

# THE ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW.

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## THE NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR OPPOSING WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

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### THE PADDINGTON BUFFET.

The Secretaries' and Workers' Committee recently selected a sub-committee to report on some suggested schemes for war service. This sub-committee, of which Mrs. Archibald Colquhoun is chair, and Mrs. Carson Roberts vice-chair, was asked by the War Office to open a free buffet for sailors and soldiers at Paddington. Two excellent institutions already exist outside the station for men who have some time to wait or desire to sleep, but no buffet inside where they can get light refreshment. Initial difficulties had to be overcome, as no suitable room could be had, but with due kind co-operation of the station authorities, an enclosure was made and fitted up as a buffet. It was opened on Tuesday, April 13th, and is much appreciated by travelling soldiers and sailors.

Gifts in kind of eatables, particularly cake, will be gratefully received at the buffet, or, if sent, should be addressed to the Sailors' and Soldiers' Free Buffet, The Lawn, Paddington Station. Gifts of money may be sent to Miss Mackenzie, Hon. Treasurer, 6, Grange Road, Gunnersbury.

The staff of helpers has been organized by the hon. secretaries of the principal London and suburban branches working under Mrs. Arthur Page, 57, Inverness Terrace, who will be glad of offers of further help. Though at present her lists are full, she can register names for emergencies. It is hoped shortly to open the buffet all night, as many men are travelling between 12 and 4 a.m. At present it is open from 7 a.m. to 12.30 a.m.

The Assistant Secretary would be very glad to hear of some members who would give one day a week to visiting in Stepney. If any who are able to do this will communicate with her, she will give all particulars.

### THE INFORMATION BUREAU.

The Committee of the Information Bureau, 415, Oxford Street, acknowledge with thanks gifts of clothing and comforts for the troops from Mrs. L. A. B. Drummond, the Misses Martin, Miss Phillott, Miss Housden, Miss Nichols, Mrs. Fahey, P.L.G., Mrs. Mould, Mrs. C. Smith, Mrs. Farquhar, Mrs. Cowper-Cotes, Miss Mackenzie, Mrs. Langton-Walsh, Mrs. Holt, Mrs. Bower, Miss King and Miss Nona Hill. These have been distributed among S.S.F.A. at Bow, London Docks, and Battersea, and two additional maternity bags have been provided for the use of the S.S.F.A.

Comforts for the men in the Army and Navy have been sent to the R.E., the Mine-Sweepers, the Royal Scots Regt., the A.S.C., the 6th Batt. Royal Lancs. Regt., Belgian soldiers at the front, the R.F.A., and to a Red Cross Hospital in France. The large and well-filled box of hospital comforts and socks received from Mrs. Farquhar was especially welcome. Our members will have read in the public press of the very urgent need of hospital necessities and clothing in Serbia, and the Committee would like, if possible, to send a weekly supply. Gifts, either in money or kind, sent to the Bureau, will be forwarded to the Serbian Relief Committee, if specially marked.

The Hon. Sec. has heard from the Y.M.C.A. Sec. that the first Recreation Hut provided by our members at Seaford Camp is finished, and will very shortly be opened. Books, magazines, games, both outdoor and indoor, and pictures, are urgently needed for the Hut. Will our members send some of these to us, or, if they prefer, send them to Seaford direct, addressed to the Y.M.C.A. Recreation Hut, North Camp, Seaford, c.o. C. J. Newton-Turner, Esq., Sec. of Y.M.C.A.

Our Hon. Sec. Miss Blenkinsop has just visited the Hut, which she describes as being in a most excellent position and quite ready; she was greatly pleased with it, and says it is a delightful room, much larger than we could have hoped. Mr. Newton-Turner, who will be in charge of it, begged her to say how much the success of these Huts depends upon a good and constant supply of games and attractive literature. He would also be very glad of any good pictures, suitable mottoes, etc., for the walls, and for any deck chairs. We have to thank Mrs. Whittick, the Misses Martin, Miss Pott, and Miss King for some games, puzzles and periodicals already sent to us, but we hope that all our readers will take part in making this Recreation Hut a centre of attraction to the men who are defending us, that they may take a happy memory with them when the sterner part of their task has begun.

Funds for the second Hut which it is hoped to provide come in but slowly, and £130 are still required to complete the sum promised by us to the War Office.

### WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT.

It has been repeatedly pointed out that women are the hardest hit by the war; in other words that unemployment among women has been more serious than among men, and has called for a larger measure of relief. Few people, perhaps, have stopped to consider the reason, or, having stopped, have realized that the probable explanation is to be found in the fact that women's paid work is, in comparison with that of men's, more of the superfluous order. Confronted with a crisis, the nation has a tendency to dispense with non-essentials, and if unemployment among women has been serious enough to attract general attention, it is safe to suppose that in the past a large number of women have been engaged in unnecessary work or in work which can be abandoned without any sense of loss to the nation as a whole. If, therefore, we are to benefit from the lessons of the war, one of the things which we are called upon to do is to see whether this characteristic of women's unemployment—that at a crisis it is the first to be dispensed with—can be successfully eliminated.

