

# THE VOTE

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

VOL. II.—No. 42.

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ONE PENNY.

## NOTICE.

Letters relating to editorial and business matters should be addressed to THE EDITOR and MANAGING DIRECTOR 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.

### Before the Recess.

The *Spectator*, alluding to the correspondence between Mr. Asquith and Lord Lytton, says that it is the business of a Prime Minister to be most careful that his words shall not be capable of double interpretation, and further remarks: "The incident recalls to our mind the Duke of Argyll's moving panegyric on the Duke of Devonshire (then Lord Hartington) in 1886: 'Oh, gentlemen, what a comfort it is to have a leader who means what he says and means you to understand what he says.'" The attitude of the Government is in the highest degree disingenuous. They will not accept this Bill and they will not draft one or suggest one to which they will give facilities. Their attitude in this matter is like that of the elephant in the fables of George Washington Æsop. The elephant, having killed a hen with a blow from his hoof, protested to the brood with tears in his eyes that to make up for the deed he would act the part of mother to them. So, gathering the chickens together beneath him he promptly sat upon them. The chickens' fate resembles that which the kindly Government would prepare for any further Bills which might succeed the present one, should our supporters be foolish enough to let the Conciliation Bill drop; knowing this, we are at present taking every possible precaution against those whose object it is to kill this Bill and give us nothing for it. Mr. Asquith reviewed with muchunction the great number of Bills he had piloted to safety during the past session, and there was hardly one of them which had not the interests of the male elector as its aim and object. The one great measure which he might have passed into law he endeavoured to shelve, and knowing that his own opposition—that of an avowed anti-suffragist—would be taken for granted, he engineered the opposition of two avowed suffragists—the only two members of his Cabinet whose love of office was greater than their love of honour—and this will not be forgotten to either him or them.

### During the Holidays.

The great House is empty and silent for a time, but their anxieties are waiting for the Cabinet on their return, and not even "Colonel Bogey" can drive them wholly away during this time of respite. Scotland has now introduced an insistent demand for Home Rule which is not unlikely to become as harassing as that of the Green Isle; the Budget is waiting for them; and the results of the Conference will have to be made known. But than any of these new and old troubles which the Government will have to face in the autumn, the demand of the women will prove

more pressing. The truce which we have called will continue, but it is a truce for purposes of education and propaganda, and the Government will find its results wide and far-reaching when they go to the country. Mr. Keir Hardie has given notice of motion that our Bill have precedence in the autumn session. To that end our work in the holiday months is directed, and we surrounded Westminster on the day the House rose with a peaceful cordon holding up THE VOTE to the gaze of the M.P.s going holiday-making, that the memory of the women who never forget their duty may inspire the Government with the desire to do theirs. Mr. Birrell told the House that, "after all, our minds are not centred in our seats. They deserve a more desirable habitation." Though Mr. Birrell was once a professor and ought to know, yet we believe that the ordinary member is vulnerable in this one point, and we shall prove ourselves right by paying particular attention to the constituents of certain chosen ones during the present time of truce.

### Women in the Shoe Trade.

It is a very excellent sign of the times that women workers in the boot and shoe trade are organising for better wages. It is, as was stated by Miss Willson, Secretary of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives, Leicester (No. 3, Women's Branch), at a recent meeting at South Wigston, the intention of the Women's Branch to establish a minimum wage of 21s. for all women over eighteen years of age, and a standard rate of pay for all piece workers. Women's work to-day in the shoe trade required more skill than in the past, she said, it was the tops of the boots that appealed to the eye of the buyer, and it was therefore their duty, as women, to see that their part of the production was well paid for. With low wages and short work, it necessarily followed that they were compelled to live at the cheapest rate possible, which meant poor food and cheap clothing, and this had the effect of decreasing work and wages in other trades. A large number of women joined the Union at the close of the meeting. These are the signs that the evolution of the woman worker who realises her own importance in the general scheme of things is going to be a quicker process than the male capitalist is prepared to like. Every such realisation, in whatsoever trade it is found, helps to bring nearer the day when cheap labour shall no longer mean female labour.

### Our Municipal Votes.

During the heat of the recent debate the accusation that we do not vote at municipal elections has been thrown at us. There is a certain apathy amongst women in voting for administrators of laws of which they have had no hand in the making; but men, for some unknown reason, are equally slack in voting for the municipal councillor. There are, we hear, numbers of women not on the registers who ought to be, and owing to the nature of the Women Occupiers' Suffrage Bill, which may find itself law before next year, it is well for all women who have claims to be occupiers to see if their names are on the municipal register. This is hung up from August 1st outside every church, chapel, post office, or public building in their parish, and if their name be not upon it, claim should be made before Saturday, August 20th, and the overseers of the parish or the secretary of the political association which they favour should be informed. All information as to the municipal vote may be obtained from the Women's Local Government Society, 17, Tothill Street, Westminster.

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PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT.—MISS HICKS, M.A., MRS. SNOW.

### PROPAGANDA DEPARTMENT.

"Lest You Forget."

On the day the House rose the Women's Freedom League went down to Westminster to remind the Members through our presence, and the country through the Press, that although conditions may vary and circumstances change as the fight passes from one phase to another, Suffragists are always on the alert and will never falter, never rest, until our high purposes have been achieved. The message we sought to convey was taken up by the Press in quite an exceptional manner, and the demonstration received favourable notice throughout the length and breadth of the land.

#### Constituency Campaigns.

Members are again asked to watch the movements of their local members of Parliament, and to see that the burning question is not overlooked. Isolated members of the W.F.L. wishing to know the exact record of their M.P. on the Conciliation Bill should apply to the nearest Branch or to me. It is also desirable to use the present dull newspaper season for working up a correspondence in the local press on the attitude of their respective M.P.s, in such a way as to draw a statement from them.

#### Holiday Propaganda.

Once more the vast holiday crowds have gone out from their homes to the sea and the hills, to meet new people and to make new friends, and everywhere Suffragists are at work spreading the gospel of equal rights and fair play. We can all work with renewed hope, for the public Press and reports from everywhere testify to one fact—that the whole country is gaining the positive conviction that women will be enfranchised soon. A year ago there was some doubt, some fear, and much uncertainty, but now to every clear-sighted and fair-minded person Woman Suffrage has become a matter of practical politics immediately realisable. This is a great encouragement, and must spur us on to fight better, utilising every opportunity the intercourse with strangers and friends affords to push the interests of the Cause.

**EASTBOURNE AND FELIXSTOWE.**—These are the holiday Suffrage centres for London members, and promise to be most successful. In Felixstowe the work includes a Caravan Campaign, and from Eastbourne, in view of the energy and devotion of Mrs. Dilks and Miss Munro, great things are also expected. At present a big demonstration is being organised in which Mrs. Despard will take part. From Eastbourne the war will be carried into Bexhill, Hastings, and other South Coast towns. Members going to the seaside are urged to remember the Suffrage centres. Those willing to help can have special arrangements made for their accommodation.

**ISLE OF SHEPPEY.**—Visitors this week are asked to communicate with Miss K. Raleigh, Cliff Cottage, Eastchurch, who is organising open-air meetings in this district.

**MIDHURST.**—Miss Cummin, Easebourne Vicarage, Midhurst, Sussex, the Hon. Secretary of the West Sussex Branch, will be glad to receive help for outdoor and indoor meetings.

#### "The Vote."

There is no member of the W.F.L. who can plead inability to serve the movement for a single day, for on everyone there lies the duty of helping THE VOTE. As the official organ of the League it depends largely on members of the League, and they can increase its success in three ways: by thinking out and suggesting to the Editor how to make it still more attractive, by pushing the sale, and particularly by supporting the advertising

department. If every member will each week buy something from one of the firms advertising in THE VOTE, and will mention the paper, this will be of great service. It will increase the advertisement income of THE VOTE, thus strengthening its power to aid the movement. Remember that in helping THE VOTE, you help the great cause it champions. B. BORRMANN WELLS.

