

By the end of 1913 there were 5080 members and one hundred and three branches, 425 of the members being clergy.

* Then there is the Women's Freedom League, with a large membership and income, and branches throughout the United Kingdom; and there are besides some twenty other distinct societies in England: The Conservative and Unionist Franchise Association, the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, the Conservative Irish Women's Franchise Association, six other Irish societies, and two Scottish societies, the Women Writers' Association, the Women Teachers' Association, and the Actresses' Association.

So far as I have had an opportunity of judging by a visit to the headquarters of these societies, they are doing quite remarkable work. The larger ones have extensive offices in the best part of London, all of them well equipped and capably staffed by women, in most cases giving their time to the work. These larger offices also have separate departments for correspondence, finance, statistics, political work, and literature. They have a special book shop just off the Strand, and are printing and issuing great quantities of books and leaflets. There are five weekly newspapers and one monthly, all capably conducted and widely circulated. The amount of money subscribed to the funds is one of not the least remarkable features of the movement.

The second very striking characteristic of the movement is its democracy and the very live zeal of its leaders.

Women of all classes and all creeds work side by side; women in society, in the professions, and working women associate freely, their devotion to their cause being their common bond. That refined and well-bred women will either mount the chair or waggon in the park or at the street corner, or will sell newspapers in the streets, is a very practical illustration of their genuineness and strength of conviction.

The third and last point or feature of this new crusade appeals to me as the most important, and appears to give to it a value and significance that is most vital and of the greatest consequence to us as a people nationally, and as it naturally follows, Imperially also. It is a quality of the movement that seems to have been obscured or overlooked by the public generally, and more especially so by our own

people outside the Mother Land. I refer to the fact that the interest the women are taking in the franchise extension to themselves has brought them into direct vital contact with all the great social and political problems of our time. They are being lifted entirely out of the rut of the ordinary round of women's interests, have come, as it were, into a new world of ideas and interests.

The Society woman, with her gay and but narrow round, the middle class and professional woman, also circumscribed in outlook, as well as the working woman, have all been compelled to take a wider view. On the platform, in their journals and books, and at all times and seasons, they are discussing the causes and results of poverty, crime, bad laws, overcrowding, ignorance, and low wages, and indeed the whole gamut of social and political vexed questions that are waiting for solution.

In spite of some small improvement in the general condition of the mass of the workers in England, there is an enormous amount of suffering and degradation caused through low wages and sweating. Wages in many districts are as low as 16s per week for men, and rent consumes one-third of that amount at least. Women in many of the sweated industries earn 2s only for a day's work of twelve hours.

In the past one of the obstacles that lay in the way of a remedy for this has been that the wealthy classes were ignorant of or ignored these conditions. Through the organisation of the Franchise Movement, the barrier is breaking down. The educated woman and the woman in society is being brought in contact on equal terms, through a common cause, with the labourer's wife and the factory worker, and is compelled to realise and understand the suffering and injustice that is being inflicted on her helpless sister.

The working woman on her part has come to see that the road to economic justice is by way of the vote, so that the suffrage struggle has become a means of enormous benefit as an educational force. Altogether apart from the question of the vote, this is now, and will be, a factor of the greatest value in the struggle that is going on for better social conditions for the worker, as well as for a change in women's social and economic conditions generally.

BRITISH DOMINIONS WOMAN SUFFRAGE UNION.

LETTER TO THE FRIENDS OF THE UNION IN NEW ZEALAND.

Dear Friends,—I have just read with the deepest interest the Special Franchise Number of the "White Ribbon" (August, 1914). Almost every article in this paper is of help in England, giving not only knowledge concerning the status of women in New Zealand but what is even more valuable, a clear idea of the aims of these women for the future. Once more the thought comes with renewed force: To how many centres in the other Dominions overseas does this illuminating and helpful paper find its way? I have ventured to write to the Editor of the "White Ribbon" on this point.

At the present terrible crisis in the history of our people it behoves us women more than ever to draw closely together, and thus prepare the way for united endeavour in the future. May I beg you to remember that the first essential is that we shall each know what the other is doing? In each Dominion we must make every effort to extend the sale of the woman's paper of that Dominion. We must encourage each society in each Dominion to take in, for the benefit of its members, the women's papers of the other Dominions:—

The "Woman Voter," Melbourne, Australia.

The "Liberal Woman," Sydney, Australia.

The "Woman's Century," Toronto, Canada.

The "Woman's Outlook," Port Elizabeth, S. Africa.

As I take in and read carefully every one of these papers, I can speak from experience of their value. Specimen copies can be had on application to the Editors.

Further, I am sending you from the London offices a specimen copy of each of the English Suffrage papers in turn. Each of these papers gives a different view of the great woman's movement in Britain and all over the world. Will you compare these papers and decide for yourself which you prefer? If possible, order it through your own local news agent, but if this gives any difficulty, please write to me, and it shall be sent you from London.

I beg you not to feel impatient if I press on your attention again and again the importance of women's