All the available information points to the fact that unemployment among women has been most conspicuous in the dressmaking and the clerical world. In regard to the first it is not unnatural that with the outbreak of war there should be a tendency to impose unofficial sumptuary laws in every household. For those who have ministered to feminine conceits in the matter of dress it is unfortunate that a period of national heart-searching should claim them as victims. Their consolation must be that their ostracism is not likely to be permanent. That the war should introduce more Spartan fashions is hardly to be expected; if it should, we could count on seeing them exchanged for the opposite extreme a year or two later. When normal conditions are restored the dressmaker and her satellites may expect to come into their own again. If they do not, it will mean that dress economy has become the order of the day, and they are to be sacrificed for the nation's good. Let them not delay to adjust themselves to the altered situation, if there is to be a change, and when taking up fresh work of a permanent nature let them make sure that it belongs to one or other of the classes of work which the nation does not dispense with lightly.

Of clerical work it cannot be maintained that it is unnecessary or unsuited to women. It remains, however, an overcrowded profession, with an increasing number of members entering it with a minimum of qualifications and gradually lowering both standard and pay. In such circumstances it is bound to come to grief at a time of national crisis. The remedy, unfortunately, is not altogether a matter of organization. So long as there are employers who require of their clerical staff nothing more than a moderate proficiency in shorthand and ability to tap the keys of a typewriter, the supply of half-trained uneducated girls will continue, and the incentive to a certain section of the community to submit to careful training or to take up a calling more in keeping with their general intelligence will be wanting.

The fact may be difficult of proof, but there can be little doubt that the recent agitation in the world of women will have done much to perpetuate an unsatisfactory state of affairs in regard to women's work. It is impossible that girls and young women should be fed continually on statements of the equality of women and men, on appeals for equality of opportunity, and for

equality of pay, without having their minds distracted from the basis of all satisfactory work, adequate training, and the interest of the worker in his work. Writing in the February issue of the *Fortnightly Review*, Mrs. W. L. Courtney brings sound common sense to bear on the subject of women's employment. "The so-called professions and occupations open to women," she points out, "are so numerous that they could not be adequately surveyed in detail in a single article. . . . Art and learning know no sex barriers, though they may include sex differences. . . . When the community has seen to it that no barriers stand between a woman student and free access to every university privilege, it has done all that it can to help forward woman's creative work. The rest must lie with herself. And though there are still a few obstacles in a woman's way—for instance, in securing a wide enough field of experience in hospital work, if she takes up medicine—for the most part the community does now allow women equal facilities with men in obtaining scientific education. Probably it will not be long before they stand a fair, if not a perfectly equal, chance with men in obtaining public appointments. . . . But these higher branches of productive work depend on gifts, of which nature is not prodigal. They must always be professions for the select." Compare this statement with platform utterances on the "slavery" of women, which, because the medical profession was not opened to women at the first demand, and because the legal profession is not yet opened to them, make out that women are hampered wherever they turn for a career by the deliberate action of the tyrant man. The inevitable result of such utterances must be to turn the attention of women of ordinary capacity away from the work that they are fitted for, and is waiting to be done by them, and fix their attention on obtaining a man's post without his mental attainments acquired by training or his physical capacity. No one desires that women's work should not be well and adequately paid; but the cry for equal pay rests on a double fallacy. It presupposes that to the ordinary employer the work of a number of women will always be of the same value as the work of the same number of men, and it ignores the fact that the interests of the community require that there should be, as a general rule, a difference between a man's wage as that of an actual or potential family-wage and a woman's or boy's wage, which, again as a general rule, will be an individual wage. The worth of the workman is not merely the worth of his work for a given day or a week. He represents a reserve strength to be called upon in emergencies, whether by his employer or by the State, while woman as surely has to be regarded as an element of weakness, owing to her physical limitations and the prospect of her abandoning her work on her marriage. The principle of equal pay can be enforced by legislation, but while the results may benefit the individual woman, sooner or later the community must suffer. In the Suffragist State of Idaho not a solitary male (according to the statement of a member of the New York City Board of Education in the *New Statesman* of September 12th, 1914) is employed in the school system throughout the State, either as teacher or administrator. Equal remuneration is in force, and the salaries paid are above a living wage for a woman, but below a family wage for a man.

Mrs. Courtney in the article already quoted divides labour into three categories, productive, administrative

and servile. "Very little of the work of professional women, as distinct from women in industry, belongs to the first class; a good deal of it is in the second; but far too large a proportion is in the third, and it is this superfluous, unproductive, artificial kind of work which in every crisis ceases to be." With women second in point of time in the modern labour market and handicapped by physical disabilities, it is evident that where they have invaded man's sphere they are liable to be dispensed with unless they have brought special qualifications to their task. Those who have done this will always be few in number; the majority will rely on "undercutting" men in virtue of the fact that they offer either inferior workmanship or just fulfil the hard and fast terms of the contract, without that reserve of strength which in the case of a man is taken for granted. The best preventive against unemployment, therefore, would be for women to avoid man's sphere as far as possible, and specialize in those occupations in which man is at a disadvantage. Teaching and clerical work they may agree to share, for much of the latter is for men a period of training for higher posts, in filling which women may well be at a disadvantage. On broad lines let women attend to the national housekeeping, where scope for their activities and special qualifications abounds. The term applies to nursing, to Local Government work, and to every activity connected with the nation's food supply. The woman of commanding ability will carve a career for herself. We are concerned here only with the rank and file, those for whom occupations have to be found, or who must be assisted in their choice in order that they themselves may run the less risk of unemployment at times of stress, and that the country may derive the maximum benefit from their collective work.