### CARAVAN TOUR.

On Monday (Bank Holiday) morning at Dunstable we chalked a meeting for that evening as usual, and although there was a counter attraction in the shape of local sports, we attracted a fair audience, and found several keen supporters in the crowd, who zealously removed one or two men who had enjoyed their holiday "not wisely but too well." One old lady came out of her house to assure herself that we were all right, and told us she was a suffragist long before either of us was born. "But of course," she wound up, "you militants have waked things up a bit—we were so discouraged before you began!"

On Tuesday morning we moved on to Hockliffe. There was no way of getting there except by walking or driving, so we were compelled to hire a conveyance and drive over. We found Hockliffe a very small village, but we had to call at each of the five inns before we succeeded in securing a pitch; and when the van arrived there was a great struggle to get it through the gate on account of an overhanging tree and a wire drawn across above the gateway. We had chalked the only pavements and the telegraph poles in a very short time, and soon the village people were all aware of our presence. However, very few of the inhabitants were courageous enough to come out and hear us, and those who did had to come close up to distinguish our speeches from the noise created by the local imbecile, who had a chair a few feet from ours and kept up a continual shouting during the whole of our meeting.

We decided to move on here (Woburn) the next day. Again there were no trains, and we had to drive, and a very enjoyable drive it was. On this occasion our chaise was driven by the daughter of a man who used to speak with Dr. Pankhurst very many years ago. At Woburn we had considerable difficulty in securing our pitch, as a party of show caravans had arrived and captured most of the available ground. Eventually we got a delightful spot from a friendly innkeeper and his wife, who had recently entertained some Suffragettes, and so felt kindly disposed towards us.

Miss Roff had joined us at Hockliffe, and she and I held the first meeting here that same night, after Miss Henderson had "cried" it (there are no pavements at all in Woburn). We found the natives very shy—they stood around as far off as possible, and altogether were most unresponsive. The next two evenings stormy weather prevented us holding any meetings at all, but on Saturday Miss Roff and Miss Guttridge held a most successful meeting at Woburn Sands. Miss Henderson and I intended holding one at Woburn, but when we arrived on the spot we found that the sexton, who lived opposite our meeting-place, had just been drowned. In view of this untoward event, we fold the various groups of people who were standing about that we would hold the meeting on Monday night instead.

MARGUERITE A. SIDLEY.

#### Miss Reeves's Whist Drive.

In aid of the funds of the London Branches Council, Miss Reeves arranged and acted as hostess for a most successful and enjoyable whist-drive held at the W.F.L. Office on July 26th. This seems one of the pleasantest ways of raising money, and Mrs. How Martyn's proposal at the close of the proceedings that monthly whist-drives should be arranged during the coming winter was received with general acclamation.—F. A. U.

#### Mary Wollstonecraft's Tomb.

Suffragists, when in Bournemouth, should not fail to pay a visit to Mary Wollstonecraft's tomb in St. Peter's churchyard, which, with its secluded by-ways and steep wooded paths, is perhaps one of the prettiest churchyards in England. The remains of the authoress were removed from St. Pancras, and now lie with those of Godwin and their daughter Mary Godwin Shelley.

## THE GIRL HE LEFT BEHIND HIM!



By kind permission of the "Daily Chronicle."

The above appropriate cartoon, "The Girl He Left Behind Him," by David Wilson, appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* of Thursday last. The girl he left behind him is seen holding a copy of THE VOTE, and it symbolises our reminder to the representatives of the male electorate that we have no intention of allowing them to forget us even on holiday.

From 12 noon till 2 on last Wednesday we stood at the various gates of the House. We allowed no entrance to escape our vigilance, and each of our members was armed

### THE TRUCE CONTINUED.

We have sent a notice to the Press that "the Women's Freedom League National Committee, at its last meeting, decided that the truce should be still continued. In the meantime, and in order to be prepared for all eventualities, it was further decided to place before all Suffrage Societies a suggestion for a great national campaign, securing the concentration of all Suffrage forces in one direction. Invitations have been issued for a conference, which will meet in September or October." This notice has been given wide publicity. Meantime we are educating the electors, and those who presently will be electors.

Mrs. Sproson (N.E.C.) writes expressing her gratitude for the sympathy of her friends and colleagues in her recent bereavement.

### THE WOMEN VOTED.

At Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., last week the women voted, regardless of their previous attitude on the question of suffrage. Under an old village ordinance women property owners are entitled to vote in elections where appropriations are to be authorised. Hitherto the privilege has never been exercised, but when the project to vote money for sewers, street improvements, and school buildings was to be decided, the women turned out in force. So well did they work and vote that every proposal was carried, and some \$300,000 will be expended for needed improvements. The most approved election methods were utilised by the women. Automobiles and carriages took them to the polls and a woman at the booths instructed each voter carefully how to cast her ballot.—*The Woman's Journal*, Boston.

## MR. HUGH LAW, M.P.

Nationalist Member for West Donegal.

The member for West Donegal is one of the firm friends of the Suffrage Cause in the House. He is always ready at the right time to ask the Government pertinent questions, either concerning the treatment of Suffragists or the Government attitude towards the demand for enfranchisement, and a question from the Nationalist benches has to be answered without evasions. Mr. Law is a member of the Conciliation Committee, on which, with Mr. Kettle and others, he has had to watch over the interests of those Irishwomen who would be enfranchised under any possible Bill which might be drafted.

Mr. Law is an Oxford man, and is particularly useful to the Irish Party on this account. To the imperturbability of the Oxford manner he adds the sense of humour of his native soil, and the combination has often proved a dangerous weapon against the most polished periods of the Opposition. Mr. Law does not speak much in the House, but when he does he is listened to with attention, and the Irish Party has few members who answer the Party Whip with more regularity or watch the interests of the "Intelligent Isle" with more jealous earnestness. In appearance Mr. Law bears a strong resemblance to the first man who used the common tongue of Italy as a literary weapon—Dante. But Mr. Law does not copy his prototype in sending his enemies to the lowest malebolge of the Inferno—he prefers that in seasonable time they should be sent to the country.

Mr. Law gave the editor of THE VOTE a brief interview recently in the Lobby of the House.

"The problem of Woman Suffrage," he said, "is not an isolated problem—everything to-day is tending towards equality. You can have no special political categories into which you can put men and women as men and women. Our forefathers divided all humanity into classes and categories—men and women, children and adults, rich and poor, those who were born into the world to be masters and those who were destined by Divine Providence to be slaves. To each class or category was assigned—quite arbitrarily in the thought of the day—what were supposed to be its appropriate functions and duties. To certain families in this country, for example, there was tacitly assigned the function of government; to the rest the duty of obedience. To-day our motto (imperfectly observed, I admit) is that of Mirabeau, 'La carrière ouverte aux talents.' We are all democrats nowadays—in word at least. Even dukes, I understand, profess their anxiety to 'consult the country' and to 'defer to the will of the people.' As in politics," continued Mr. Law, with a

smile, "so in the more important affairs of life. We no longer content ourselves with telling our children 'Little boys should be seen and not heard.' We really try to study childhood, not merely to make it obey us. We even sometimes contrive to remember how things looked to us when we were children ourselves. In a word, we think less of categories and more of individuals. The opposition to Woman Suffrage is simply a belated remnant of a habit of thought which we have abandoned in relation to almost everything else. To say that political inequality as between the sexes is a remnant of barbarism is not, however, to ignore sex differences. Sex, thank Heaven, is too strong. Else this world would be a mighty dull place!"

"You believe, then, in absolute political equality?"

"I never could see anything specially appropriate in confining political rights to one sex. The opponents of Women's Franchise say there would be the danger of a majority of women swamping by their votes a minority of men, but this is illogical. There has been no great question in the past on which men and women have been divided simply as men and women. There is no conceivable question which can go before the country for which all women and no men will vote, or all men and no women. Individuals attack the political questions from their standards of what is right or wrong, just or unjust, expedient or inexpedient, but seldom from the point of view of sex."

