, October, 1907, to December, 1910	£	s.	d.	For Census Protest:
11,595	3	2		Vulliamy, Mrs. 5 0 0
Amount previously acknowledged	533	10	3	Miss Boileau 0 10 0
Evans, Mrs. 3 0 0				Ballam, Miss G. 0 5 0
Tudor, Dr. D. M. 2 2 0				Watson, Miss A. W. 0 1 0
Temple, Mrs. Elinor. 1 1 0				Per Mrs. How Martyn:
Harvey, Mrs. K. 5 5 0				Miss Eggett 0 5 0
Dixon, Mrs. 1 1 0				Miss H. Fryer 0 2 0
Moore, Miss Decima. 1 1 0				A Well-wisher 5 5 0
Sanderson, Mrs. A. 0 5 0				A Friend 0 5 0
Baughan, Miss 0 2 0				Mrs. Ellis 0 1 0
Stribbling, Mrs. L. 0 1 0				Mrs. Tylor Lobley. 0 2 0
Sims, Mrs. 0 2 6				Mrs. Rawles 0 10 0
Taylor, Miss L. 0 1 0				Mrs. Drysdale 1 0 0
Sutton, Miss L. 0 2 0				Per Miss Neilans:
Whyte, Miss M. 0 1 0				Sheffield Branch 1 0 0
Tritton, Mrs. 0 2 6				Edinburgh Branch .. 1 0 0
A Camberwell Member's				Miss Angus 1 0 0
Subscription 0 1 0				Harrogate:
Tigg, Miss R. L. 0 2 6				Miss Brook (To balance deficit)..... 0 7 2
Dixon, Miss 0 1 0				Mrs. Bagenall 0 10 0
Craig, Miss Edith 0 2 6				Mrs. Brook 5 0 0
Black, Mrs. L. M. 0 1 0				Tickets and collection 6 5 7
Caswell, Miss E. 0 2 0				Drawing-room Meeting, per Mrs. Alison
Knight, Miss E. 0 2 0				ing, per Mrs. Manning 1 7 9
Wood, Miss A. 0 5 0				Per Mrs. Manning ?
Parker, Miss C. M. 0 2 0				Lancs. & Cheshire Dist.
Dennis, Miss E. A. 0 1 0				For Travelling Expenses:
Hammerschmidt, Miss K. 0 2 0				Miss Manning 0 8 9
Armstrong, Mme. 0 2 6				Chester Branch 0 8 9
Allen, Mrs. E. 0 2 6				Waterloo Branch ... 0 17 5
Harrison, Mrs. L. 0 2 0				Profit on VOTES. 0 0 4
Bobby, Mrs. E. 0 2 6				Ditto, Mrs. Thomas 0 0 5
Howell, Miss G. 0 2 6				Miss Daly 0 2 0
Margetson, Mrs. 0 9 6				Lord St. P. S. A. 0 2 0
Hudson, Miss M. 0 2 0				Miss Greenwood 0 2 0
Taylor, Mrs. 0 5 0				Anonymous 0 0 6
Kinx, Mrs. 0 1 0				Miss Turner (Collecting-box) 0 4 0
Haden Guest, Mrs. 0 2 6				Sale Branch 0 10 6
Cross Buchanan Miss C. 0 1 0				Mrs. Warburton 0 0 6
Mallet, Miss G. 0 2 6				Per Mrs. A. Sanderson : 0 1 0
Swainey, Mrs. R. E. 0 2 6				Mrs. Pratt 0 1 0
Burr, Miss M. 0 4 0				Mrs. Lockyer 0 1 0
Jones, Miss J. 0 1 0				Collections and Sales :
Jastrow, Miss H. 0 10 6				London 22 11 2
C. T. O., per Miss Alder				London on Meeting (Mrs. Every) 0 16 0
Barry Branch (Affiliation Fee) 0 5 0				Per Miss Manning :
For Office Expenses				F. Nightingale Meeting 0 12 0
Fund :				£609 15 2
Harvey, Mrs. K. 1 1 0				

We offer our warmest congratulations to our friend, Mrs. Rowe, the first woman to seek election to the Bournemouth Town Council, for the plucky fight she made for the interests of women in the Sunny South. We wish that her candidature had been successful, for Bournemouth citizens would have honoured themselves by electing Mrs. Rowe to help manage their town's business. We are extremely glad to note that both Mrs. Rowe and her opponent acknowledged the contest to have been a pleasant one, and that their supporters worked hard but amicably for the return of the respective candidates. This is as it should be, and emphasises the fact that women are resolved to take their part in elections on broad principles, and intend to eliminate the personal and bitter element which has so often marred the contests of men. The Women's Freedom League's best wishes for the success of Mrs. Rowe's candidature at a future town council election!

Norwegian Women.

In a sitting on Saturday in Christiania the Cabinet resolved to place before the Storting a proposal to extend to women the right of admission to all public offices except membership of the Cabinet, military, diplomatic, and Consular posts, and benefices in the State Church. This is a splendid result of the practical work done by the Norwegian women.

NEWS FROM NO-MAN'S LAND.
THE PASSIVE RESISTERS. By LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

As I have already indicated, the largest contingent of Census boycotters in No-Man's Land will be the passive resisters; people, that is to say, who, owing to circumstances, are unable to act militantly, but who do nevertheless join heartily in the protest, and are glad, while remaining technically "constitutional," to aid in giving unrepresentative Government so good an object lesson. And as this is very likely the case with you also, I will give in detail the line of action which these passive resisters are proposing to adopt.

It is well known that Census evasion has always had its attraction for a certain number; and while many people who would never think of breaking the law have been thus escaping through the gaps left in its provisions—as they have a legal right to do—the Government is always trying to fill up the gaps and make evasion more difficult. I find, for instance, on referring to the Act, that, as in your own country, the Government is attempting on this occasion to rope in those members of the community to whom I referred on a previous occasion, who endeavour to evade the Census by spending the night in travelling. Those who possess motors can still do so; but on the railroads measures are being taken to obtain the same returns as are required from householders—a very pretty opportunity for the active resister, but a set-back to the mere evader who wishes to avoid conflict with the authorities. And the Act further provides—and this is important—that "any person who is travelling or at work on the night of the Census day (Sunday) and who returns to a house on the morning of the following day (Monday) shall be regarded as having been in that house on the night of Census day."

Now, mark the word "returns," for that is the important point which passive resisters who are also householders have seized hold of. To be entirely safe from the inquisition of the Census officers they must not return to their houses till after twelve o'clock (noon) on Monday, and they must not have been occupants of any other house from which a Census return is being made during the transitional hour from Sunday to Monday, or else the occupier of that house will include them in his return.

What are they to do? It is really very simple. They have arranged to exchange houses with other passive resisters, after the following fashion. Before midnight on Sunday they leave their own houses, and after midnight arrive at the house into which they have agreed to exchange. There they sleep, have breakfast, and go forth to their work or their shoppings, and do not return to their own houses till after noon on the Monday. The occupiers who have thus exchanged roofs and beds are not qualified to make any returns whatever for Census purposes; their houses have been technically vacant, no one has been in residence for the requisite qualifying period either on the Sunday or the Monday, and the collectors cannot therefore claim that the forms should be filled up.

It is a beautiful example of "red tape stewing in its own juice," and should in consequence endear itself to the official mind.

Any who, with their households, get that scheme off by heart cannot be included in the Census, or incur any penalties for not filling up the forms; in fact, they would incur penalties if they did, for they have not been in occupancy within the requirements of the Act; they were in one house on Sunday, in another on Monday, but they do not return to any house until after Monday noon, when Census operations are over. To a lay mind this seems absurd; but the law is very often absurd, and sometimes most absurd when, as in this case, most logical. (It may be noted in passing that according to the strict terms of the Act this avoidance of a return before noon is only necessary where anyone has been "at work" or "travelling." Any person who qualifies for Census inclusion at the house where the Sunday to

Monday hours of the night are spent is not properly qualified for inclusion elsewhere. But the Census officers will be asking absentee householders suspicious questions; it is better, therefore, for householders, at all events to make their inability to be included as technically complete as possible; and this is best done by not returning before twelve o'clock on Monday.