### NOTES AND NEWS.

#### "Peace" Delegates.

Among the questions connected with the war which, we fear, will never be cleared up, is whether the boat traffic between England and Holland during the last week in April was suspended solely for naval and military reasons, or in the hope of preventing the Home Secretary's deputation to the International Women's Congress from proceeding to The Hague. We have no wish to attribute to the hundred and more women who proposed to go to the congress anything that was not in their own minds. Some of their number have repudiated the suggestion that the congress had necessarily to be for peace at any price. The point need not be pressed. There is enough to go upon in the public utterances of those who expected to go to the congress. Two meetings, at which the promoters of the congress were the speakers, were held in London in connection with the proposal. In not a single speech was there anything to show that the speaker had any other thought than that war was terrible, and, war having broken out between Germany and Great Britain, it must be stopped at once. These were praiseworthy sentiments for the beginning of August, 1914; but there must be something radically wrong with the mind that imagines that the question is still at that stage. Here are British women who, after all that has happened during the last nine months, are so incapable of appreciating facts as they are that they

imagine their country to be engaged in a conflict over some academic question in regard to which there are two points of view and the possibility of a compromise.

#### Our Enemies.

If the country were to take these people seriously, it would stand amazed at their ineptitude or wonder whether the workings of the enemy might not be traced among them as in the promptings of strikes. There is no need for Britons to hate Germans as the latter are goading themselves on to hate us. Hatred for our enemies does not happen to be a British national vice; we are far more likely to have a good-humoured contempt or a sneaking liking for them. The only other possible attitude for Britons to adopt towards an enemy is consciously to suppress either of these instinctive attitudes, while they carry out the task which a sense of duty impels them to perform. With some such feeling we enter upon native wars. There is no room for pleasantries or conventionalities in dealing with a native foe who understands neither. He knows nothing of the rules of civilized warfare or of the sanctity of a pledged word; he is out to kill anyhow, anywhere and everyone in any way connected with the enemy nation, and probably to torture those who fall into his hands alive. Under these conditions the Briton knows only one kind of warfare: he goes on fighting until the natives admit themselves beaten and sue for peace. What our Suffragist friends, who in such large numbers have now allowed peace to share with the vote the dignity of an obsession, fail to note is that, so far as our attitude towards our present enemies is concerned, the Germans have deliberately placed themselves in the third category. There is no need to labour the point here. Too much has happened to leave any thinking man or woman under the impression that this war may possibly be "allowed to continue through misunderstanding" (as Miss Picton-Turberville suggested was likely to be the case, if the International Women's Congress did not take place). There is no more misunderstanding between Germany and Great Britain than there was between ourselves and the Mahdi. It is not any misunderstanding that has caused Germany to abandon all the canons of civilized warfare and to wage this war in a manner that we have hitherto associated with only uncivilized peoples. But as she has done so, Great Britain has no other alternative than to go on fighting until Germany says that she has had enough.

#### Lessons of the Congress.

There is no room, therefore, at this stage for a women's peace congress at The Hague. The women of neutral countries and, indeed, of Germany and Austria-Hungary, may hold such a congress if they like, but it is in the nature of a blow to our national pride to find that any of our own countrywomen can be so lacking in intelligence and impervious to all self-respect as to wish to take part in such a gathering. Only when we remember who these women are does the fact explain itself. Under the driving power of an obsession, as we have seen, the brightest intellect often goes hopelessly astray, and the moral sense becomes blunted. Whether for the women under consideration peace has come as a further obsession superimposed on the vote we cannot say. The fact remains that among them are those who have suffered

conspicuously in the past from the major obsession. These extremists belong to the clique of leaders who direct the small section of women who claim a voice in the government of the country. At a time when the nation is at one in a way that it has never been before these women prove incapable of reading its mind. What prospect have they of being able to interpret public opinion or to represent usefully any section of the community when the nation is once more divided in its views?

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#### A French View of the Congress.

While the proposed Women's Congress has caused a split in the ranks of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, it will not have done much to strengthen the ties between the Suffragist organizations of the various countries. Every French woman who has been appealed to has roundly denounced the scheme, and in this connection it will be remembered that when Mme. Vérone was brought over to speak at the Annual Council meeting of the N.U.W.S.S. she devoted practically the whole of her remarks to showing why French women would have nothing to do with any proposal to discuss terms of peace with German women. In a spirited reply to the invitation sent to France over the signature (Mrs.) Eleanor Fell, Mme. Juliette Adam writes: "Are you truly an English woman? Although I am but little of a Suffragette, I must confess to you that I better understand those English women who would like to fight. England and France to-day have proof of what arbitration and mediation would have done for us. To ask French women at this moment to talk of arbitration and mediation to discuss an armistice is to ask of them national abdication of their rights."

The whole incident confirms what has been repeatedly maintained in these columns, that nine-tenths of Suffragedom is entirely out of touch with the realities of life. In the midst of war, when the Germans have shown that they have not the least intention of observing any treaty or solemn undertaking, and while they are employing the scientific resources of civilization to carry out the devilry of savages, these Suffragist women express their anxiety to learn from German speakers in what way Germany feels aggrieved against Great Britain in order, forsooth, that we may make fresh treaties with her. It is the same people who in peace time ask the country to believe that their vote will prove a panacea for all the ills from which the nation suffers.