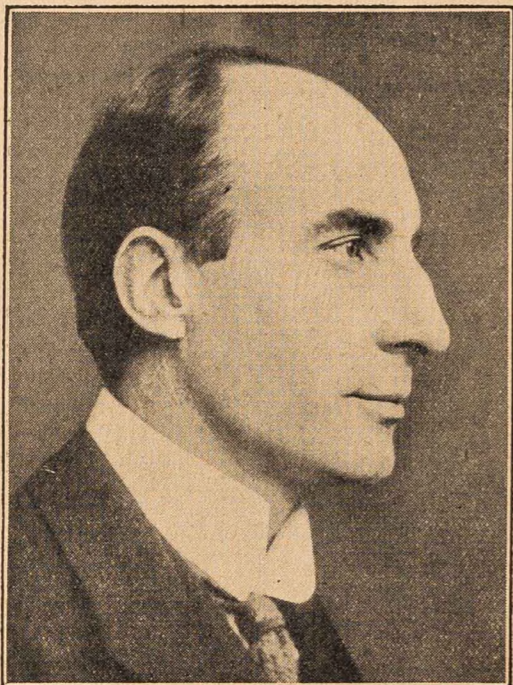
"But suppose the impossible—suppose they did vote as women against men—what then?"

"Granting the impossible—even if they did, the principle of democracy is that the will of the people is the supreme law. You

cannot have the will of the people and rule out half the people. Not being an Englishman, I have no distrust of first principles, and I say that it is obviously just and right that women should be represented, whatever the result might be."

"And do you see a great New England and a great New Ireland springing out of this change when it comes?"

"I do not. I am no believer in the Millennium. The change will be an imperceptible one. The people who will be enfranchised will obtain gradually and automatically those advantages which direct representation gives. The traveller from the distant country coming over here will see no obvious signs of a great revolution or a new regeneration. Things will go on much as before, but justice will have been done one half the population."



MR. HUGH LAW, M.P.



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## BATTLE HYMN OF THE WOMEN.

**THEY** are waking, they are waking,  
In the East and in the West,  
They are throwing wide their windows to the sun;  
And they see the dawn is breaking,  
And they quiver with unrest:  
For they know their work is waiting to be done.  
They are waking in the city,  
They are waking on the farm,  
They are waking in the boudoir and the mill;  
And their hearts are full of pity—  
So they sound the loud alarm,  
For the sleepers who in darkness slumber still.  
In the guarded harem prison,  
Where they smother under veils,  
And the echoes of the world are walled away,  
Though the sun has not yet risen,  
Ye the ancient darkness pales,  
And the sleepers in their slumbers dream of day.  
Oh! the dream shall grow in splendour,  
Till each sleeper wakes and stirs,  
Till she breaks from old traditions and is free;  
And the world shall rise and render  
Unto Woman what is hers,  
As it welcomes in the Race that is to be.  
Unto Woman, God the Maker  
Gave the secret of His plan;  
It is written out in cipher on her soul—  
From the darkness you must take her  
To the light of day, O Man,  
Would you know the mighty meaning of the scroll.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

[This stirring hymn, which we are permitted to print in THE VOTE, has just been published simultaneously in the States and in London (Messrs. Gay and Hancock are the London publishers). It was given to Mrs. Cope, one of our members, by Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, to use as she pleased, and it will be presently set to music. While Mrs. Wilcox was in London she recited it to Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Cope. Only Mrs. Cope and Messrs. Gay and Hancock have any English rights in this poem, and Mrs. Cope is using hers for the benefit of the W.F.L.]

## IRISH DEPUTATION TO MR. REDMOND.

The answer of Mr. John Redmond, chairman of the Irish Party, to the deputation from the Irishwomen's Franchise League which recently waited upon him at the House could not be called entirely satisfactory. Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington, one of the delegates, pointed out that, in spite of the Constitutional crisis, the Irish Party could as legitimately take action in support of the Suffrage Bill as in support of the Accession Declaration Bill, which she instanced as showing that the Irish Party did not confine themselves to the question of Home Rule. They asked Mr. Redmond, therefore, to use his political and personal influence with the Government to enable this Bill (which passed its second reading by a majority larger than that on the Veto Resolutions) to pass into law this session, and that no Cabinet veto should block the way.

Mr. Redmond said he would not have an opportunity to mention Woman Suffrage in a speech on the adjournment, because he did not intend to make one. So far as pressing for facilities for the Bill was concerned, his hands were tied because of the pledge taken by the Irish Party that they would do everything in their power to prevent the Government from bringing forward any contentious measure until the Veto question was settled. But he would certainly undertake to bring the fact of the deputation and their views before the Irish Party at their next meeting. He thought a majority of the Party was in favour of the Bill, though a more democratic one would certainly have secured larger support.

"Will either party benefit immediately by the accession of voters under the new Bill, should it pass?"

"That would be impossible to say. Women will not vote as a sex for one party or the other; but even if they were expected to vote *en masse* for the party to which the Government in power happened to be opposed, it should make no difference to any member of that Government in his attitude towards the Bill. It is a question of right and wrong, and not of possible additions to the voting strength of any particular party."

"And the fate of the Bill?"

"I have a distrust of political prophecies."

"Do you think that militancy has, as our opponents say, put back the movement?"

"You have the analogy of Ireland. No show of strength, of earnestness, of sincerity, ever put back any movement, and the man or woman who says to the contrary only deals in surface humanities. No one ever won power save by proving that he had the elements of it in himself."

"The Irish women have a disability in voting for the County Council, have they not?"

"That has been remedied in a Bill which has been entrusted to me to bring in. It has the support both of Nationalist and Unionist representatives, and I hope it may be passed into law this year."

"What is the attitude of Irish women towards the Suffrage?"

"Irish women are extremely anxious for enfranchisement, but they also want Home Rule, and they are specially bound to the Irish Party for this reason, and I do not think they will be likely to embarrass it at a moment of crisis when Home Rule is at stake. Some time ago Mr. John Redmond, the Chairman of the Irish Party, received a deputation of Irish women demanding that the question of enfranchisement should be given prominence by the Party. The majority of the Irish Party are, I think, in favour of the enfranchisement of women, and if it rested with us, the matter would be settled at once."

M. O. KENNEDY.

## 101 POINTS IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

These points will cover the legal, social, and economic grounds on which women demand the vote, and will call attention to the glaring inconsistencies which demand a change in the present condition of the franchise.

**28.**—The so-called "legal privileges" of married women to pledge their husbands' credit and to have him jointly liable for libel are results of the time when the woman was regarded as her husband's chattel and without any separate entity. These privileges are of so humiliating a nature that all self-respecting women are desirous of their immediate removal.

The number of women who desire to pledge their husbands' credit or libel others is small, and in recent actions for libel where the husband was jointly cited, the woman only was punished. It would be well to have these shameful anomalies—humiliating as they are to the women of the country—swept from the Statute-book. They are the result of masculine legislation.

Lord Beaconsfield wrote in April, 1873:—"I was much honoured by receiving from your hands the memorial signed by eleven thousand women of England, among them some illustrious names, thanking me for my services in attempting to abolish the anomaly that the Parliamentary franchise attached to a household or property qualification, when possessed by a woman, should not be exercised. . . . As I believe this anomaly to be injurious to the best interests of the country, I trust to see it removed by the wisdom of Parliament."

A special meeting of the Council of the Women's Liberal Federation has been called for Monday, December 5th, to consider the situation with regard to Women's Suffrage. Delegates from 694 Women's Federal Associations will be present.

## THE VOTE.

Proprietors—THE MINERVA PUBLISHING CO., LTD., 148, Holborn Bars.  
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SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1910.

### BE READY!

The curtain has been rung down at Parliament Square. The clever necromancing performances by the political Davenport brothers—Messrs. Asquith, Lloyd George, and Winston Churchill—are at an end. The recess has begun, and the Parliamentary conjurers, whose thimble-rigging manoeuvres with the Conciliation Bill failed to hoodwink a public now alive to the subtleties, evasions, and jugglery which have been employed, are, no doubt, congratulating themselves upon having put off, for the time being, the serious consideration of the great question which they must know will have to be faced in the near future. Never, during the whole course of the militant movement towards the enfranchisement of womanhood, has there been a greater need for our workers to stand at attention and be ready for the word of command than at the present moment. Political betrayal is no new thing in the history of great reforms, and the Woman Suffrage cause has so often experienced chicanery and deception on the part of those in power in the House of Commons that the recent trickery has neither surprised nor dismayed a single unit in the great army of women who, having implicit trust in the righteousness of their movement, and in the integrity and courage of their leader, are preparing themselves to carry out whatever orders may be issued from headquarters.