The main inconvenience attaching to this form of evasion is in the case of large families, including children and servants; but I hear that housewives who are also ardent Suffragists do not find that matter any more troublesome than the usual preliminaries for a spring cleaning or for the annual exodus to the seaside. Most of them on their way from one house to the other will look in on one of the midnight social gatherings which are being organised by the active resisters. Carrying their impedimenta for the night upon their backs, they will come and go like the silent Arab, just resting at some small bubbling oasis by the way. Truly the midnight streets of No-Man's Land during Census-night will see some curious sights, and quite an unusual amount of traffic and house-fitting!

This form of passive resistance is specially recommended to householders or occupants of flats and premises on which a distraint might be levied, in all cases where a strictly law-abiding form of resistance is preferred, one, that is to say, in which the person actually avoids qualification. A more general and straightforward form of resistance, which also leaves the resister immune from penalties is attendance for the greater part of the night (including midnight) at one of the gatherings organised in the houses of active resisters. Those who wish to avoid all chance of official questioning will not return to their own home from these gatherings till after twelve on Monday—but as a matter of fact it is sufficient to qualify at one place (namely at the place of rendezvous) in order not to be properly qualified for any other place. Any who spend the night elsewhere, so long as they have not been "at work" or "travelling," will not be properly qualified for inclusion at their permanent homes on returning there the next morning; while the person at whose house they did stay for the qualifying period will, on the next day meet the collector either with a torn up Census form or one across which will be written the words, "No vote no Census."

Many of these being only temporary occupiers, will refuse any information whatever, not giving either name or address, and will leave the authorities to prosecute behind their backs whatever inquiries may be thought fit or profitable. But in speaking of them I am straying from the passive resisters who are the subject of my present article.

Some of these passive people intend to be very active indeed, leaving their empty houses or flats labelled with the announcement, "No Vote, no Census," they will start on a walking tour, or a motor ride, visiting, perhaps, for rest and refreshment, several of the social gatherings which other resisters will be holding, and going to any other house but their own for breakfast, will come back to their original starting place only after noon on Monday.

There are passive resisters, on the other hand, who pride themselves on an extreme of passivity which will give the authorities perhaps even more trouble than some of the more active forms of resistance. They will receive the Census form on Saturday demurely and complaisantly, but later in the day, after hanging out the label, "No Vote, no Census," on their door-knockers, they will take the opportunity of going on holiday for a time, which may extend to days or weeks according to what happens to be convenient. And all that time a door that opens to no knocking or ringing and a defiant motto will greet the repeated calls of a collector who, when at last he does find them at home, will learn that

on Census-day the place was vacant and no return due from it. And if he inclines to disbelieve the word of the returning occupants, then perhaps he may summon them to prove an alibi—and without any difficulty the alibi will be proved and the obstinately unteachable and unrepresentative Government will have to pay the costs of the summonses. But, if the Government of No-Man's Land is going to start summonses, it will either choke up the magistrates courts for a good many days to come, or it will have to show gross partiality and favouritism in its selections. For, as I told you before, the women of No-Man's Land mean business; and in the department of passive resistance especially, business is going along very nicely indeed. The only sad thing is we shall never know the numbers of these passive resisters who leave emptiness behind them. The Government, you may be quite sure, will never tell us even of the numbers it becomes aware of; and there will be still more of whom it will get no inkling or trace until it arrives at the diminished returns, when it finishes its calculations a year hence.

Some faint-hearted people question what effect a few tens of thousands of omissions can have on returns that are counted by the million. But when they so talk they are considering only the gross aggregate of the population, and are forgetting that many of the calculations derived from the Census are very delicately balanced affairs, full of decimals and affecting averages which are minutely tabulated and compared. These passive resisters are going to affect the decimal places of a good many calculations which do not run into millions at all; they are going to affect the birth-rate, and the increase rate of the population, and the proportion between men and women and married and unmarried, and in the eyes of some Government officials these resisters will deserve to be classed more closely and emphatically with lunatics than even the law has previously seen fit to class them, and there will be, from the official point of view, quite an alarming understatement in the lunacy returns! Yes, the official word will no doubt regard these women resisters as very mad indeed; but they will discover hereafter that there was a method in their madness.

IN THE HOUSE.

Notice has been given by Mr. King to ask the President of the Local Government Board "if he has considered the threat of a number of females to defeat the Census enumeration in various ways, and especially by walking about all the night of the Census date, and whether, with the view of preventing the accuracy of the Census results being diminished by such action, he proposed to take special action to defeat this policy."

Mr. King (Somerset, N., Min.)—Bill to consolidate and amend the bastardy laws; to enable maternity orders to be made with regard to certain women and girls; to make further provision with respect to certain maternity cases dealt with under the Acts relating to the relief of the poor; and otherwise to amend the law relating to illegitimacy; and for other purposes connected therewith.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

It is with much regret that the present Editor announces that with this issue of THE VOTE her tenure of office, which has lasted during the past year, and her pleasant relations with the Minerva Publishing Co., Ltd., and her readers cease, owing to the pressure of private work. Mrs. Despard has consented to take over the editorial duties herself, and the retiring Editor trusts that every assistance will be given to her by contributors—branch secretaries and others—who can make things at the office difficult or simple according to their ideas on the drafting and sending in of their matter. MARY O. KENNEDY.

CAMPAIGN AT HARROGATE.

It is well known to all workers in what are called "reform movements" that there are certain places and districts which are very much more difficult to work than others. Harrogate is one of these difficult centres, and judging by the following little incident, the Suffragists are not the only people who have found it a not too easy place in which to arouse enthusiasm.

Maud Allan, in one of her tours, visited Harrogate, and the Kursaal, the largest concert hall in the town, was literally packed from floor to ceiling, a most unusual event, such was the curiosity felt about her dancing, due to the somewhat sensational newspaper reports. She finished her performance and left the stage without receiving a single clap or sign of either approval or disapproval from anyone in that huge audience. As a lady in the town said to a member of the Freedom League, "You know this is a dreadful place in which to work for your cause, as it is not considered good form to be enthusiastic about anything."

It is not only Harrogate, however, that harbours this kind of feeling, and Suffragists are well used to it in the course of their work, and therefore, in spite of its reputation for stiffness and indifference Harrogate gave an exceedingly kind and courteous hearing to the Freedom League representatives. A public meeting was held in the Crown Hotel on Tuesday, February 21, which, while not actually full, was well attended by an audience, every one of whom had paid for a ticket, and in addition gave an excellent collection. A member of the Men's League, Mr. Septimus Marten, kindly took the chair, Mrs. Despard and Miss Neilans being the speakers. After the latter had spoken on the aims and objects of the Freedom League and dealt with the question of militancy, Mrs. Despard gave an address beginning with the King's Speech, then gradually leading her audience on to the wider aspect of the woman's movement, and ending with an explanation of the Census boycott. Her speech was listened to with the deepest interest, and in spite of the dictum re "good form," great enthusiasm was shown.

The following day Mrs. Alison, of Dunain Lodge, gave a drawing-room meeting, and there, too, Mrs. Despard was received with the most friendly and cordial expression of goodwill and sympathy. About forty-five ladies were present, and although no collection was taken, about 27s. was put into a box at the door.

No report of the Harrogate work would be complete without a very grateful reference being made to the immense amount of help which Miss Neilans received locally, and especially from members of the National Union in the district. Miss Brook, hon. sec. Harrogate National Union Branch, had begun the work before Miss Neilans arrived, having most kindly put all the printing and advertising in hand, and was tireless in calling, stewarding, and helping in every way with the arrangements for both meetings. A great deal of help in selling tickets was given by Miss Baker, Miss Snow, Miss Hodgson-Smith, and others whose names were not known to us. These friends, together with Miss Shaw, Miss Kirk, Mrs. Dunn, and Miss E. Woodhead, also gave great assistance in stewarding the public meeting, and Miss Neilans is especially grateful to Miss Woodhead for taking charge of the ticket stall at the door. In connection with the drawing-room meeting Mrs. Alison most generously gave her room and provided tea which everyone appreciated, and she also issued the invitations which so successfully filled the room, being helped in this by Miss Brook. We have to thank Mrs. Bagenall, too, for taking the chair so efficiently on this occasion.

The result of the week's work, owing to the great help received, was a financial success. We have to acknowledge in another column the generous donations of Mrs. Brook and Mrs. Bagenall. Three new members definitely joined the League, and two new subscribers to THE VOTE were obtained, while a number of others will probably join shortly.