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#### Women and Farm Labour.

We publish in this issue an article by Miss G. S. Pott on the interesting experiment for the revival of dairy work for women now being made in Berkshire by a committee of which Miss Pott is honorary treasurer. Amid the mass of words appearing in our Press on the subject of work for women it is of interest to have a brief description of a scheme actually in working, which shows every prospect of proving successful. The Berkshire Committee, it is true, is more concerned with dairy work and the question of the national milk supply than with mere relief for unemployment. It does its best to select only suitable workers, and then makes a point of "seeing the thing through" until the rest depends entirely on the women themselves. The proper training is

given, suitable housing accommodation provided for, and work for the trained women procured. As a result of the committee's efforts there are ten more women milkers in the country than there were before it began its good work. It does not claim to have solved the problem of women and farm labour for the nation. A few Berkshire ladies have shown what can be done in one centre to provide women with suitable employment in which their work is of vital importance to the nation at large. They offer their experience as a guide and stimulus to similar voluntary effort in every country district where complaints are heard of a shortage of farm labour and there are women in need of or available for work.

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#### Round Pegs in Square Holes.

The arrangements made by the Berkshire Committee are eminently practical. By dealing with a class of women who are at least likely to take to dairy work, and by subjecting applicants to a careful scrutiny, it has set its face against the pitfalls that beset the majority of amateur efforts to meet sudden emergencies. Some years ago two public appointments were made at about the same time, A to a diplomatic post, B to a high literary post. The Prime Minister of the day was subsequently asked (privately) why he had not appointed A to the literary post and B to the diplomatic post, on the ground that A might turn out to have literary attainments and B to have the diplomatic instinct with far more likelihood than there was of their developing qualifications for the posts to which they were actually appointed. Relief measures, it is to be feared, often suffer in the same way. Work is allotted more with the idea of recording so and so many jobs filled than with any reference to the fitness of the women for the work given them. In many cases no doubt a means of livelihood with the least possible delay must be the first consideration of those responsible for relief measures. But with provision made for such cases there will be time for voluntary helpers to turn their attention to work on the lines laid down by the Berkshire Committee, work which, it is hoped, will have a permanent influence on the national well-being.

#### WAR WORK FOR WOMEN.

Some practical remarks were a feature of a meeting held at Leeds on March 30th in furtherance of the Government's scheme for the registration of women for war service. Miss Thornton, senior Labour Exchange organising officer for the Board of Trade in Yorkshire and the East Midlands, explained the scheme, and warned women against undertaking the work lightly or without the resolve to go forward with it to the end. Women with young families, she said, would be doing equally as good work for the country by staying at home and looking after their children as by taking up work in connection with armaments. Another speaker, Mrs. Kitson Clark, warned women "not to rush off and try to pick a job for themselves; they must put themselves at the disposal of the Government for the job that would be most advantageous to the nation." The scheme must not be regarded as an "opening," as a career for ambitious girls. They must make up their minds that they were doing war service and war service only, and must be prepared to stand aside when the men came back. Most of the men who were fighting were not helping their careers by so doing, and girls must recognise that they were not finding careers in industries or on farms.

A very salutary warning was conveyed in these last words in view of the agitation started in certain quarters to prevent the possibility of these emergency workers being "ousted" from their posts when the men whose places they are taking return from the war.

#### WOMEN AND FARM LABOUR.

BY GLADYS S. POTT (*Hon. Treasurer of the Berks Committee of Women's Farm Labour.*)

Amongst the industries mentioned in the Board of Trade's appeal to Women for War Service is that of agricultural employment. The official paper places such work under two headings, namely, "Farm" and "Dairy," and of course it is easy, and in many cases necessary, to draw a line between the two. But it may be of interest to those concerned with the question of the present development of women's employment to know of a scheme embracing both forms of labour that has taken practical shape in one of the home counties during the past two months. Early in February, before the Government appeal had been issued, two or three people met together in Berkshire to discuss the problem of the shortage of labour in the neighbourhood, and its probable effect upon the milk supply in and from that county. Letters had been appearing in the London Press, some signed by well-known men and women, urging that women in the South of England should take up milking in order to substitute their own labour for that of the agricultural recruit. More than one paper, and at least one voluntary association, had announced its willingness to register the names of women candidates and of employers with a view of putting each in touch with the other. But so far as was discovered by the Berkshire ladies, no actual practical step had been taken with a view to providing free training in milking for women, nor had the dairy farmer decided whether he was prepared to accept the suggestion of female assistance.

#### PRACTICAL STEPS.

It appeared obvious that the first person to be approached was the employer, for what use could it be to train a girl unless, when trained, she found an engagement? Private communications were therefore entered into with a few of the leading county farmers, and through their influence the question was brought before the local Dairy Farmers' Association, who expressed approval of an experiment being made in the direction of women milkers. The next necessity was to find a farm or dairy where milking could be taught and learnt. This was not an easy matter. When labour is short it requires real sacrifice on the part of the master to allow his cowman time to teach raw hands, and the patient cows themselves do not altogether enjoy the process! But with great generosity the authorities of Reading University College, one of the chief agricultural centres in the South of England, came forward with the offer of providing instruction of a fortnight's duration upon their farm for a limited number of girls. Without such offer the scheme might probably have failed to materialize, but with this co-operation the small body of promoters took courage and "went ahead."