In last week's issue of THE VOTE Mr. Brailsford announced that our supporters in the House of Commons intend, before Parliament reassembles in the autumn, to lay before the Prime Minister evidence of the urgency and extent of the demand for the passing of our Bill this year. "We take our stand," says Mr. Brailsford, "upon the rights of a majority." We began our work an obscure committee which stood alone. We now know that behind us is more than half the House of Commons, and every woman who respects herself." The organisation of the Women's Freedom League is now so complete that should the occasion arise there will be no lack of volunteers willing to make great and noble sacrifices in the cause of women's freedom. In the meantime, however, a pacific but active campaign has already been begun all over the country. Educational propaganda is in full swing. Even seaside and country holidays are being turned to account. Constituencies are being visited, open-air meetings are being arranged, street sales of THE VOTE are being organised in London and the provinces, and house-to-house visits are being made. Suffragists recognise that at a crisis like this much is expected of them, and that they are fulfilling such expectations is shown by the fact that workers are coming forward in every direction and giving their services in whatever capacity they can be of best use to the League. Ingenuity, resourcefulness, and imagination are all being brought into play. We recognise that every weapon is of value, and that in a crusade like ours not only every point of view is worth consideration, but every creative or original idea merits faithful investigation with a view to its possible adoption or adaptation.

Were Mr. Asquith an able statesman instead of merely a short-sighted politician, he would have learned ere this that it is a diplomatic error to attempt to treat in airy fashion, as if it were a parochial matter, a movement which has now assumed colossal proportions. It is not even a question which concerns this country alone. Militant action has so stirred public opinion in all civilised countries during the past five years that Woman Suffrage has now become of international interest.

It is interesting to observe that there are some people who never learn by experience. Mr. Asquith is evidently one of these. Even history itself does not appeal to him. The revolt of British women against political tyranny—govern-

ment without the consent of the governed—is as tremendous in its meaning as was the revolt of the Chartists, and as far-reaching in its nature. At the back of this great revolt are grievances which have been patiently borne for centuries past. In order to make revolt complete and ultimate victory certain, it is necessary that those who rebel should realise to the full not only all that their political subordination implies, but also the wide possibilities of the open door to political equality. That we have arrived at that point is no longer denied by all intelligent watchers of the political sky.

The question—"For what are you fighting?" is no longer asked. Our propaganda has made it clear that the Vote, as exemplified in the right to enter the polling station, is but the symbol of the power that will then be ours to raise the legal, economic, and moral status of women in every rank of life. The practical recognition of our right to a voice in the government of the country, the laws of which we keep and the taxes of which we pay, will necessarily carry with it the power to deal, by direct representation, with the many disabilities under which women suffer. The banner of hope will be raised for the sweated workers who, in stifling East End dens, earn the means of keeping body and soul together on wages often less than a penny per hour, a ray of light will shine for the victims of the white slave traffic, the growth of which is largely due to imperfect legislative protection. When the Conciliation Bill is passed the way will be paved for the first steps to be taken towards a readjustment of our legal code. The laws which affect the position of the married woman, placing her at present under many disadvantages; the divorce laws, which bear most unfairly upon the wife; the laws relating to parental responsibilities, which give the father alone the guardianship of all children born in wedlock, but which make the mother of an illegitimate child solely responsible for its care and upbringing; the laws of inheritance, which still retain cruel injustices towards women; and the Factory Acts, which make unfair distinctions between men and women, will all, without doubt, be modified and amended when the woman's point of view is taken into consideration by means of direct representation. It is towards this goal we are working, and, as we have shown, every available step is now being taken to consolidate our forces, so that at the reassembling of Parliament we shall be in a stronger and more united position than ever before. The choice as to whether it is to be peace or war will then rest with the Prime Minister. In any case we shall be ready!

LOUISA THOMSON-PRICE.

### THE HOUR OF JUSTICE.

(An Appeal to Liberals on Behalf of the Women's Bill.)

Friends of our cause, if friends sincere,  
 Put not afar what Time brings near!  
 The cause being just, the mandate clear,  
 What wait we yet?  
 The time is now, the place is here,  
 To pay your debt.

Ye who made one and calm and free  
 The jarring Afric races; ye  
 Whose creed of old was Liberty,  
 Whose will, through all,  
 Sought Justice, keeping her decree  
 Though heaven should fall—

Have we not wrongs for righting, too,  
 Who plead to-day for justice; who  
 Are free-born, equally with you,  
 And yet not free,  
 Though bold, of old, to dare and do,  
 To bear, and be

Free us, if Freedom ye revere!  
 Nor wait till dangers disappear;  
 Nor, till the right course be the clear,  
 The wrong allow.  
 Be bold! Behold, the place is here,  
 The time is now.

Bournemouth. S. GERTRUDE FORD.



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### BRANCH NOTES.

**London Branches Council.**—1, Robert Street, Adelphi.

**Central Branch** (Open-air Meetings).

Miss Hicks, M.A., was the speaker at Regent's Park on Sunday morning, when there was an excellent attendance. The Conciliation Bill was explained, and also what women would get the Parliamentary vote under the Bill. Next week Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett will speak at Regent's Park at twelve. She and Mrs. Richmond held a most successful meeting at West End Green, Hampstead, last Saturday.—E. DE VISMES.

**Crystal Palace and Anerley District**—149, Croydon Road.

On Bank Holiday, in spite of the counter attractions of the Crystal Palace, a large and very successful meeting was held at the Tram Terminus. Owing to the fact that notice of the meeting had been chalked in several places in the afternoon by Miss Jessie Fennings, we found quite a number of people waiting for us when we arrived at 7.30. Mr. H. Hyde took the chair, and made an instructive and amusing speech, which kept the crowd in a good humour and helped to get the best collection we have yet taken there.

Miss Ethel Fennings spoke at some length, and showed why women need the vote, and answered the usual objection that women do not want it. After dealing with the Conciliation Bill, she answered several questions. The usual number of THE VOTE were sold.—E. M. F.

**Herne Hill and Norwood.**—32, Geneva Road, Brixton, S.W.

On Sunday, August 7th, a very successful meeting was held in Brockwell Park. The speakers were Mrs. Nevinson and Miss Dorothy Spencer. The chair was taken by Miss Spencer, who in an opening speech said that, although men may have tried to promote the interests of women by Parliamentary legislation, they could not do so successfully until the women's point of view was properly represented. A very large audience listened attentively while Mrs. Nevinson spoke of the many sufferings and miseries endured by women of the poorer classes on account of the unjust laws that have been made and administered by men. For many long years, she said, women have been working for the right to have a voice in the making of the laws by which they were governed, and when they are able and willing to take the trouble to work for university degrees, and pay their taxes exactly like men, for what reason can they be debarred the vote? Several questions were asked at the close of the meeting, which were kindly and readily answered by the speakers, and a good

number of copies of THE VOTE were sold. The next meeting will be held on Sunday, August 21st.—B. SPENCER.

**Croydon.**—9, Morland Avenue.

Meetings have been held the last two Saturdays at Thornton Heath Clock, in both cases large crowds assembling, a great many copies of THE VOTE being sold. The first week Mrs. Nevinson gave an interesting speech, and as she was obliged to leave early she kindly answered a few questions at the close of it. She was followed by Mr. John Simpson, who dealt with the subject of Votes for Women in a most effective manner, ably refuting the objections brought forward by the Anti-Suffrage League. Miss E. Fennings took the chair, and answered some of the questions, the rest being well replied to by Mr. Simpson.

On the 6th inst. the speakers were Miss E. Fennings and Mr. R. Bowden Smith. The latter dealt with the Conciliation Bill, which still seems to require a lot of explanation before the justice of it sinks into the minds of many men who call themselves democratic, but who fail to understand the true meaning of the word. Many questions were put and answered by both speakers. Miss Mary Pearson took the chair.

In response to Mr. Brailsford's letter in THE VOTE, we are happy to report one new member for the Men's League and one for the Men's Political Union.