MR. W. T. STEAD ON THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMAN.

During the recent Divorce Commission the most powerful arguments for the equality of women before the law were put forward by Mr. W. T. Stead in his evidence, a brief draft of which appeared in our New Year Number and the full text in a recent number of *The Review of Reviews*. Mr. Stead very kindly stood a brief cross-examination on some phases of the woman question in the interests of THE VOTE. There are few men who have had the courage to voice opinions contrary to those of a large number of their sex in the way that Mr. Stead has done in the past. A great chivalry towards women has influenced much of the work of his public life, and he has stood the test of a storm of hostile criticism and imprisonment to vindicate his views.

"Should all legislation affecting women be left severely alone until such time as women get the vote?" he was asked.

"Good heavens, no! That would mean that no legislation affecting women harmfully could be set right until they were enfranchised. Such laws should be put right at once. But I do say that in all legislation affecting women as much as men they should have an equal voice. And until such time as this is granted them it is perfectly fair and just that they should say to the legislators, 'I repudiate your authority and I deny your right to legislate for me.'"

"What has caused you to champion women, Mr. Stead, and to become a suffragist?"

"I have always been a believer in women. I cannot remember a time when I was not. I think it would be of the very greatest advantage if the boy of a family could always be born second, so that he could realise that a 'she-thing' could be wiser and stronger than himself. It would be good for him to grow up with a brave, strong little sister older than himself to look up to. It would make his attitude to other women more rational.

"But the first thing that brought home to me the position of women in politics and towards the making of the laws that concerned them most nearly was when Josephine Butler was fighting against the C.D. Acts at the end of the 'sixties, and my mother was helping her by acting as one of a local committee to get petitions signed. I had there before me the spectacle of my mother, intellectual and brave, asking illiterate men far below her in intellect and knowledge to save helpless women from outrage which she was powerless to hinder, because they were voters and she was not.

"All my life I have been accustomed to look up to women and not to look down upon them. I think that it is fundamental that all conversation—politics, books, religion—in a house where opinions are freely expressed should be taken part in by the women equally with the men. We all know houses where if a woman ventures on an opinion she gets 'Shut up—What do you know about it? You're only a woman,' for an answer. This is very like the Turkish point of view. The other day a Turk informed me that women were men's inferiors and were for the use and pleasure of men, and that no woman was any good until she had been well trampled on and her will broken. Englishmen do not formulate their ideas as crudely as this Turk did, but many of them think just the same."

"But can you regard all women on this plane?"

"Yes, all women," said Mr. Stead. "I have always felt that women are nearer to God than men are, and to all 'she-things' my attitude is the same. What is the origin of all that is beautiful in the world? It is to be found in the love inherent in woman for man, man for woman, the mother for her child. It was through the mother and the child that the knowledge of God came into the world, and God gives a renewal of His manifestations and of His wisdom every time a mother has a child. The mother and the child are the symbol of all faith and all beauty, and in the barest Russian peasant home you find the eikon—the picture of the Mother and the Child."

"And what do you think the strongest arguments in favour of the enfranchisement of women?"

"Perhaps that which I used twenty years ago in a memorial to the Pope, and which is equally true to-day. The modern State grows every day more and more a home and less and less a fortress. In the early days the functions of government were limited to questions of defence, the levying of armies, &c., and life in the home was not within its sphere and went on unhindered, the mother having a superior voice to the father. But gradually those things which were in the mother's control became more and more a matter for boards and councils. Every day the State interferes with matters that formerly belonged to the home, and it is monstrous that when it appropriates such duties to itself only men are consulted. It is blank idiocy to shut women out from matters which are their own concern and where their influence is more needed—"

Mr. Stead broke off here and suddenly asked—

"But women have one great fault, and what do you think it is?"

With considerable humility and out of the depths of a guilty conscience Mr. Stead's questioner answered, "They talk too much."

Mr. Stead flouted the idea. "No, indeed," he said. "The great trouble is that they don't think highly enough of themselves—some think too much, perhaps!—but they don't think enough of Woman with a capital 'W.' Women are often such horrid cats to each other; they have not as yet the same spirit of camaraderie that men have, but they are more trustworthy with men. I would sooner trust a woman than a man, and since I was in gaol twenty-five years ago, I have spoken and confided in many women, queens and empresses down to poor girls in the street, but save in one instance I have never found a woman to betray a confidence."

"But do you believe in giving confidences indiscriminately?"

"You owe it to your fellow-man," said Mr. Stead, "to give him a share in your confidence. What is the good of talking to him about Julius Cæsar when you might be of some help to him by bringing your share of experiences to his aid? We ought to share 'the Communion wine and cross of life' with our brothers and our sisters. I am not one who upholds the necessity of reticences when confidences spread the feeling of brotherhood and common humanity."

MARY O. KENNEDY.

LONDON UNIVERSITY MEMORIAL TO MR. ASQUITH.

Over eighteen hundred members of Convocation who, being men, were entitled to vote, have signed a memorial which has been forwarded to the Prime Minister and to Mr. Balfour, protesting against the restriction which prevents women who are graduates and members of Convocation from taking part in the election of the Parliamentary representative of the University. The signatures are extraordinarily representative, and include men as different in outlook as the Master of the Rolls (Sir H. H. Cozens-Hardy), Sir William Collins, and Mr. H. G. Wells. The wording of the memorial runs:—

That this University was the first to admit all comers to its examinations and degrees without distinction of sex;

That every appointment and privilege which it has power to bestow is now open to women who possess the necessary qualifications;

That women take part in the proceedings not only of Convocation but of the Boards of Studies, Boards of Examinations, the various Faculties, and the Senate itself;

And that it is a matter of deep regret to your memorialists that these, their fellow-members of Convocation, many of whom have attained to the highest distinction in the branches of study and research to which they have dedicated themselves, should be denied equal rights in the election of the representative of the University in Parliament;

Your memorialists therefore trust that you will take every step in your power to remove this last disability and permit the University to carry out to their full and logical extent those principles of comprehension and equality on which it is founded.

THE VOTE.

Proprietors—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., Ltd., 148, Holborn Bars.
Secretary—Miss M. E. RIDLER.
Directors—Mrs. C. DESPARD, Mrs. E. HOW MARTYN, B.Sc.,
Mrs. MARIE LAWSON, Mrs. J. E. SNOW, Mrs. L. THOMSON-PRICE.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1911.

"THE SPECTATOR" ON THE CENSUS BOYCOTT.

The objections which have so far been brought against our scheme of passive resistance to the Census are either trivial, like the old gibe that it is being done in order to escape telling our ages, or they fail entirely to grasp the main reason for the refusal to take part in this national inquiry. Not one of our critics has attempted to deal with our actual position, which is: "That we boycott the Census in order to show that we are protesting against being governed without our consent." Mr. Balfour has said: "My view is that a democracy, properly understood, is government by consent." With that view we are in agreement, and every woman who refuses information for this reason will be giving a practical proof of her belief in it and acting up to the principle of "Deeds, not words." Chief among our critics is *The Spectator*, which describes the boycott of the Census "as a piece of criminal folly."

Presuming *The Spectator* accepts Mr. Balfour's definition of democracy, does it then proceed to prove logically and conclusively that the definition does not apply to women, and that even if it did the present political position of women would not justify them in refusing their consent to the Census? No, it makes no attempt to do this, but just abuses us, which is so much easier than to show why women who have no political status should help to provide the returns used in dealing with "questions, social and educational." By passive resistance to the Census we are asserting our right to have a voice in settling these questions.

At the moment we are not fighting for any "particular reforms," as *The Spectator* seems to think, but we are trying to get possession of the essential weapon—the vote—used in civilised communities in everyday political warfare. Let us imagine that a law was proposed to curtail the outside work of married women; the proposal is fought out on the floor of the House of Commons, and the champions for and against are sent there—by the votes of married women or of any women?—by no means, but only by the votes of men, including those who would benefit by such curtailment. Women, being voteless, are powerless.