Certain questions of real importance had to be considered, for it was felt that upon the wisdom of their settlement depended in great measure the future of the experiment. The first point concerned the living accommodation to be provided for the women; secondly, the class of girl to be trained; thirdly, the wages to be earned; fourthly, the duties other than that of milking to be performed. These points are largely interdependent, housing forming the groundwork of the others. Everyone familiar with country conditions is aware that the farm "lad," unless his parents be resident in or close

to the village where the boy works, is taken in and "done for" by a labourer's wife or widow. In some cases upon large farms, where a number of lads or single men are normally employed, they live together in a "bothy," but upon the majority of farms likely to take girl milkers in Berkshire such bothies are not the custom, nor, had they been, would it be desirable to allow young women to be so housed. The girl milker would have to lodge with the family of an agricultural labourer, living and boarding with his wife and himself, except in such instances as those in which a furnished cottage could be provided—a very rare occurrence—or when the girl lived and worked in the farmer's house. These facts guided the committee towards a decision with regard to the second point, that of the class of girl to be trained.

#### VITAL CONSIDERATIONS.

The vast majority of women being trained in dairy or farm work in agricultural colleges are of a well-to-do type, able to pay fees for their own maintenance and instruction, and expecting when trained to command such salaries as will enable them to live and mix with people accustomed to their own standard of comfort. Not only would such women be uncomfortable and unhappy in the labourer's family, but the farmers themselves felt unprepared to introduce the "lady" worker upon their farms. To give the experiment a fair chance of success it was felt that the candidates should be drawn from amongst the daughters of agricultural labourers, and mainly from those accustomed to country conditions. Girls used to town life seldom realize what country surroundings mean. The lack of artificial light, pavements, shops, and neighbours, the winter's mud and wet, the discomfort of an unclean farmyard at 5 a.m. on a winter's morning when milking begins, are intolerable to the Londoner, who is apt to form her judgment of country life on a single experience of a day's outing or a week's holiday during the summer. It was essential that every precaution should be taken against accepting girls who would probably give up the work after a short trial, and also against offering the farmer a class of worker he did not desire. Hence it was decided to eliminate for the present the town bred girl and the more highly cultivated type of woman and to refuse applicants below 18 years of age. To carry out these decisions a committee of ladies and gentlemen, including farmers and representatives of Reading College, was formed to interview and select candidates, and make inquiries into conditions of housing offered by individual employers. The questions of wages and duties required careful discussion. The average normal wage of the districts immediately concerned is low, sometimes only 14s. to 15s. a week to a married man with a family, the farm lad often taking only 9s. or 10s. a week. It is also to be remembered that women cannot and ought not to perform every task a lad or single man can be put to do. Lifting heavy weights, throwing up heavy loads on a fork, etc., are obviously improper duties for women. And these limitations make her less generally useful on a small farm than is the male labourer. Milking and dairy cleaning (except in very large dairies) occupies from four to five hours a day, and for this work alone she is not worth a living wage to her employer. Jobs have to be found with which profitably to fill up the rest of the day. The milkmaid must therefore be ready to clean, cut up and prepare food for cattle, pigs, poultry or sheep, to hoe and weed fields in spring time, to lend a hand with hay or harvest, and

perhaps in some cases to drive a light cart and groom and harness a pony. A general scale of work drawn up by the committee included all these duties, but it was felt that until the women had shown their value and the experiment proved its worth the committee should content itself by inquiring into the wage offered by each individual employer, and only recommend a girl to such masters as offered sufficient remuneration to pay the employee's maintenance and give her a few shillings a week over and above that sum.

#### THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHEME.

Finally there remained the question of clothing. Candidates being chiefly limited to labouring girls might not possess or be able to buy suitable garments for the rough outdoor life they would have to live. A small fund was therefore guaranteed by the ladies on the committee, and power reserved to them to provide in such cases as were considered advisable, a strong and thick pair of boots, a coarse overall and a cap as the preliminary outfit for the girl candidate. While in training she is boarded and housed, but no wages are given, the cost of her maintenance being borne by the Committee. The scheme is in working, and so far has succeeded beyond the promoters' expectation. Ten women and girls have been trained to milk, and situations secured for them with satisfactory housing and wages, the best proof of success being that one employer has taken four and asked for two more. Whether the work becomes really permanent, and whether the pay increases, depends entirely upon the women themselves. If they adapt themselves genially to new circumstances, show themselves willing and handy, in short, put their backs into it and prove their worth, the farmers will look with favour upon women farm hands. The shortage of agricultural labour, though accentuated by the war, was with us before the outbreak of hostilities, and is a problem to be faced seriously and remedied carefully. A diminution of our milk supply is a threatened reality, and women should remember that the first individuals to suffer from a decrease of such food will be children and hospital patients.

The Berkshire Committee has done and is doing its best to encourage women milkers and prevent disaster to the nation. It needs careful, patient and quiet work of voluntary committees. Cannot ladies in other districts start similar schemes? The Board of Agriculture is now making grants to agricultural colleges for the training of women, but in most instances candidates are taken from the professional classes. If farmers can be found to employ these girls all will be well; but the belief and experience of the Berkshire Committee is that the labouring girl is the more desirable candidate.