During the absence of our Secretary the usual Saturday evening meetings will not be held, but Miss E. Fennings has undertaken to hold one every Friday, at 8 p.m., at South Norwood Clock, and she will be very glad of the help of all the members who are not out of town. Will those who can help advertise these meetings by chalking in Thornton Heath or South Norwood please write to Miss Fennings, 149, Croydon-road, Anerley.—E. M. F.

**East Anglia.**—Miss C. Andrews, 160, Norwich Road Ipswich.

**Felixstowe.**

After a very great deal of difficulty we have found a pitch for our caravan near Princes' Road. Meetings, which we advertise by chalking the pavements, are held near the Model Yacht Pond. We had a very successful meeting last Thursday afternoon, addressed by the Rev. W. B. Graham. Many questions were asked, and after our resolution had been carried an Anti-Suffragist proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker for the admirable way in which he had dealt with his subject. Miss Woodall has rendered us splendid help in selling THE VOTE and preparing the way for meetings. I shall be glad to receive contributions towards the expenses of this campaign, and can find plenty of work for friends who have a little time to spare.—CONSTANCE E. ANDREWS.

**East Sussex.**—Mrs. Dilks, 39, Milton Road, Eastbourne. Eastbourne.

Our holiday campaign is doing good work. The meetings on the Beach are well attended, and the audiences are for the most part entirely sympathetic. We usually have some good questions at the close, and meet many visitors who are interested in our movement. We sold five dozen VOTES last week. We are altering our nights, in order to have a better pitch. Miss Munro has visited Hastings, Bexhill, and Hailsham, and we are arranging meetings at Hastings and Hailsham. We find Bexhill not very hopeful, as open-air meetings are not allowed anywhere.

Our stall for literature on the front is fairly successful and is useful as an advertisement that we are alive. We badly need more helpers for this work, and also for the country districts. We are arranging a full week of work—meetings in the Old Town and on the Beach, Hailsham, on Wednesday, and Hastings on Saturday. Mrs. Dilks is inviting friends to a garden meeting on Tuesday afternoon.

We are negotiating for the use of the Recreation Ground for a big meeting, when we hope to have Mrs. Despard with us.

**Portsmouth and Gosport.**—64, Devonshire Avenue, Southsea.

The above branch held a meeting on Friday, July 20th, at the corner of Chichester Road. The crowd was not as large as usual, but the resolution was passed unanimously. The meeting at Gosport on Wednesday, August 3rd, had to be abandoned owing to the weather. Any member of the League visiting Southsea, and willing to do a little propaganda work, writing to the above address will be heartily welcomed. Visitors can also obtain THE VOTE from Mrs. Crawley (our Secretary), 4, St. Paul's Road, Southsea.—S. WHETTON.

### SCOTTISH NOTES.

Glasgow Office: 302, SAUCHIEHALL STREET, GLASGOW.  
 Hon. Treasurer: MRS. JULIA WOOD.  
 Office Secretary: Miss McARTHUR.  
 Telegrams: "Tactics," Glasgow. Nat. Telephone: 495 Douglas.

**Glasgow.**

CLYDE CAMPAIGN.—A week of almost continuous bad weather has had a very deterrent effect on the number of meetings held during the past week. With the help of the Misses Scrymgeour meetings have been held in Troon and Girvan, the latter meetings being advertised and arranged by Mrs. Wilson. At the evening meeting Mrs. Rowat, a sister of Mrs. Brailsford, came and helped splendidly. I shall be glad to hear of volunteers for this campaign. Our headquarters are c/o Mrs. Martin, 19, Quail Road, Newton, Ayr.—MADGE TURNER, Org.

## ON MY LIBRARY TABLE. AN APOSTLE OF FREEDOM.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN THE FREEDOM OF WOMEN. By Laurence Housman. (A. C. Fifield, Clifford's Inn, and The Women's Freedom League, 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.) Price 6d. net.

The woman's cause owes much to Mr. Laurence Housman. No modern writer has done more for the great movement towards the enfranchisement of womanhood than this clear-sighted apostle of freedom. Not only with pen, but with eloquent tongue has he again and again advocated the extension of political justice to the unrepresented half of the community. In his latest book, "Articles of Faith in the Freedom of Women," he has rendered a magnificent service, for there is not only courage in every line of this collection of essays, but evidences of generous sympathy with and subtle understanding of the woman's point of view.

In the record of long struggle for political freedom on the part of woman, the services of Laurence Housman will ever be remembered with gratitude. As his books prove, he has always been in sympathy with our movement, but by coming into the fighting-line at a crucial



Photo L.N.A.

SHOWING "THE VOTE" OUTSIDE WESTMINSTER THE DAY BEFORE THE SUMMER RECESS. (MRS. DESPARD IS SEEN STANDING BESIDE MISS ALISON NEILANS.)

point in our struggle and by bravely giving voice to sentiments with which all progressive thinkers on this question must be agreed, but which few have the courage to expound, he has shown himself to be a fearless and single-hearted champion and one to whom the word chivalric may be applied in its highest and finest sense.

The book includes the famous recitation "Woman This and Woman That" (echo of a barrack-room ballad, with acknowledgments to Mr. Rudyard Kipling), which has been so powerfully recited by Miss Decima Moore from many Suffrage platforms, and a number of essays which have appeared in various journals and magazines. "The Anti-Suffrage Point of View" and "The Right of Way" appeared in THE VOTE, and one is glad to see that they are now given a permanent value by being embodied in this little volume. Mr. Housman's views on the real meaning of our agitation are admirably set forth in his article on "The 'Physical Force' Fallacy." "The power to organise and the determination to agitate," he says, "are in themselves the beginning of a qualification for political enfranchisement, for they are a proof of political vitality and show that a fresh section of the community has awakened from sleep. As long as any class, through ignorance or lack of will, remains quiescent and consenting to the rule of others, as long as, in return for benefits real or supposed, it is willing to

obey laws in the making of which it has had no share, so long can the State afford to withhold from it direct representation. But if its members become conscious that such conditions are ignominious and begin to rebel against them, if they say 'though weaker than you in physical power or fewer in numbers, we are willing and determined to take our share in the government of the State,' then you have a new force to reckon with; a section of the community which was previously, from a political point of view, a negligible quantity, has taken to itself a new attribute, and presents, by the awakening of its will for citizenship, a claim which no democracy can afford to withstand."

Suffragists, and more especially "Suffragettes," are continually being charged with adopting "unwomanly" methods. Mr. Housman's essay on "What is Womanly?" gives the other point of view of in what true womanliness consists. "The women who appear, in the conventional sense, most womanly to-day are those who find themselves well provided for, who believe themselves to be also well protected, and into whose lives no flagrant contradiction to that belief has yet entered. In their own quiet and narrow circle they do appear gracious, gentle, and lovable, and very often they are as they

appear. But side by side with all that gentleness and grace there moves a great crowded world of oppressed and over-driven womanhood, in relation to which remedial measures and just dealing are falling more and more into arrears. Are these more fortunate women in their self-contained lives quite so 'womanly' when viewed in relation to those dark and pressing problems of modern life? Have they been 'womanly' during the last forty years in contentedly letting go, as no concern of theirs, that terrible grinding spirit of commercialism and greed which has during that time forced its way or kept its previously secured place in so many of our laws, and which has its stronghold in our great centres of population and industry? Is it 'womanly' for them to stuff their ears, as it were, with cotton-wool and speak only in low tones of their quiet domestic concerns, deaf to the cries around them of a civilisation in pain?"

In the chapter on George Meredith, Mr. Housman pays a fine tribute to one of the greatest novelists of the Victorian age. He hails him as a great prophet, as he undoubtedly was. Meredith's women are, perhaps, the finest types of any feminine characters in fiction. He gave woman a soul of her own and the power of sustaining the dignity of her womanhood. An equal tribute can Suffragists pay to Laurence Housman, who, not only in the book under notice, but throughout his literary works

has sustained a dominant note of reverence for womanhood and has valiantly taken up the pen to aid in bringing about the dawn of that real civilisation when woman shall take her place side by side with man and shall be represented equally with him in the councils of the nations.  
LOUISA THOMSON-PRICE.