At any rate, in the future Suffragists will have the satisfaction of knowing they did not help to supply the statistics which will be used for or against them according to the fancy of our legislators. It is not surprising that *The Spectator* tries to explain away the fact that we have numerous supporters in the House. In an earlier part of the same article we read that "the pledges said to have been given by Members are in most cases so ambiguous that they have no determinable value"; that though a majority of 110 was obtained for our Bill last Session, yet the predictions of the Suffragists as to the number of votes likely to be cast for their cause are "consequently scarcely worth the paper they are written on." Apparently the 110 majority caused the writer a little uneasiness, for he goes on to say: "It is quite possible that a majority of the present House have a general sympathy with the principle," but "it would fade away before a Bill which did not satisfy the hundred and one scruples and reservations that exist side by side with a sincere enough attachment to the cause of Woman Suffrage."

In plain language this means that our supporters in the House do not mean, and never intend to mean, business. We do not believe this, and we look to Sir George Kemp and the majority of the House on May 5 to vindicate themselves from such a base and insinuating

charge of political dishonesty towards the great body of earnest Women Suffragists in this country.

Passing to another critic of the Census boycott, *The Outlook* says: "The injury done would be national." Exactly so; but sometimes national interests are conflicting. This is a case in point. Rendering the Census unreliable is a small injury compared with the social, political, and economic injury daily suffered by women, consciously or unconsciously, owing to their unfranchised condition. Our proposed protest has already drawn national attention to our grievance. While our object is not revenge, yet we are only ignoring the Government as the Government has systematically ignored our claims for over forty years. This time no private person is being attacked and no private property is to be damaged, so we can hear no outcry that women can't play the game, that they cannot distinguish between a man's public and his private life, and that to injure private property is childish and futile. *The Outlook* continues: "To attempt to wreck it wantonly for a private end would be not only an offence against the law, but an unpardonable breach of civic obligation. Martyrdom that alienates sympathy is a poor game. We trust that, even in their own interests, the members of the Women's Freedom League will choose a less repugnant method of self-assertion." This hysterical outburst of indignation is a poor substitute for logical argument. The paper which can characterise the desire for political freedom as a "private end," which can talk of "civic obligation" as though it should be binding on voteless women who are not even legally persons, which can imagine that Suffragists want martyrdom either with or without sympathy, and which imagines that the Women's Freedom League exists for the purposes of self-assertion cannot carry much weight with any thinking person.

We cannot reiterate too often that our object is to give a practical example of the *impasse* which would be produced in our national life if women seriously began to refuse their consent to the autocratic government by men. Passive resistance against unjust authority is binding on those who believe in doing something to win their freedom. Until women win representation they are morally justified in demonstrating that their exclusion from citizenship certainly does involve national injury.

Let us unite now to make this protest so effective that no more examples will be needed. Let us stand firm in our determination only to fulfil the obligations of citizenship if its rights are accorded us.

No Votes for Women—no Census!

EDITH HOW MARTYN.

CAXTON HALL "AT HOME."

There was a good attendance last Thursday, and Mrs. How Martyn, who was in the chair, summarised the principal Press criticisms of the action being taken by the Women's Freedom League towards the Census.

Miss A. A. Smith gave a delightful account of Finland, dealt sympathetically with the Finns' long struggle for freedom, their victories and defeats, in both of which the women shared with the men, and their dissatisfaction with the way in which the present Czar had endeavoured to curtail their liberties.

Miss Neilans gave a very encouraging account of the progress of the Census boycott in Scotland and the North of England.

Mrs. Despard, who had travelled a long distance to be present at this meeting, gave a most inspiring address. Our president has everywhere met with success in persuading women to boycott the Census, and very interesting were the details she gave of the different ways in which this was to be effected. Mrs. Despard will have a large house-party on the night of the Census, and encouraged her hearers to get as much fun as possible out of this protest. She hoped that no woman present would so far lose her self-respect as to give the information asked for on the Census forms.



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BRANCH NOTES.

NATIONAL OFFICES, LONDON.—1, Robert-street, Adelphi, W.C.

Anerley and Crystal Palace District.—149, Croydon-road.

The Whist Drive held at "The Hermitage" last Wednesday was a complete success from every point of view. Thirty-two tickets were sold, and a profit of £1 8s. 6d. was handed over to the treasurer. Of those present twenty did not belong to any Suffrage Society, and some had never been to a meeting. At the special request of an "Anti-" Miss Ethel Fennings made a short speech in the tea interval, which led to a lively discussion. The very handsome prizes were most generously given by Mrs. Davidson, our hon. treasurer, who also acted as M.C. and contributed largely to the success of the afternoon. Fourteen copies of *THE VOTE* were sold, besides some literature and "The Awakening," which had been sung in the interval by Miss Muriel Fennings. Our first branch meeting was held last Friday at the above address, when the following officials were elected: Hon. Organiser, Miss Ethel Fennings; Hon. Secretary, Miss Jessie Fennings; Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Davidson; Committee, Mrs. Higgins, Miss Morgan, Miss Sinclair, Miss Rodwell, and Miss Muriel Fennings.

A public meeting has been arranged for Wednesday, March 22, at the Town Hall, Anerley, with Mrs. Despard as speaker. Helpers are urgently needed to work up this meeting.

Croydon.—Mrs. TERRY, 9, Morland-avenue.

The first of the drawing-room meetings held to discuss the census boycott was held, by Mrs. Ridley's kind permission, at 53, Dingwall-road on February 21. There was a good attendance, and much interest was shown in Mrs. How Martyn's address, which dealt, first, with the need of the Parliamentary Franchise for Women, and, secondly, with the ways and means of evading the Census.

Two similar meetings are arranged for February 28 and March 1. Will other members please offer their drawing-rooms, so that these meetings may be continued?

Still more parcels are needed for our Jumble Sale. Our thanks are due to those who have already sent contributions. The treasurer will be glad to receive the annual subscriptions that have not yet been paid as soon as possible.

Hackney.—Miss E. E. BUSBY, 4, Clarence-road, Hackney, N.E.

On Saturday the Cake and Candy Sale was held at the Suffrage Shop, and proved a good financial success. The shop had been previously decorated, and, when the tables had been arranged

with all the good things so generously sent us, was an attractive sight, and evidently passers-by thought so, as it was the scene of general interest during the sale.

We are most grateful to all those who so kindly helped us with cakes, sweets, &c., and would ask them to accept our hearty thanks for their help in making the sale such a success.

We would remind members and friends that the shop is open every evening from 6 to 10 p.m., except Thursdays, and we should be pleased if they would call in any time they are passing or have a few minutes to spare.—E. E. BUSBY.

Herne Hill and Norwood.—32, Geneva-road, Brixton, S.W.

On Saturday afternoon, February 18, a very successful social meeting was held by kind invitation of Dr. Alice Vickery, at 28, Carson-road, Dulwich. There was a good attendance of members and friends, who very much appreciated an informal discussion of the various aspects of the Suffrage question and of the Census protest, and a new member joined the branch.

On Tuesday, February 21, our debating circle met at 32, Geneva-road. Mrs. McLeod-Kingsnorth read a chapter from Mrs. Gilman's "Women and Economics," which was followed by an interesting discussion in which all members took part.

On Tuesday, March 7, a drawing-room meeting will be held by kind invitation of Miss Davies at 161, Croxted-road, Dulwich, at 3 p.m., at which Mrs. Despard will speak.—BARBARA SPENCER, Hon. Secretary.

Mid-London Branch (late Central).—Mrs. TRITTON, 1, Northcote-avenue, Ealing, W.

All our members must have heard of the projected boycott of the Census. They will have a further opportunity of learning all the details from Mrs. Despard, who has kindly consented to speak at our next meeting in the Bijou Theatre on Wednesday, March 15, when, with Mrs. Tanner in the chair, and the additional attraction of a recitation from Miss Olive Terry, the hostess (Miss Bosley) may expect to be kept very busy welcoming our friends.

Directly after Easter we must turn our attention to open-air meetings, which, we hope, will be as numerous and well attended as during last summer.

We must remember that much is expected of a large branch like ours.—E. G. T.

Stamford Hill.—Mrs. CUNNINGHAM, 114, Holmleigh-road.

The "At Home" on Tuesday last proved a highly successful function. The proceedings opened with a very bright violin quartette, led by Mr. Taverner and accompanied on the piano-forte by Mrs. Spurling. Mrs. Nevinson much impressed those present with her account of the hardships sustained by women under the present laws of coverture.