The War Office asks for respirators of the following types for troops at the front:—

*First*: A face piece (to cover mouth and nostrils), formed of an oblong pad of bleached absorbent cotton-wool about 5½ in. by 3 in. by ¾ in., covered with three layers of bleached cotton gauze and fitted with a band, to fit round the head and keep the pad in position, consisting of a piece of ¼ in. cotton elastic 16 in. long, attached to the narrow end of the face pad, so as to form a loop with the pad.

*Second*: A piece of double stockinette, 9½ in. long, 3½ in. wide in the centre, gradually diminishing in width to 2½ in. at each end, with a piece of thick plaited worsted about 5 in. long attached at each end so as to form a loop to pass over the ear.

As these respirators have to be sent in packages of not less than 100, the Assistant Secretary is prepared to receive small quantities from individual members and will dispatch them as required by the War Office.

## THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONGRESS.

Perhaps the most charitable remark that can be said of the promoters of the International Women's Congress summoned to meet at The Hague on April 28th, is that they sought to do ill by stealth and are now covered with confusion at finding themselves notorious.

As the proposed congress has been the subject of so much publicity in this country it will be as well to explain its origin, or at least as much as can be gleaned of it from the Suffragist press. The International Alliance for Woman Suffrage was to have held a congress next June in Berlin. As this congress obviously could not take place in Germany, it appears to have been tacitly agreed that the meeting should not be held at all this year. A few enthusiasts, however, conceived the idea of convening an international "peace" conference in a neutral country as a substitute for the formal Suffrage Congress. The Dutch Woman Suffrage Association, or what is termed a "sub-division" of it, was entrusted with the work of carrying this proposal into effect, and proceeded to circularize the Suffrage Associations in twenty-six different countries affiliated with the International Alliance. To the surprise of the promoters the replies were not encouraging. "The idea itself met with general favour, but it was considered advisable to refrain from holding official assemblies" (*Jus Suffragii*, April, 1915). But the promoters refused to be thwarted of their purpose, and decided to "consult separately the prominent women of the different countries, both belligerent and neutral." The next incident appears to have been a meeting in Amsterdam on February 12th and 13th last, attended by a number of British, German, Dutch and Belgian women. As this meeting was described as "an informal conference of women to consider the possibility of holding an International Women's Congress to discuss problems arising out of the present war and the peace settlement which is to follow," it becomes responsible for the subsequent congress. The British women present were (or included) Miss Chrystal Macmillan, Miss Emily M. Leaf, Miss Catherine E. Marshall, and Miss Theodora Wilson Wilson, all members of the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies. The Amsterdam meeting, however, did more than consider the possibility of holding a congress; it drew up a detailed programme, even to the drafting of motions to be submitted to the congress.

#### GOLDEN SPEECH: SILVER SILENCE.

An attempt has been made to deny that the congress was to be of a "peace-at-any-price" character. The attitude of the promoters, however, may be gauged from their draft resolutions. The first "urges the Governments of the belligerent countries publicly to define the terms on which they are willing to make peace, and for this purpose immediately to call a truce." Another declares war "to be a madness, possible only to people intoxicated with a false idea." As, therefore, the British Empire, according to this handful of women, is intoxicated with a false idea of defending itself and seeking to uphold the sanctity of treaties and to redress the outrage done to Belgium, it follows that peace, in their opinion, ought to follow the truce—at any price.

Now we may examine the constitution of this "International Women's Congress" which calls upon the Powers of the world to bring about peace and severally to

adopt Woman Suffrage, for, of course, the cloven hoof appears in the draft resolutions of the congress.

"It should be made clear," says the official prospectus, "that the congress is organized by individual women." Further, "women in general sympathy with the resolutions on the programme may become members, with the right to speak and vote, on payment of the congress fee of 10s. . . . Men and women may attend as visitors on payment of the fee of 5s." Such is the congress. A handful of Suffragists put their heads together, draw up a statement to the effect that they won't have war and that they must have Woman Suffrage, and then announce that anybody who agrees with them may come and say so for half-a-sovereign, or may look on for five shillings—the gathering to be known as The International Women's Congress.

#### THE BRITISH DELEGATES.

The whole affair was *pour rire*, and ought to have been treated in one of two ways. Either no notice should have been taken of the congress, while the women who proposed to go from this country should have been allowed to do so in company with Miss Maude Royden, and thus should have been given opportunity to act upon the latter's proposal, that women could stop the war by throwing themselves under the German troop trains; or, if the Government saw fit to intervene, it ought to have been with a curt intimation that no permits would be issued to enable anyone to go to the Congress. The actual course adopted appears to have been that the Home Secretary nominated the British delegation to the International Women's Congress, and our enemies are left to derive such encouragement as they may from the reflection that the British Government is so far weakening in its conduct of the war that it has lent itself to informal *pourparlers* in order to find out Germany's peace terms. At the eleventh hour the *deus ex machina* appeared to interfere with the departure of the British delegates in the stoppage of boat traffic between England and Holland, and when the congress opened it was reported that only two women from Great Britain were present.