## SUFFRAGE SHEARINGS.

### The Clerical Vote.

A writer in the *Yorkshire Herald*, dealing with the time-honoured cliché that if women had votes they must necessarily sit in Parliament, says: "It is not true to say that if women have this further vote they must sit in Parliament, as clergymen of the Church of England have votes, but by statutory declaration are debarred from sitting in Parliament, and the same could be done, if desired, in the case of women."

### Indians in the Transvaal.

Speaking at a meeting held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, held to protest against the deportation in large batches of Indians who had long been domiciled in the Transvaal, Mrs. Despard, who said she spoke as a "British woman," but not yet a "British citizen," expressed her sympathy with this movement, and declared herself in open rebellion against the oppression which was exercised to-day in the matter of sex and colour. She was not surprised at the unrest in all parts of the world when such injustice was being done in the name of British rule.

### Polling-day in New Zealand.

In the course of a reply to an Anti-Suffragist, a New Zealander thus describes polling-day in New Zealand:—"I come from there, and I know that since women have had the vote the 'pubs' have been closed on polling-day, and, instead of a pandemonium of rows and drinking till midnight, polling-day is now like Sunday, and you may see working women in their best clothes going to record their vote, and the men standing aside to 'let the ladies go in first.' Chivalry has not been destroyed by Women Suffrage there, at any rate."

### The Government Attitude.

The *Scotsman*, in a strongly-worded and not particularly friendly leader, criticises the Government attitude towards us. In the course of it the writer says: "The Government, though divided on the principle of Women's Suffrage, are apparently ready to take a strong party line against a limited franchise. Some of them are strangely illogical; the Prime Minister is most conspicuous of all in his inconsistency if he prefers an army of women rather than a minor detachment. The argument of the Unionists is that Adult Suffrage would be deleterious, but that it would not be brought nearer by the enfranchisement of women householders—in fact, that the Shackleton Bill would be a barrier against universal Suffrage. The reasoning of Mr. Asquith appears to be very different: he believes that women are unfitted by sex for responsible participation in the affairs of State, and consequently that their enfranchisement would mean peril to the commonwealth, but he desires, if his attitude is to be inferred from his reply to Lord Lytton, that if the risk is to be run it shall be encountered in its grossest and most overwhelming form."

### Tolerance.

Writing in the *Dublin Evening Telegraph* on the Suffrage Procession, an Irish delegate says of the pipers who led their contingent: "One of these—a veteran Fenian—remarked to us, as he gave the word for 'The Wearin' o' the Green,' 'Fifty years ago, when I came to this town first, we daen't have played that tune,' and we wondered whether the change boded only good. While we wondered the tune passed into another imperceptibly: 'Vive-la, the Old Brigade, vive-la the young one too, Vive-la, the Rose shall fade, but the Shamrock blooms for ever new.'"

### Widow-Farmers.

Alluding to the women-in-agriculture discussion at the Women's Congress, the *Mark Lane Express* says: "Many instances could be quoted of women who have carried on farms successfully after losing their husbands, and they prove the contention that farming is not beyond female capacity, at any rate, when the woman is driven to it by the hard law of necessity. Women have a marked capacity for adapting themselves to circumstances, and we have known members of what is called the weaker sex who, after the death of their husbands, have even carried on the farm better than was the case before."

### Hon. R. Russell's Solution.

Writing to the *Daily News*, Mr. Russell says: "Would it be a possible solution if all women desiring the vote were to receive their qualification on giving long notice, every possible precaution being taken against compulsion; or would it be more practicable for women in every district to elect electors from among themselves? Objections are obvious, but are they greater than the objections to any solution hitherto suggested?"

### The Conciliation Committee.

"The Conciliation Committee remains intact. Its meetings have been better attended since the second reading than before. There is thorough loyalty and strong determination among its members. . . . The situation to-day is as promising as it was when the division on the second reading of the Bill was an-

nounced. It is for the women to keep up the agitation in the country during the recess. The women of the Liberal Party hold the key to the situation. If they would take up a firm and united attitude now, and tell the Government that the Bill must be passed before Christmas it would be done. But whether they rise to the occasion or not, the enfranchisement of women is soon going to be an accomplished thing."—PHILIP SNOWDEN, in *The Common Cause*.

### The Proposed Referendum.

Referring to the proposed referendum, a writer in the *Dundee Advertiser* says: But Women Suffragists do object to this proposal, because it is one of the many unfair schemes which have been suggested regarding their question. No such criterion has ever been set up in connection with any extension of the franchise to men. When objection was made in 1884 that the agricultural labourers did not want the vote, Mr. Gladstone repudiated the idea that it was necessary to show that the majority desired enfranchisement. He said: 'It is the business of the statesman to anticipate the people's demand for enfranchisement, not to wait until he is asked.' How different is the treatment given to the women's demand for enfranchisement! The present proposal is not even that the 'people' themselves who demand enfranchisement must show themselves in a majority, but that other 'people' who are already enfranchised must do so."

### Head Mistresses need Enfranchisement.

In the course of an able letter to the *Times* deprecating Miss Octavia Hill's attitude towards the franchise, Sara A. Burstall, President of the Association of Head Mistresses, says: "The members of the Association of Head Mistresses (who are heads of public secondary schools for girls) feel themselves so seriously hampered in their duties as guardians of the secondary education of girls by their lack of political power that in 1906 and again in 1908 a strong and almost unanimous resolution was carried at the Annual Conference in favour of the enfranchisement of duly-qualified women. Since the 1902 Education Act, year by year the State has tightened its hold on the public secondary schools. The realisation of this rapid increase of State control has, no doubt, been one of the reasons which induced the members of the Head Mistresses' Association (the first aim of which is 'to support and protect the status of women engaged in education,' and which is bound by rule every year to allot a certain amount of its Conference hours to the consideration of 'State action with regard to education') to put on record twice a resolution in favour of the enfranchisement of duly-qualified women."

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### "NO CASE."

"The witness was of opinion that the little slips of a husband should not entitle the wife to claim a divorce."—DAILY PAPER.

Mrs. Basil Berners sought audience with her lawyer, sought to tell him in the incoherent, choked language of agony that her husband was no longer faithful to her; she craved relief for the soul's torture of one "who doubts yet doats, suspects yet strongly loves."

Her lawyer listened politely, a little cynically, to her story (certainly it was hard to follow at times). He held the usual view of his class and profession, that a husband's "little slips" do not matter. The law rightly took no notice of a wife's torture and agony; she had got to endure it; it was better for society to ignore a man's peccadilloes. Where should we all be if adultery in a husband were made an offence in the sight of the law?

"You see, Mrs. Berners," he said at length, for tears had stifled her complaint, "all this, you tell me, is only what you have seen; it is not evidence. If you want to bring your case into court you must have witnesses, and prove desertion and cruelty, as well as these alleged acts of infidelity."

Rachel Berners started, and her sobs stopped. The word "alleged" cut like a whip. She was a truthful woman, and she had never had her word doubted before; the squalid requirements of the law sickened her. "Cruelty," she said with a laugh—the laugh that mad women laugh in Hanwell.

"My dear lady," said the lawyer, looking at her with the cheerful jocularity a man generally assumes when he is defending the "little slips" of his sex, "you take this too much *au grand sérieux*. A man has these little fancies from time to time, but they pass, you know, and then all is right again. You will find it very hard to prove your case, as I have told you, and you will break up your home, and think of your children practically fatherless."

"The father of my children is a liar and adulterer; they would be better without him. I am only asking to be free of an intolerable chain."

"Well, Mrs. Berners, I can only repeat you may take a step you may live to repent bitterly. A wise woman overlooks these little peccadilloes. Go home, make yourself very charming to your husband, and try to win back his love, and—excuse me—but why don't you dress better?"

Rachel Berners had her fair share of good looks, but pain had made her white and haggard, and the plain walking suit was worn without a touch of colour in vest or necktie, and without the flair and coquetry of happier women. Her lips curled slightly at the question, but she made no reply. It seemed useless talking to this "man of the world." Their standards of right and wrong were too far apart.