Mrs. Wheatley made a delightful chairman. Mrs. Cope's singing of "The Awakening" was more charming than ever, and Mr. Barrow's paper met with much appreciation.

Mrs. Barrow, Mrs. Fenhof, and Miss Brodie met at Mrs. Cunningham's last Wednesday to read each a paper respectively entitled: "The Ideal Qualities of a Citizen," "The Ethical Value of the League," and "The Greek Ecclesia." This new departure found great favour, and another set of papers will be contributed by members on March 8.

At the "At Home" on Tuesday, March 7, Miss Underwood will be the principal speaker and Mrs. Cunningham the chairman.

West Hampstead.—23, Pandora-road, West Hampstead. The usual weekly meeting was held on Wednesday, February 22, at above address.

We held an open-air meeting at the corner of Fawley-road, West End-lane, on Saturday, February 25, at 8 p.m. We had an interested audience and sold a fair number of VOTES. We intend holding another meeting at the same spot next Saturday, March 4, at 8 p.m.

Meetings are being held at 23, Pandora-road every Wednesday evening at 8.30 p.m., when sympathisers will be welcomed.—JEANNETTE VAN RAALTE, Hon. Secretary.

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.—Hon. Organiser: MISS MANNING, B.A., Harper-hill, Sale, Cheshire.

Census Resistance.

All men and women anxious to boycott the Census should write at once to me at the above address, as the popularity of the protest will make the necessary organisation work very heavy. I have a number of houses promised for Manchester, and shall be glad to know from the other branch secretaries of the progress in their districts.

Eccles.—Miss J. HEYES, "Newholme," Hazelhurst, Worsley.

On Monday Miss Heyes visited the Broadway Socialist Society. Even here there were found some to uphold the point of view that woman had deserted her sacred trust of child-bearing and child-rearing to follow an absurd chimera, which would never effect any improvement in her position. As a large number of the audience were women workers this attitude met with strenuous opposition. The meeting was a great success, and Miss Heyes received an invitation to come again another time.—M. E. MANNING.

Sale.—Miss GELLER, "Thornlea," Wardle-road. VOTE AGENTS: Mrs. HOBSON, 13, Northenden-road; Mrs. WALKER, 125, Washway-road.

The speakers' class will soon accomplish its object, and give us several new speakers for summer propaganda work. On

Monday the discussion on Tariff Reform and Free Trade drew forth many short speeches and varied points of view. Miss Hines and Miss Fildes made admirable speeches for the Tariff Reform position, and were ably opposed by Mrs. Cross, Mrs. and Miss Manning. Mrs. Gothard opposed both sides, on the ground that neither had found the remedy for unemployment. Next time we discuss the following resolution: "That England's expenditure on armaments is excessive and a danger to the prosperity of the nation." By kind invitation of Mrs. Cross the meeting will be held at 33, School-road.

SOUTH OF ENGLAND BRANCHES.

Brighton and Hove.

Hon. Secretaries: MRS. FRANCIS, 51, Buckingham-place, Brighton; MISS HARE, 8, San Remo, Hove.

Weekly "At Homes" have been arranged at different members' houses on Wednesdays, either in the afternoon or evening. Three have already been held, when Mrs. Macheson, Miss Speke, and Mrs. Budd, respectively, were hostesses. The next will be on Wednesday, March 8, at 8, San Remo, at 8 p.m., when Miss Hayllar and Miss Nellen will speak and Miss Hare will be hostess.

A series of sixpenny Saturday Socials have also been arranged by our indefatigable Brighton secretary, Mrs. Francis, in order to raise money which we hope to send to headquarters. The first two—progressive games at Mrs. Francis' house and Suffrage plays at Mrs. Jones-Williams'—have been great successes in every way. The next one is a dramatic reading, arranged by Mrs. Francis, to be held at 8, San Remo on Saturday, March 4, at 7.30 p.m., by kind invitation of Miss Hare.

Members are asked to bring friends, especially unconverted ones, to any of the meetings.

Portsmouth and Gosport.—MRS. WHEATON, 64, Devonshire-avenue, Southsea.

A well-attended branch meeting was held at 6, Clarence View on Thursday evening, February 23. After the business was finished Miss Whitehouse read a very interesting paper on "Women's Work." A good discussion followed.

On Thursday afternoon, March 2, Mrs. Hay Shaw (Mrs. Donald Shaw) has kindly invited members and friends to meet at 3 o'clock at Kedleston, Junction-road, to discuss our Census plans. Two householders have already promised to fill their houses with resistors and refuse all information. Miss Mottershall is giving the second of a series of Whist Drives on Wednesday, March 8, at 7.30 p.m. Tickets 1s. each.

THE VOTE can always be obtained at 4, St. Paul's-road, Southsea.—S. WHEATON.

WALES AND MONMOUTH.—Hon. Organiser: MRS. CLEEVE, "Chez Nous," Sketty, Glamorgan.

Barry.

On Tuesday evening a large and enthusiastic meeting was held in the Co-operative Hall. Mrs. Cleeves presided, and Miss Anna Munro addressed the meeting on the King's Speech and Census protest. A very animated discussion followed, which proved the keen interest members, friends and opponents are taking in our latest form of passive resistance actively carried out.

Aberdare.

Great credit is due to the energetic secretary of one of our youngest branches for the meeting which assembled on Wednesday evening. Mrs. Walter Lloyd, who occupied the chair, announced her approval of the Census protest.

Whist Drive at Chez Nous.—In aid of the branch funds a large party assembled at Chez Nous on the invitation of Mrs. Cleeves. A very pleasant evening was spent, in the course of which Mrs. Cleeves sang "The Awakening," in which the entire company joined, and Miss Munro gave a short address on the Census protest.

Caldicot.—Miss L. CORBEN, Ivy Lodge.

On Thursday last we held our Census meeting, and in spite of most unfavourable weather over thirty people assembled and listened with keenest interest to the eloquent speech of Miss Anna Munro. Several people have since expressed their readiness to take part in the Census protest, and that is perhaps the best comment on the splendid way in which Miss Munro won the sympathies of her audience for the justice and urgency of our protest.

At the close of the meeting we sold twelve copies of THE VOTE, as well as other literature, also postcards of Miss Munro, and a collection was taken.

We are now getting busy preparing for our Sale of Work and Jumble Sale on the Wednesday after Easter (April 19), when we hope to have Mrs. Francis (N.E.C.) with us. Further details will be advertised later on in THE VOTE.—L. CORBEN.

OTHER PROVINCIAL BRANCHES.

Waterloo.—49, Kimberley-drive, Great Crosby.

On Friday, February 10, the Waterloo Branch held its King's Speech meeting at St. Luke's Boys' School, Crosby. This is new and notably hard ground, and the workers were hardly surprised at the small attendance. Miss Sidley and Miss Heyes unfolded the details of the Census protest with such enthusiasm that almost every woman present, from the branch members to the caretaker of the room, announced the intention of keeping her name from the Census Roll. Two householders offer hospitality for the night of April 2 to all "resisters" who wish to avail themselves of this opportunity. One lady declared that she would not rest content until a hundred and fifty women had

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promised to keep watch with her on Census night. In thanking Miss Sidley and Miss Heyes, the members of the Waterloo Branch think that the meeting, though small, was quite successful, and new members joined the branch.—J. A. E.

SCOTTISH NOTES.

Glasgow: Suffrage Centre, 502, SAUCHIEHALL STREET.
Suffrage Centre Managers: MISS H. McARTHUR.
Hon. Secretary: MISS B. S. SEMPLE.
Hon. Treasurer: MISS JANET L. BUNTEN.
Telegrams: "Tactics," Glasgow. Nat. Telephone: 435 Douglas.
Edinburgh.

Hon. Secretary—Miss A. B. JACK, 21, Buccleuch-place.
Hon. Treasurer—Miss M. A. WOOD, 67, Great King-street.
Hon. Shop Secretary—Mrs. THOMSON, 39, Rosslyn-crescent.

Our public meeting in the Oddfellows' Hall was very successful, and the utmost enthusiasm prevailed throughout. The explanation of the Census Boycott by the chairman, the inimitable witticisms of Mrs. Israel Zangwill, and the very plain speaking of Mr. Price, Liberal Member for Central Edinburgh, regarding the Government's delay in dealing with our question, were alike greeted with rounds of applause. Several converts, indeed, were made. Our good friend, Parish Councillor J. Dan Easson, of the Men's League, made an excellent chairman. The resolution calling upon the Government to grant facilities for our Bill at an early date was carried unanimously. Much of the success of the meeting was due to the Visiting Committee, and others, who canvassed members and householders in the division.—HELEN McLACHLAN, Assistant Secretary.