#### THE N.U.W.S.S. AND THE CONGRESS.

When an international congress at The Hague was first suggested, Mrs. Fawcett took up a strong attitude against the proposal, urging, amongst other objections, the possibility of the delegates to a conference on peace quarrelling amongst themselves. Mrs. Fawcett's shrewdness and her knowledge of her own people have not been belied. Her attitude was at once challenged by an influential section of her followers; quite a heated correspondence on the subject appeared in the *Common Cause*, and finally, when the Executive Committee decided not to accept the invitation to the congress, ten out of twenty-one members of that Committee resigned, together with the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Parliamentary Secretary\*. The quarrelling prophesied by Mrs. Fawcett has taken place; but as it occurred before the congress met the harmony of the latter is probably assured. Only the extreme peace-at-any-price clique will elect to pay half-a-sovereign to tell one another how little they like

\* The members of the Executive Committee who have resigned are Miss Maude Royden, Mrs. H. M. Swanwick, Miss Margaret Ashton, Miss Alice Clark, Miss I. O. Ford, Miss E. M. Leaf, Mrs. Harley, Mrs. Arthur Schuster, Mrs. Stanbury, and Miss Tanner. Miss Courtney (Hon. Secretary) and Miss Catherine Marshall (Hon. Parliamentary Secretary) also resigned their posts, and Miss Royden resigned the Editorship of the *Common Cause*.

war and how much they want Woman Suffrage. To judge by the statements of the two camps, the split in the N.U.W.S.S. is for the time being at least definitive. In spite of Mrs. Fawcett's warning against the congress and her appeal to her followers to give the proposal a wide berth, some of the officials of the society actually went over to Holland in February to make arrangements for the congress and to draft the resolutions. At the annual council meeting held a few days previously a compromise appeared to have been effected by a resolution recommending the International Women's Suffrage Association to call a council in a neutral country this year. The reference, it was explained subsequently, was to a "business meeting"; but so far the recommendation does not seem to have been taken up by the Association. It looks as if the motive power in Suffragist circles had gone over to the peace movement; certainly in America this movement is now identical with Suffragism-cum-pro-Germanism.

## WAR SERVICE FOR WOMEN.

In the April number of the REVIEW reference was made to the decision of the Government to establish a special register of women for war service. The response of the country has probably been proportionate to its comprehension of what is required of it. Some 50,000 women have registered so far, and if there were any likelihood of the services of those 50,000 being utilized and others being wanted, the same number and many multiples of it would doubtless register without further delay. But it has to be admitted that no very definite lead is being given to women in this matter. The Board of Trade convened on April 13th a conference of representatives of women's societies in connection with the subject, but the meeting cannot be said to have provided any fresh stimulus to registration. Mr. Runciman, who presided, explained that a special register was necessary, because although there were considerable numbers of women on the ordinary Labour Exchange register, taking the country as a whole, it did not follow that in any particular district sufficient women were available for the present demand. He added that it was not intended that the women on the special register should be placed in employment at the expense of the Exchanges in the ordinary way. The women on the special register would be called on only if there were not sufficient women available on the ordinary Labour Exchange register of the locality.

In the subsequent discussion Miss Mary Macarthur pointed out that she had visited certain districts where munitions of war are being manufactured, and found that large numbers of women who desired employment were unable to obtain it, although they stood outside the works daily for the purpose.

The register, however, is a move in the right direction, although it is the preliminary and easiest step in a somewhat complicated problem. It remains to be seen whether the Government will feel encouraged to proceed with the idea, and so organize the manufacture of munitions of war that it will be able not only to use the services of all the women on the ordinary and special registers, but also to call for more helpers.

Members of the League will have noted with interest that the King, on the recommendation of the Home Secretary, has been pleased to appoint Mr. Heber Hart, K.C., a member of our Executive Committee, Recorder of Ipswich.

## FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

No set ceremony marked the unveiling of the statue of Florence Nightingale, which has been erected hard by the Crimean Memorial in Waterloo Place. A certain appropriateness, however, attaches to the time of this latest addition to London's monuments. For those who pass by have their minds set on war, and instinctively recall the debt that the country owes to the one who first showed how some of its horrors could be lessened. Florence Nightingale's work was not restricted to the field service that the lamp in her hand more particularly commemorates. She returned home to see that the lesson which the Crimean War had taught should receive practical application. She believed in doing things and using to the full her woman's influence to get them done.

Florence Nightingale has been claimed as a Suffragist. Her strength of will and powers of sympathy may well have led her in her later years to feel drawn towards the women who protested a desire to do things. That she would have supported the Suffrage agitation as it stands to-day committed to everything that is unreal, unpractical, or untrue, cannot be believed. Florence Nightingale might insist upon the head of a Government Department carrying out her wishes; but we cannot imagine her lobbying with Mrs. Fawcett or urging with Mrs. Maude Royden that people should allow themselves to be run over by troop trains as a protest against war.

In the prime of her womanhood she had no illusions about the Suffrage agitation. Writing to Madame Mohl in a letter dated December 13, 1861, Florence Nightingale said:—

" . . . . You say 'Women have more sympathy than men.' Now if I were to write a book out of my experience I should begin, 'Women have no sympathy.' Yours is tradition. Mine is the conviction of experience. I have never found one woman who has altered her life one iota for me or my opinions. Now look at my experience of men. A statesman past middle age absorbed in politics . . . out of sympathy with me remodels his whole life and policy—learns a science the driest, the most technical, the most difficult, that of administration, as far as it concerns the lives of men—not as I learnt it, in the field from stirring experience, but by writing dry regulations in a London room by my sofa with me. That is what I call real sympathy. (Seven cases cited.)