"We men are so susceptible to clothes," he went on with heightened jocularity. "Be a sensible woman, go off to Bond Street, and if you think your husband is deceiving you, look the other way. Many ladies come to me with the same tale, and I always give the same advice. 'Don't take your husbands too seriously, and all will come right.'"

Mrs. Berners rose to her feet. "Good day," she said haughtily, and the little cynical lawyer felt for once that there might be a higher standard of life than the one he had been so glibly defending.

Nevertheless, his words worked on her sub-conscious mind. A good wife is always afraid of being jealous without just cause. She told herself perhaps she had been too hard, and in pathetic compliance with the lawyer's advice she dressed for dinner in a red silk frock, arranging her hair with special care. She noticed with horror the havoc strong crying and tears and sleepless nights was playing on her looks. Her cheeks were hollow, her eyes sunken, and threads of grey were showing amongst the dark hair upstanding above her forehead.

She sent word to the cook to prepare a special favourite entrée, and then she waited in the flower-scented drawing-room with sudden hope in her heart. Presently the tele-

phone bell rang the message so familiar now: "Detained at the office. Don't wait; will get a chop at the club"—and Rachel sat down to the dust and ashes of her solitary meal.

"Poor mistress," said the cook, as half an hour later she cleared the untasted dishes into the larder; "all my trouble, too, and not a crumb touched. She looks so thin and ill, poor thing; we shall have some tragedy in this house soon, mark my words, Gladys."

"Fair puts one off matrimony, as I told my young man last night. Only last week when he took me to the Palace I saw our beauty driving in a taxi with Mrs. Chester, just after he had lied through the telephone: 'Detained at the office!' Oh lor, cook! these men!"

"Just go up into the drawing-room, Gladys, and ask if she fancies anything—some beef tea or cocoa—I hate people not to eat. If 'e was 'alf a man 'e wouldn't like to see his wife dying by inches."

But Rachel, with parched lips, declined extra nourishment; she had gone to sit in the night-nursery beside the cots of her sleeping children. Motherhood is supposed to bring consolation, but to Rachel it brought none. She noticed with a sensation of terror how like her two boys were to their father—the same build, the same features, the same growth of hair, the same habit of sleeping with their fists clenched. Would they, too, grow up liars and adulterers, deceiving the wives who trusted them? Could it be right to let them live these first impressionable years in this atmosphere of sensualism, deceit, and intrigue?

Such problems bewildered her too much; she went downstairs and tried to read, but she could not fix her thoughts, and the words danced before her eyes, meaningless symbols. She took up some needlework, and forced herself to sew, but hot tears would fall, clogging the needle and staining the material, and at length she threw the little pinafore impatiently away.

She heard the postman's knock, the noise of bolts, and the rattle of blinds as the servants shut up for the night. How could she chase the leaden-footed hours when nothing seemed worth doing? How could she go to bed with this pain of jealousy gnawing at her heart like a sharp-toothed beast? She knew too well the horrors of wakefulness and the tortures of her obsession to face the night. To walk and walk till the wearied body could feel nothing more was the only panacea she knew, and, slipping a cloak over her dinner dress, she rushed out into the scented darkness of the summer night.

All was quiet in the leafy old suburb. A few taxi-cabs and hansoms were bringing back revellers from theatre or party; a white-faced woman begged for alms, and was satisfied; a policeman followed her with noiseless feet, and then stopped, reassured by the frou-frou of silk and the sheen of velvet—misery and suicide in his mind were connected with rags and poverty. She wandered along by the river bank, trying to restrain an almost overwhelming impulse to end her misery in the dark flowing water. A few struggles, a few choking gasps, and this unbearable pain would end; but Rachel belonged to sane and sober stock, her upbringing had been stern and Puritan, and she turned away from this new and strange temptation that had seized her so suddenly. When at length she set her steps homeward she felt glad of the physical exhaustion that might bring her a few hours of merciful oblivion. Weary and footsore, she climbed the steep terrace that led to her house, when, beneath the trees in the moonlight, she saw a couple coming towards her linked arm-in-arm; the man's hat was slouched low over his face, his collar was pulled high, and he was leaning forward gazing into his companion's eyes. So he had walked with her, so he used to bend forward "to see what her face was saying"; so his voice had sounded in love's "little language." She knew again "the words and looks from the old mint" re-issued again, "no matter whose print, image, and superscription once they bore." The solid earth surged and raged around her like a stormy sea, a stifled cry broke from her lips, and then she staggered and fell headlong at their feet.

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON.

### WOMEN AS LEGISLATORS.

Nothing could be less effective than the protestation by some champions of Women's Suffrage that women will never seriously claim the right of election to Parliament. Nor could anything be more quaint than the declaration by certain responsible statesmen—who are willing to grant the mere vote—that such a claim would be against the interests of the State. The protestation is ineffective because no generation can tell just what may be dictated by the conscience of the next. The declaration is quaint, because for every argument in favour of granting women votes there are two arguments for allowing them, and even begging them, to sit in the Lords and Commons.

We have here, indeed, a living instance of the strange history of moral ideas. For these particular political ideas are at bottom moral ideas; and such ideas are never received when they are first seriously urged except with terror. Votes for Women have almost ceased to be alarming. Seats in Parliament, which are really very much less of a danger, but happen so far hardly to have been talked about, send cold shivers down the Parliamentary spine.

For the sake of the argument, let it be noted that the case for giving votes is seriously disputable. The step has been described as a leap in the dark; it is at any rate only a twilight performance, to be taken in a mood of splendid humanistic faith. The results of any political departure have never been quite what was prophesied: they were worse or they were better, or they were simply different. Those of us who think we see that enfranchising women does almost inevitably mean eventually votes for all women and all men have really committed ourselves to that tremendous experiment in a fit of divine adventure. Doubtless it is only after a severe confronting of all the arguments for and against the use of such a powerful social solvent, but it is adventure all the same. As in physics, so in politics, adventure is a necessary means of advance. But one could conceivably shrink appalled from this experiment, and still contemplate with perfect equanimity the presence of women at St. Stephen's, Whitehall, and Downing Street.

For there are so many women now actually alive who obviously ought to be there. It is conceded by the anti-suffragist that women accommodate themselves with surprising capacity to bearing the moral and intellectual burdens of the throne. Indeed, an effort is often made to increase the interest of this fact by pointing out that the woman on the throne arrives there by the chance of birth and not by any process of selection of the fit. But this view is both unnecessary and untrue; a queen is a most highly-selected person. She is subjected from childhood to an acutely specialised environment. Queens may be born, but they are still more made. Every idea in their heads is more or less differentiated from the ideas of persons not of royal blood. And this process of intensive culture has turned out queens who were even more remarkable than any kings contemporary with them. Now every argument which is used to show that a woman may be trusted on the throne may be equally or even better used to show that women should sit in the Lords and Commons. For if the selective process of a suitable moral and intellectual environment can turn a sensible woman into an admirable queen it can also turn a sensible woman into a suitable person to sit in Parliament. And this process is actually going on at the moment. There are other highly-specialised environments at work shaping women besides those of queens. The entrance of women into certain walks of life has meant the entrance into such environments. Business, Medicine, Charity Organisation, Temperance Work, Literature, Journalism—all these and more are so many matrices in which men legislators are made, and fit women legislators also, only that at present the existence of the latter is not observed.

Now, it can be argued with an appearance of plausibility that the home-keeping woman is not fit to vote. It can be argued that the whole mass of women are, and must remain, temperamentally unfit to vote. And the shallowest argument that the Suffragist ever uses is when it is urged that (for instance) Mrs. Humphry Ward is fitter

to vote than most navvies and yet cannot do so while the navvies can. For by way of keeping all women out of it, it may be necessary to do without Mrs. Ward. That, in effect, is what Mrs. Ward says, and the argument holds water—though, of course, it will be violently protested that it does not hold much.