Dundee.—1, Blackness-crescent.

A branch meeting was held on Thursday, Miss Deas in the chair. The debate for the evening was "Burial versus Cremation." Miss Wilson argued that burial was the most natural, dignified and effective, as well as the most ancient method of disposing of our dead.

In opposition to this Miss Angus said that burial was crude and dangerous, and a menace to the community. The discussion was taken part in by several of the members, and an overwhelming majority voted in favour of cremation. Both ladies were cordially thanked for their interesting papers.

Some discussion took place on the evasion of the Census returns.

A Jumble Sale is settled for March 25, and members are urged to begin collecting at once so that we may have a record sale to cheer the treasurer's heart and fill her purse!—J. A. SMART.

OLIVE SCHREINER ON PARASITE WOMAN.*

It is only when one has finished the last page of this great book that its defects become apparent. Whilst reading it the sincerity and the broadness of outlook dwarf the occasional ruggedness of style and that occasional incoherence which not unfrequently clouds the dogmas of the visionary. But in the incoherence there is a certain grandeur and strength, for it is that of a woman who has a great deal to say and short time to say it in. All pain, all sorrow, all wrong is comparative, and no young woman could make comparisons in the way that Olive Schreiner does: only experience could have given us this rare book, and as experience is always dearly bought, so it was by great labour this volume grew to completion.

The circumstances of the loss of her book as originally planned is told by Mrs. Schreiner in her preface, and the tragedy of it is the greater because she was a woman who wrote very slowly and with evident pain and care. Many years of patient labour had been devoted to the maturing of this early book, or, indeed, as she says, a large part of my life, and I had hoped, whatever its deficiencies, that it might at least stimulate other minds, perhaps more happily situated, to an enlarged study of the question.

This book was burnt during the Boer War when she was away for her health in Aar. Her feelings at the loss may have been something like Carlyle's when Mill's servant-maid burned his "French Revolution," and, like him, she bravely, in the dark hours when the fate of the Boers was still in doubt, set to work on the present volume, "being a remembrance mainly drawn from one chapter of the larger book."

The armed native guards, she says, standing against the uncurtained windows, it was impossible to open the shutters, and the room was therefore always so dark that even the physical act of writing was difficult.

Whatever faults the book has in the "harking back" to its original can be forgiven in the fact that we have even a fragment of that original. And Olive Schreiner's point of view, however given, is worth the having.

Increased justice towards woman as a domestic labourer is one of the claims the book makes. As a subtle and logical tracing of the history of woman, from being in rude times the free companion of man, and in later years, when he grew to riches, his parasite, the survey is broad and perhaps deceptively complete. We give some excerpts taken from different parts of the book, but mainly from chapters headed "Parasitism":—

Woman's Right.

Not only are millions of our women precluded from ever bearing a child, but for those of us who do bear the demand is ever increasingly in civilised societies coupled with the condition that if we would act socially we must restrict our powers.

Looking round, then, with the utmost impartiality we can command, on the entire field of woman's ancient and traditional labours, we find that fully three-fourths of it have shrunk away for ever, and that the remaining fourth still tends to shrink.

Thrown into strict logical form our demand is this: We do not ask that our ancient spinning-wheels be again resuscitated and placed in our hands: we do not demand that our grindstones and hoes be returned to us, or that man should again betake himself entirely to his ancient province of war and the chase, leaving to us all domestic and civil labour. We do not even demand that society shall immediately so reconstruct itself that every woman may again be a child-bearer (deep and overmastering as lies the hunger for motherhood in every virile woman's heart!); neither do we demand that the children whom we bear shall again be put exclusively into our hands to train. This we know cannot be. The past material conditions of life have gone for ever; no will of man can recall them; but this is our demand: We demand that in that strange new world that is arising alike upon the man and the woman, where nothing is as it was and all things are assuming new shapes and relationships, that in this new world we also shall have our share of honours and socially useful human toil, our full half of the labour of the Children of Woman. We demand nothing more than this, and we will take nothing less. This is our "Woman's Right" (pp. 66, 67, 68).

Parasitism.

The position of the unemployed modern female is one wholly

* "Woman and Labour." By Olive Schreiner. (Fisher Unwin. 8s. 6d. net.)

different. The choice before her, as her ancient fields of domestic labour slip from her, is not generally or often at the present day the choice between finding new fields of labour or death, but one far more serious in its ultimate reaction on humanity as a whole—it is the choice between finding new forms of labour or sinking slowly into a condition of more or less complete and passive *sex parasitism* (p. 77).

Behind the phenomenon of female parasitism has always lain another and yet larger social phenomenon: it has invariably been preceded, as we have seen, by the subjugation of large bodies of other human creatures, either as slaves, subject races, or classes; and as the result of the excessive labours of those classes there has always been an accumulation of unearned wealth in the hands of the dominant class or race. It has invariably been by feeding on this wealth, the result of forced or ill-paid labour, that the female of the dominant race or class has in the past lost her activity and has come to exist purely through the passive performance of her sexual functions. Without slaves to perform the crude physical labours of life and produce superfluous wealth, the parasitism of the female would in the past have been an impossibility.

The mere use of any of the material products of labour, which we term wealth, can never in itself produce that decay, physical or mental, which precedes the downfall of great civilised nations. The eating of salmon at 10s. a pound can in itself no more debilitate and corrupt the moral, intellectual and physical constitution of the man eating it than it could enervate his naked forefathers who speared it in their rivers for food. The fact that an individual wears a robe made from the filaments of a worm can no more deteriorate her spiritual or moral fibre than were it made of sheep wool. . . . The debilitating effect of wealth sets in at the point exactly (and never before) at which the supply of material necessities and comforts and of aesthetic enjoyments clogs the individuality, causing it to rest satisfied in the mere passive possession of the results of the labours of others, without feeling any necessity or desire for further productive activity of its own (pp. 99, 100).

At the present day, so enormous has been the advance made in the substitution of mechanical force for crude physical human exertion (mechanical force being employed to-day even in the shaping of feeding-bottles and the creation of artificial foods as substitutes for mother's milk!) that it is now possible not only for a small and wealthy section of women in each civilised community to be maintained without performing any of the ancient, crude, physical labours of their sex, and without depending on the slavery of, or any vast increase in the labour of other classes of females; but this condition has already been reached, or is tending to be reached, by that large mass of women in civilised societies who form the intermediate class between poor and rich. During the next fifty years, so rapidly will undoubtedly be the spread of the material conditions of civilisation, both in the societies at present civilised and in the societies at present unpermeated by our material civilisation, that the ancient forms of female domestic, physical labour, of even the women of the poorest classes, will be little required, their place being taken, not by other females, but by always increasingly perfected labour-saving machinery. Thus, female parasitism, which in the past threatened only a minute section of earth's women, under existing conditions threatens vast masses, and may, under future conditions, threaten the entire body.

If woman is content to leave to the males all labour in the new and all-important fields which are rapidly opening before the human race; if, as the old forms of domestic labour slip from her for ever and inevitably, she does not grasp the new, it is inevitable that, ultimately, not merely a class, but the whole bodies of females in civilised societies, must sink into a state of more or less absolute dependence on their sexual functions alone (pp. 114 and 115).

The truth is, we are not new. . . . We are women of a breed whose racial ideal was no Helen of Troy, passed passively from male hand to male hand, as men pass gold or lead; but that Brynhild whom Segurd found, clad in helm and byrne, the warrior maid, who gave him counsel "the deepest that ever yet was given to living man," and "wrought on him to the performing of great deeds"; who, when he died, raised high the funeral pyre and lay down on it beside him, crying, "Nor shall the door swing to at the heel of him as I go in beside him!" (pp. 144 and 145).

Woman's Future Share of Labour.

From the judge's seat to the legislator's chair; from the statesman's closet to the merchant's office; from the chemist's laboratory to the astronomer's tower, there is no post or form of toil for which it is not our intention to attempt to fit ourselves; and there is no closed door we do not intend to force open; and there is no fruit in the garden of knowledge it is not our determination to eat. Acting in us, and through us, nature we know will mercilessly expose to us our deficiencies in the field of human toil, and reveal to us our powers. And from to-day we take all labour for our province!