"Now just look at the degree in which women have sympathy—as far as my experience is concerned. And my experience of women is almost as large as Europe. And it is so intimate, too. I have lived and slept in the same bed with English Countesses and Prussian Bauerinnen. No Roman Catholic Supérieure has ever had charge of women of the different creeds that I have had. No woman has excited 'passions' among women more than I have. Yet I leave no school behind me. My doctrines have taken no hold among women. Not one of my Crimean following learnt anything from me, or gave herself for one moment after she came home to carry out the lesson of that war or of those hospitals. No woman that I know has ever 'appris à apprendre.' And I attribute this to want of sympathy. You say somewhere that women have no attention. Yes. And I attribute this to want of sympathy. Nothing makes me so impatient as people complaining of their want of memory. How can you remember what you have never heard? It makes me mad, the Women's Rights talk about 'the want of a field' for them—when I know that I would gladly give £500 a year for a woman secretary. And two English Lady Superintendents have told me the same thing. And we can't get one . . . .

"Women crave for *being loved*, not for *loving*. They scream out at you for sympathy all day long; they are incapable of giving *any* in return, for they cannot remember your affairs long enough to do so. . . . They cannot state a fact accurately to another, nor can that other attend to it accurately enough for it to become information. Now that is all the result of want of sympathy."—(*Florence Nightingale*, by Sir E. T. Cooke.)

Florence Nightingale's somewhat sweeping verdict opens up an interesting subject. One wonders whether, if in 1914 she had been alive and possessed of the vigour of 1861, she would have modified her earlier views, on seeing the following that Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Fawcett had obtained, or whether she would have felt still more "mad," but at the same time content that the "passions" which she had excited had been saner and healthier, even though they produced no school.

The Queen's "Work for Women" Fund has published in book form "Some Newspaper Extracts Relating to the Work and Activities of the Fund." By this means a wider and perhaps clearer view of the work inaugurated by Queen Mary will be obtained, while the Fund stands to benefit from the sale of the book, which costs one shilling.

## BRANCH NEWS.

**Hereford.**—The Annual Meeting of the Hereford and District Branch of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage was held at Eaton House, by kind permission of Miss King-King, on April 7th. Among those present were Anna, Lady Croft, Mrs. Paul Chapman, Mrs. Butterworth, Mrs. Gladstone, Miss M. King-King, Miss Capel and Miss Armitage. A letter of regret at being unable to attend was received from Mrs. G. Greenland.

Miss King-King presided and in her opening remarks said that everyone's thoughts were with the war, so of course no meetings had been held, for all the members of the Branch were helping with various kinds of patriotic work.

The accounts of the Branch were passed as satisfactory and the Committee was re-elected.

It was decided that a letter should be sent to all members pointing out the useful work done by the Anti-Suffrage Information Bureau, 415, Oxford Street.

Miss Armitage said that she had recently visited the Great Eastern Military Hospital at Cambridge and was pleased to note how cheerfully our brave soldiers bore their terrible sufferings.

**North Berks. Branch.**—We record with satisfaction the election of one of our members, Mrs. Reynolds, to the Board of Guardians, recently appointed by the Borough of Abingdon. No canvassing was carried on this year owing to the abnormal circumstances of the war, though six persons stood for five vacancies. Mrs. Reynolds' name came out head of the poll, and though the number of votes was extremely small, only 242 persons of both sexes out of a total list of 1,625 taking the trouble to record their vote, our lady member secured 167 of these 242 votes.

Miss H. Page thinks that those members who have so kindly sent comforts for Airmen and Mine Sweepers in answer to her appeal in the REVIEW, will be interested in the following letters:—

"The Royal Flying Corps Aid Committee.

"DEAR MADAM,—Very many thanks for your letter and parcel of comforts, for which I am very grateful. The one thing we are short of is socks. For the present we are not sending out other warm woollen garments, but are keeping them in case they will be needed for next winter. But socks I send all the time, and we get so very few of them.

"Should you know of anyone who has any to spare, I would be so very much obliged if you would remember us.

"Yours truly,

"NETTY HENDERSON."

(Lady Henderson.)

"THE MOBILISING OFFICER, R.N.,

"Trawler Reserve,

"Royal Dock,

"Grimsby.

"DEAR MADAM,—I thank you very much for your kind gifts. The men are very grateful indeed for them. I will take care that they are distributed and not hoarded up.

"F. H. POLLEN,

"Commander."

## INFANT MORTALITY.

In commenting upon the high infant death-rate at Runcorn for the year 1914 the Medical Officer states:—

"Ignorance on the part of mothers in the proper management of infants is the most potent factor in the causation of the loss of infant life. Such a condition of affairs in a town in which the married women of the working-classes do not engage in employment is a disgrace which the Health Committee ought to attempt to remove." The report touches upon the serious matter of the increasing number of premature births among the working-classes, and Dr. T. E. Annett expresses the opinion that adequate care of expectant mothers might save the young life in many cases.

Many indications justify the belief that since the outbreak of the war increased attention has been paid to the subject of infant mortality. It has been all to the good that a certain number of people have been roused out of the frame of mind which affected to believe that nothing could be done to cope with infant mortality until women had votes. This in spite of the fact that every Medical Officer of Health has insisted that the mothers—the very women who were to have votes in order to put things right—were mainly responsible for the high death-rate, partly on account of their ignorance and partly because they have so largely abandoned the custom of breast-feeding, which in Norway, for instance, is practically universal and is held to account for the low infantile death-rate.