But if we were to say that it is an intolerable outrage that certain men can sit in the House of Commons while Mrs. Ward cannot, we are on wholly different ground. Here is no question of admitting every member of a sex to legislative power. This is simply a matter of getting the best brains into the service of the State. Who will dare to deny that Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss McMillan, Miss Balfour, Lady McLaren, Miss Mary McArthur, Lady Henry Somerset, and Lady Frances Balfour (purposely to omit the militant Suffragists, against whom there may be prejudice) would be far more useful as legislators than nine-tenths of the gentlemen who now frequent the Best Club in London? What is wanted in politics is brains, and brains subjected to wide experience of life, to discipline, and to the protracted study of social affairs. The bar of sex may or may not be a genuine barrier in the lower walks of life, but only a pedantic consistency, or mere stupidity, can demand that it be kept up in the great services of the State. It might, as has been urged, conceivably be necessary to sacrifice some women's claim to the vote in order to suppress a horde of the unfit. But when it obviously might help the nation beyond measure to get ten acknowledged competent women into the House of Commons in place (as it might well happen) of ten acknowledged male nincompoops now there, there is no case against admitting them as candidates. The suffragist will contend that the work of women in the House on behalf of women themselves would be probably of small avail if they had women electors behind them, and with this I agree, but my present contention is wholly and solely that women ought to be admitted to the Commons on their human merits, if there be any constituency which sees fit to elect women to represent it there, and that the case against this is even harder to argue than the case against votes.

Two practical considerations should be mentioned. One is that in the nature of things only competent women are likely to have any chance of election. Women rarely possess the independent wealth necessary to indulge in the virtual purchase of a constituency, and men with the money to spend are not likely to prefer women to men as their candidates. The other consideration is that only single women, or married women of ripe age and knowledge of affairs—and who is a better counsellor?—would be at all likely to seek the suffrages of the people. The dream of a Commons full of giggling girls or of Casandras is only the nightmare of some Commons diner, reflecting discredit on his temperance or choice of diet.

The Suffrage advocate, then, would do well to leave this question to settle itself in its own good time, and not foolishly to pretend to swear away the right of the twenty-first century (or whenever it may be) to attend to it. It does not in the least mollify opponents of women's suffrage, and most of its adherents know better. In the long run, however important it may be that women should have votes and thereby be awakened to share in the patriotic self-consciousness of the nation, it is still more important that whatever of high mental capacity they may possess should be called to the nation's service in the Legislature, on the Bench, at the Bar, in the Church, and wherever at present they are debared from testing their powers and proving their usefulness.

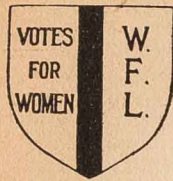
G. E. O'DELL.

### HOLIDAY READING.

Sample packets of Suffrage literature make excellent holiday reading, and those who want particular questions dealt with by experts should write to Miss Hicks, 1, Robert Street, Adelphi, saying the subject they are interested in and asking for a selection of booklets. Miss Hicks packs for 1s. and 2s. 6d. a varied assortment of literature, booklets and pamphlets which supply ready answers for those questions, industrial and economic, which continually crop up in the course of arguments on the great topic of the day.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

## LONDON.



DARE TO BE FREE.

- Thurs., August 11.—Acton, Market Place, 8 p.m. Mrs. Manson.  
 Finchley (Percy Road, Tally-ho Corner), 8 p.m. Miss Lucas and Miss Henwood.  
 Highbury Corner, 8 p.m. Mrs. H. W. Nevinson.
- Sun., August 14.—Victoria Park, 3 p.m. Mrs. Manson.  
 Regent's Park, 12. Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett.
- Mon., August 15.—Hornsey Fire Station, 8 p.m. Miss Norris.  
 Tram Terminus, Crystal Palace. Miss E. Fennings and the Rev. C. Hinscliff.
- Tues., August 16.—Hampstead Heath, 7.45. Miss Neilans.
- Thurs., August 18.—Highbury Corner, 8 p.m. Miss Pell.  
 Finchley (Percy Road, Tally-ho Corner). Miss Norris.
- Fri., August 19.—South Norwood Clock. Miss E. Fennings and Mr. Percy E. Phipps.
- Sun., August 21.—Regent's Park, 12. Mr. Duval and Mrs. Duval.  
 Victoria Park, 3 p.m. Miss Pell.
- Mon., August 22.—Hornsey Fire Station, 8 p.m.  
 Tram Terminus, Crystal Palace. Miss E. Fennings and Mr. Norman Leisk.
- Tues., August 23.—Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.  
 Hampstead Heath, 7.45 p.m.
- Eastbourne.
- Thurs., August 11.—Open-air Meeting on the Beach, West of the Eastern Band Stand, 7.30 p.m. Speaker, Miss Anna Munro.
- Fri., August 12.—Same time, place and speaker.

## WORK GIRLS' REVOLT.

A lock-out is pending in Sheffield which may have much more significance for women workers than might at first be anticipated. The resisting an attempt by the management of Messrs. Dewsnap, Ltd., cabinet case manufacturers, Sidney Street, to substitute piece work for the time-honoured datal system has resulted in seventy of their female workers receiving notice, and, unless there is a speedy change in the attitude of the firm, they will cease work at the end of this week. The decision of the women to stand up for what they believe to be their rights has not been come to without serious attempts at conciliation, but they now feel strongly that there is scarcely an honourable alternative to resisting, even at the expense of a lock-out, the new conditions. Piece-work has been substituted for the datal system without consulting the girls.

The aggrieved workers are trade unionists, and affiliated to that healthy organisation the Manchester Fancy Leather Workers' Union, of which Miss Stapleton is secretary, and as the result of a meeting a protest letter was sent to the firm. The girls also ceased work in a body, on the ground that the terms of their contracts provided for a purely datal system. "Moreover," they said, "if we are going on piece-work we want to know what we are going to receive for that work." The difficulty was met by their being told to go on as usual for the time being. A deputation met the management, and a price list was subsequently forthcoming.

It is sufficient to say that after close scrutiny and consultation each department of the workers appointed a special committee to see if what they considered a "living wage" could be earned under the new system; which, it is to the credit of the workers that they were anxious not to reject without good cause. The unanimous conclusion of these committees was that the women and girls could not earn a "living wage" under the system. As the result of the rejection of the new system the women and girls concerned received a month's notice, and this takes effect on Friday of this week.

The Women's Trade Union Council of Manchester, of which Mrs. Aldridge is secretary, is actively interested in the movement, and there are promises of assistance to the girls from various sources if the worst happens. All the workers concerned are in benefit in their union. Attempts are being made to procure new "hands," ready for eventualities, but so far much success has not attended the effort. Throughout the various factories in the city where women and girl labour is employed on leather, cabinets, and allied classes of work the facts of the pending dispute have been singularly well circulated.

## "THE ENGLISHWOMAN."

*The Englishwoman* for August has many good things in its pages, among them an appreciative article on an Indian poetess, Sarojini Naidu, who, with blue-black tresses unbound and graceful saree draping her shapely head, first made her appearance at a Girton coffee-party. Her poetry has a thoughtful sweetness and an Oriental savour we do not get in the minor poets of our own land. A verse from a poem dealing with the final victory of peace after a life of struggle reads thus:

"For us the travail and the heat,  
 The broken secrets of our pride,  
 The strenuous lessons of defeat,  
 The flower deferred, the fruit denied;  
 But not the peace, supremely won,  
 Lord Buddha, of thy lotus throne."

In the course of the first of a series of articles dealing with "Women's Wages and the Vote," Mrs. A. Hamilton says:—"The small employer with limited capital may find that it suits him to employ cheap labour of low efficiency, although he recognises that efficient labour would be worth good wages if he could afford it; but the extent to which women are being substituted for men suggests that employers are to some extent, at any rate, making an extra profit by paying them a wage that is not in strict proportion to their efficiency relative to the efficiency earnings of men. In such a case the employer is profiting by the lower cost of production of women."

"The Bill is still alive. Between now and the opening of the autumn session the agitation by constitutional methods must go on in the country. It is possible to break the resolution of the Government, and to force them to give time in the autumn for the further stages of the Bill. Failing that, there is another possibility, and that is to break the Government."—PHILIP SNOWDEN, in the *Christian Commonwealth*.

A professional woman objects through the *Nation* to having Lord Cromer's anti-suffrage views thrust upon her in the street. "It is my money, paid as income-tax on my earnings which helped to give Lord Cromer £50,000 when he returned from Egypt," she says. "He is my pensioner as well as that of every tax-paying woman."

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