On that day, when the woman takes her place beside the man in the governance and arrangement of external affairs of her race will also be that day that heralds the death of war as a means of arranging human differences. No tinsel of trumpets and flags will ultimately seduce women into the insanity of reck-

lessly destroying life, or gild the willful taking of life with any other name than that of murder, whether it be the slaughter of the million or of one by one.

In the preface she lines out what the first intention in making the book had been, and in ending it she utters what seems to us who can only guess faintly and vaguely what our successors in future generations will be like and what they will feel of all we have suffered, either mentally or physically for them.

A Great Prophecy.

"I should like to say to the men and women of the generations which will come after us, 'You will look back at us with astonishment! You will wonder at passionate struggles that accomplished so little; at the, to you, obvious paths to attain our ends which we did not take; at the intolerable evils before which it will seem to you we sat down passive; at the great truths staring us in the face which we failed to see; at the truths we grasped at, but could never quite get our fingers round. You will marvel at the labour that ended in so little; but what you will never know is how it was thinking of you and for you that we struggled as we did and accomplished the little which we have done; that it was in the thought of your larger realisation and fuller life that we found consolation for the futilities of our own.'

M. O. K.

LORD LYTTON ON PROSPECTS AND DANGERS OF THE NEW BILL.

At the opening of the International Women's Franchise Club's new rooms, 9, Grafton-street, Piccadilly, on February 23, there was a large attendance of members, the handsome rooms being crowded from exit to entrance. Mr. Herbert Jacobs presided.

The Earl of Lytton, President of the Club, made a powerful speech, some excerpts from which we give. As the questions at the conclusion were particularly pertinent we give them.

The Commons Favourable.

"May I say a word about our prospects? The present House of Commons is rather more favourable to Women's Suffrage than the last. The figures have been published, and probably you have seen them in some organ of Suffrage opinion, but I may perhaps mention them again to-night to recall them to your memory. We have ranged against us only 193 whom we can call resolute opponents. In a Parliament of 600 odd, there are 246 whom we can count upon in any emergency as resolute supporters. Out of the remaining 227 there are only 65 who are neutral or undecided, or who have never committed themselves one way or another. The remaining 162 have all declared themselves in favour of Women's Suffrage. Forty-two of them are Adult Suffragists who would probably give us their support on the Second Reading of our Bill, but would be prepared to move amendments in its later stages, and, if unsuccessful, would possibly vote against us on the Third Reading. There are 120 who have also voted for and declared themselves in favour of Suffrage Bills in the past, but the quality of whose convictions leaves something to be desired. We are able to count on a majority at least as large—rather larger than we obtained in the last Session. Therefore, we have every confidence that on May 5 the Second Reading of our Bill will be carried by a large majority.

'Next Session' is Here.

"We have been told that we must concentrate on this Session. We mean to do so. We mean to use every possible art to obtain from ministers the fulfilment of their pledges. They told us, as they have so often told us in the past, that they could not do anything for us last Session, 'but next Session'; and now 'next Session' is here. The practical step which we propose to take is clear. We are quite aware that we cannot impress the Government unless we can show a determination on the part of the House of Commons to pass our Bill. What we want to show is that the House of Commons is in favour of our Bill, and is prepared to go forward with it this Session. Immediately after the passing of the Second Reading we shall ballot for a private members' evening on which a resolution can be moved, and we shall bring forward a resolution asking the House of Commons to proceed. If we can get the desire of the House so expressed, to proceed

with the Bill this Session, it will be impossible for the Government to refuse further time.

The Private Members' Price.

"Our efforts must be concentrated firstly on converting the sixty-five neutral gentlemen, and in strengthening the convictions of our friends, so that when the time comes when the House will be asked to demand of the Government their price for what they have given to the Government—their own private members' time—the demand will be made by a very substantial majority. The Government demanded at the beginning of the Session that they should surrender some of their time in order the more speedily to remove the privileges of the House of Lords. It was given, of course, with alacrity, but I am sorry to say it was given very cheaply, they demanded no price in return. Now I think the private Members of the House of Commons have a perfect right to ask their price for the surrender of their privileges, and the price I think they ought to ask of the Government is that they will allow the House to sit on—right through the autumn, if necessary—in order to pass a Women's Suffrage Bill."

QUESTIONS.

Byles' Bill.

In reply to a question as to whether the Bill which Mr. Byles was to introduce—a Bill practically in favour of Adult Suffrage—might possibly block the Women's Suffrage Bill, Lord Lytton said that he did not think it possible, by putting down a motion of another Bill, to block a Bill that had received a place in the Ballot. The other Bill would have to take its place under the ten minutes' rule.

It!—

In response to another question, Lord Lytton said that if the day secured by the ballot were taken by the Government, they would have to ballot again. Mr. Asquith would have to ask the House of Commons to allow him to take that day; he was in the hands of the House; he could only take it, of course, if the House agreed to give it up.

The House of Lords.

Asked: "What would you consider the chance of our Bill would be in the House of Lords?" Lord Lytton said: "I take my information from the newspapers, not from personal knowledge of the convictions of my fellow peers in the House, but from what I read in the newspapers it seems very clear that the House of Lords will demand that the will of the people be expressed on this Bill by a Referendum, before they agree to proceed with it. Now, I should like to say that I regard that as a very great danger which lies before us, and for this reason: the Government which in almost every case expresses its utter scorn and depreciation of the Referendum as undemocratic, has already expressed, by many of its members, the desire to send a Women's Suffrage Bill to a Referendum. I say it is a great danger, because I regard it really, in the words used by several members of the Government themselves, as a matter which it is the business of Parliament and the business of the Government of the day to settle by their own responsibility, as they think for the good, or with reference to the needs, of the people."

In a leader referring to those who were decorated by the King last week, *The Daily Telegraph* says of Mrs. Wright (who saved an unarmed constable at night-time engaged in an unequal struggle with an armed ruffian in the Borough): "We cannot doubt that there are very many like her, and while such women abound in Britain there ought to be no fear that the men are unworthy of their ancestors."

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CENSUS QUERIES.

This week I am going to deal with a few of the many questions I have received.

How can I, a householder, resist and yet avoid paying the Government £5?

In three ways. (1) By going to prison instead of paying the fine; (2) by letting your house for the week-end to a friend, who would either go to prison or pay the fine; (3) by shutting up the house, leaving a notice on the door, "No votes for women, no census," and going away before Sunday evening, not returning until Monday evening or, better, Tuesday morning. The house not being occupied no return could be made, but the authorities would be in doubt as to whether the occupier was really absent or was protesting in this way. Such resisters would arrange to go to the houses of other occupiers who are resisting.

What degree of publicity is likely to be given to people who are fined?

Probably a short notice in the local paper, but if the numbers in the particular district are large they may even escape having their names mentioned. If the person who wishes to resist cannot, on account of business or professional reasons, risk this amount of publicity, then the best plan to follow is to shut up her house, leaving a notice on the door, and seek a temporary home with another passive resister.

What can be done to a resister who has no portable property?

If the resister refuses to pay the fine the Government will, as usual, proceed to spend money on keeping the offender in prison. The conviction would be obtained under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts, and our experience has hitherto been that a fine of £5 corresponds to a month's imprisonment. As one does no work in prison which can bring any remuneration to the authorities it would appear that the spending of public money on persons who refuse to pay fines is a sacrifice to the god of revenge, though done in the name of justice.

How can one constitute oneself an occupier of another person's house, as suggested in Mr. Housman's article last week?

In the ordinary way, by the occupier letting you the house for the week or the week-end, you will pay a sum of money, for which the occupier will give you a formal legal receipt, which will constitute the proof that on the night of April 2 you were legally in possession of the house in question.

If the householder goes away, leaving another person responsible, i.e., with definite written instructions, and that other person refuses to give information, who will pay the fine?

It is difficult to say, for the Act provides "on every such schedule shall be plainly expressed that it is to be filled up by the occupier for whom it is left"; but as later on it says "every occupier shall fill up, or cause to be filled up," it would appear that the other person would be held responsible.

Is it true that there is no obligation on anyone to give information to the occupier?

