

INTERVIEW WITH A DISTINGUISHED SUFFRAGE WORKER.

We have been privileged to have an interview with Mrs Kinton Parkes, one of the fine band of women who have been fighting for the Suffrage in the Old Land. Mrs Parkes was a member of the Women Writers' Suffrage Society, of the Church League for Woman's Suffrage, and also of the Women's Freedom League.

The subject in England is so vast that different workers were told off to different branches of the work, to the social, financial, medical, and other aspects of the question. This led to the women specialising in different subjects, and Mrs Parkes was a specialist on taxation. There were active resisters to the law—the militants—and there were also passive resisters, and to the latter branch Mrs Parkes belonged, and founded "The Women's Tax Resistance League." They refused to pay taxes on the constitutional ground, admitted by the Government themselves, that there should be "no taxation without representation." The attempt to violate this principle of sound government by the statesmen of George III.'s day cost England her American colonies. The attempt to violate it in our own time drove hundreds of fine women to become Tax Resisters. These ladies were therefore Constitutional Militants. On the outbreak of war these passive resisters, by a majority vote, decided to pay taxes, and so come to the aid of the nation, and putting aside all propaganda work, to devote themselves to war work for men and women.

These suffrage societies were magnificently organised, and there is no finer story than the one which tells how they threw the whole strength of their splendid organisation into National War Service.

Mrs Kinton Parkes being trained in Suffrage work, and a specialist on its financial side, she was chosen to take charge of the finances of the Women's Emergency Corps (the largest war organisation in London), and eventually became its secretary. To hear this lady speak upon the Emergency Corps and its wonderful work is like listening to a chapter from the "Arabian Nights." How they met and grappled with a difficult situation Mrs Parkes told in her own charming manner. Our visitor

intends to lecture upon this subject, and our readers will have the opportunity of hearing this most fascinating story.

The first work to be done, and which really called the Emergency Corps into being, was to deal with unemployment among women. At the outbreak of war many firms, for the sake of retrenchment, gave their female assistants a week's notice, and these girls came to the Women's Emergency Corps to find them work. They sprang into the breach; on the one hand were people wanting help, and on the other people able and willing to give it; and this organisation brought them into touch with each other. Women lent houses to be converted into homes and hospitals for wounded soldiers; they lent their motor cars to aid in the work; women who could speak several languages went to the railway station to meet refugees from the Continent. Any woman wanting to do war work was sent to the Emergency Corps, whose business it was to suit her capabilities to the work most urgently needed. They started industries, such as toy-making, to provide employment for women requiring it, and by their advice other women started to train for special services, and this foresight on their part provided skilled workers as time went on.

Many instances could be given of the work done by Suffrage Unions and workers all over England. The Actresses' Franchise League collected the money to establish the Star and Garter Hospital, and the Women's Emergency Corps also owed its origin to their initiative. At the head of the Military Hospital in London the Government have placed two leading suffragette doctors.

The National Union for Woman's suffrage, the oldest Woman's Suffrage Society in the world, has organised a great deal of invaluable war work. Their Edinburgh branch inaugurated the Scottish Women's Hospitals, which did such fine service of which mention has been made in our columns before. Their London branch has one of the most efficient employment agencies in the country. The story Mrs Parkes has to tell is a thrilling one. To use her own words, they "have had the war at their back door" all the time, while we have reviewed it from afar.

White Ribboners who take the opportunity of hearing Mrs Parkes'

lecture will be brought into close touch with the atmosphere breached by our women workers who are in close touch with the trenches.

CIGARETTE PAPER.

A writer in "Harper's Weekly" says: "Cigarettes are not merely rolls of tobacco. They are not drugged with expensive poisons as is charged, but they have a peculiarity. The combination of burning paper and tobacco makes a compound which is neither tobacco smoke nor paper smoke, but has a name which chemists know and a smell which everybody knows. There is not much of the new compound, but in what there is of it lies the idiosyncrasy of the cigarette. Thomas Edison may be supposed to know what he is talking about when he says:

"Acrolein is one of the most terrible drugs in its effects on the human body. The burning of ordinary cigarette paper always produces acrolein. That is what makes the smoke so irritating. I really believe that it often makes boys insane. We sometimes develop acrolein in this laboratory in our experiments with glycerine. One whiff of it from the oven drove one of my assistants out of the building the other day. I can hardly exaggerate the dangerous nature of acrolein, and yet that is what a boy or man is dealing with every time he smokes an ordinary cigarette."

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The following payments have been received since last report:—

ORGANISING FUND.

Palmerston North, £10 2s; Napier, £6 8s; North-East Valley, Dunedin, £4 3s; Normanby, £4; Pahiatua, £1 13s; Devonport, £1 10s; Waipukurau, £1 8s; Edendale, Hastings, Sawyer's Bay, and Urenui, £1 each; Morrinsville, 10s; Richmond, 9s 6d; Kai-korai, 5s. Total, £34 8s 6d. Expenditure for month, £9 1s 7d.

STRENGTH OF THE NATION FUND.

Otautau, £1.

WORLD'S MISSIONARY FUND.

Waipukurau, £2; Pahiatua, £1 2s.

NEW ZEALAND FUND.

Hastings, £1; Pahiatua, 10s 6d.

NELLIE BENDELY,

N.Z. Treasurer,

Auckland, 4th February, 1918.