The Census Act does not impose any obligation on the occupier or give him any power to obtain information, much less does it impose any duty on persons other than the occupier to furnish information. One of our legal friends writes to me: "In my opinion, therefore, persons who refuse to answer questions are guilty of no offence. Of course, if two or more persons conspire to persuade people to withhold information they may be guilty of an offence; but I am by no means sure that even in this case they would be, having regard to the fact that the Act imposes no duty to give information."

Volunteers for this passive resistance should send in their names and addresses as soon as possible.

EDITH HOW MARTYN.

On the agenda of the Eighty Club is an amendment that ladies be admitted as guests to meetings at which there are men guests.

DIET.

QUESTIONS of Diet are now much occupying the attention of the intelligent and advanced classes, and there is a widely-felt desire to benefit by the experience and research of qualified scientific investigators.

Statistics show that the consumption of meat per head in this country is now seventeen times as great as it was in 1850, and according to the best authorities the modern susceptibility to disease and rapid ageing of men and women is due to dietetic errors, of which this over-consumption of meat is the chief. Many people are aware of this but do not know what substitutes they should take. To all such we recommend Christian's Unfired Bread and Protoid Nuts as being approved by the best medical and scientific authorities. Thus Dr. Chalmers Watson, Editor of "Encyclopædia Medica," says: "There is no doubt that a little of this system (Eugene Christian's) could with advantage be introduced into ordinary dietaries, both in health and disease. A word of special commendation may be paid to the Unfired Bread, which is an excellent preparation. Protoid nuts as prepared by Christian are an excellent sample of a highly nutritious and easily digested food."

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AT
WESTMINSTER FRIENDS' MEETING-HOUSE,
52, St. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.
(Three minutes' walk from Leicester-square Tube Station.)

PROGRAMME.

MORNING, 11 o'clock. Chairman, W. S. CLARK.
"The Limitations of Rescue Work as a Check to Immorality,"
to be opened by Mrs. BRAMWELL BOOTH.

AFTERNOON, 2.30 o'clock. Chairman, W. S. CLARK.
"The Dangers of New Methods of Regulation of Vice,"
to be introduced by MAURICE GREGORY,
who will give some account of his recent visit to Gibraltar in this connection.

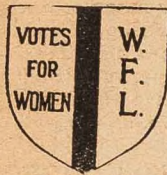
EVENING, 7 o'clock. Chairman, CHAS. I. EVANS, M.A.,
Headmaster of Leighton Park.
"Sex Education through the Home, the School, and the Gymnasium,"
to be introduced by MARY LITTLEBOY, J. H. BADLEY, M.A.
(Headmaster of Bedale's), and ETHEL ADAIR IMPEY (late
Principal Dunfermline College of Hygiene and Physical
Training, Editor of "The Journal of Scientific Physical
Training").

Full opportunity will be given for discussion at each meeting.

—MAURICE GREGORY, Secretary.
26, Devonshire Chambers, Bishopsgate, E.C.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

LONDON.



- Thurs., Mar. 2.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches 3.30 p.m. Mr. G. E. O'Dell, Mrs. Despard. Mrs. Pickering, 23, Albert-road, Peckham, 7.30 p.m. Miss Alison Neilans.
- Fri., Mar. 3.**—Census meeting, 8 p.m. Lecture Room, Public Library, Battersea.
- Sat., Mar. 4.**—"Old Rump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Miss Vera Wentworth.
- Sun., Mar. 5.**—7 p.m., Friends' Meeting House, St. John's-lane, Clerkenwell, E.C. *Speaker*: Mrs. Mustard.
- Mon., Mar. 6.**—2 p.m., Poster Parade.
- Tues., Mar. 7.**—Stamford Hill Branch "At Home" at 6, Fairholt-road, by kind invitation of Mrs. Griffiths, 3.30 p.m. Miss Davies, 161, Croxted-road, Dulwich, 3 p.m. Mrs. Despard. At P.S.A., Selhurst-road, 8 p.m. Debate. Miss Ethel Fennings.
- Wed., Mar. 8.**—8 p.m., Horniman's Hall, Croydon. Debate with Young Liberals. Miss Ethel Fennings.
- Thurs., Mar. 9.**—"At Home," Caxton Hall, 3 p.m. Speeches 3.30 p.m. Mrs. Despard, Mr. Laurence Housman, on "Women and the Census."
- Sat., Mar. 11.**—"Old Rump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Nurse Ritfield.
- Mon., Mar. 13.**—Census Meeting, Harrow, 8 p.m. Mrs. How Martyn and Mr. Laurence Housman. 20, Ravenscourt-gardens, W. 7.30 p.m. Mrs. O'Dell, Mrs. Vulliamy.
- Wed., Mar. 15.**—8 p.m., at the Bijou Theatre, 3, Bedford-street, a public meeting organised by the Mid-London (late Central) Branch. *Speaker*: Mrs. Despard. *Chair*: Mrs. Tanner. *Hostess*: Miss Bosley. A recitation will be given by Miss Olive Terry. 7 p.m., at same place, a Committee Meeting of Mid-London Branch.
- Fri., Mar. 17.**—Census Meeting, N. Finchley. Stephen's Memorial Hall. Mrs. How Martyn, Mrs. Nevinson, 8 p.m.
- Sat., Mar. 18.**—"Old Rump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Mr. Victor Duval.
- Wed., Mar. 22.**—8.15 p.m., Town Hall, Anerley. Mrs. Despard.
- Fri., Mar. 24.**—1, Robert-street, 2 p.m. N.E.C.
- Sat., Mar. 25.**—1, Robert-street, 11 a.m., N.E.C. "Old Rump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Miss Gadsden.
- Sun., Mar. 26.**—1, Robert-street. Members' Meeting.
- Sat., April 1.**—3 p.m., Trafalgar-square. "Old Rump," Uxbridge, at 8 p.m. Miss Alison Neilans.

IPSWICH.

PROVINCES.

- Thurs., Mar. 2.**—13, Friars'-street, 8 p.m. Miss Cooke. SAFFRON WALDEN. Mrs. How Martyn.
- Tues., Mar. 7.**—Parish Room, 3 p.m. Miss Andrews, Mrs. Tippet. "At Home." STOWMARKET.
- Wed., Mar. 8.**—7.30 p.m., Central Hall, Ellesmere Port, near Chester. Miss Flo. Harris (Liverpool), Miss Nellie Smith. CHESTER.
- Thurs., Mar. 9.**—16, Arcade-street, 8 p.m. Mrs. Tippet. IPSWICH.
- Thurs., Mar. 16.**—Mrs. H. W. Nevinson. PORTSMOUTH.
- Sat., Mar. 18.**—7.30 p.m. Mrs. Despard. IPSWICH.
- Thurs., Mar. 30.**—Co-operative Hall, 8 p.m. Mr. Laurence Housman, Mrs. How Martyn. BURY ST. EDMUNDS.
- Fri., Mar. 31.**—Mr. Laurence Housman, Mrs. Tippet.

EDINBURGH.

SCOTLAND.

- Tues., Mar. 7.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. "At Home," 4 p.m.
- Wed., Mar. 8.**—Suffrage Shop, 33, Forrest-road. Branch Meeting, 8 p.m.
- Wed., Mar. 29.**—Annual Social Meeting. *Speaker*: Mrs. Despard.

NEWPORT.

WALES.

- Mon., Mar. 6.**—Census Boycott Meeting. *Speaker*: Miss Anna Munro. *Chair*: Mrs. Cleaves. 8 p.m.
- Tues., Mar. 21.**—Annual Meeting, St. Gabriel's Hall. "How the Vote was Won."

Injustice to Women Dispensers.

At the monthly meeting of the Battersea and District Women's Local Government Association, held on Tuesday, February 21, the following resolution was carried unanimously:—

That this meeting of the Women's Local Government Association condemns the recent action of the majority of the Wandsworth Board of Guardians in refusing to consider the qualifications of three women applicants for the post of dispenser as arbitrary, unjust, and opposed to the interests of local rate-payers.

In seconding the resolution Miss Shillington, D.Sc., pointed out that in advertising for a dispenser, the Board had not stated that no women need apply, and that there was nothing in dispensing that needed special masculine ability, dispensing having been a woman's occupation as far back as the middle ages. The resolution was carried unanimously.

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