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EDITORIAL.

THE RIGHT TO SERVE.

"On behalf of the nation I am entitled to thank you for tendering your services."—*Mr. Lloyd George to the Women's Deputation.*

Everyone who saw the magnificent procession of women on Saturday last, who, undaunted by wind and rain, passed through the main thoroughfares of the metropolis on their way to the Ministry of Munitions of War, where they were sympathetically received by the President, Mr. Lloyd George, must have been profoundly impressed by the organizing ability of those responsible, by the resolute tenacity of purpose of the women in that brave show, and by their capacity to carry through duties which they undertake however adverse the circumstances.

For this reason it is not to be regretted that the day was so unpropitious, for the women who battled with the gusts of wind which threatened to tear their banners from the poles, and carried them triumphantly to their destination, the women who marched along undaunted, with a brave smile on their faces, though the rain drenched them as they walked, and the sound of water filling their shoes was audible with every step they took, gave the best possible evidence of their sincerity of purpose, of their determination to do all in their power to support the men behind the guns, and to help to organize victory, and of their capacity for so doing. It was to demonstrate this that they assembled in their thousands to take part in a procession stretching from Blackfriars to Westminster, and again from Marble Arch to Oxford Circus, that the banners which they bore were inscribed with words showing their determination to claim their right to serve, and that the red, white

and blue of the British flag marked the progress of the various sections from point to point.

They had their reward, in the assurance given them by the Minister of Munitions that their services were necessary to the national welfare at this crisis. "I do not think," he said, "it would be possible effectively to organize the resources of the nation for the tremendous war we are beginning thoroughly to realize we have embarked upon, until you mobilise the women of this country as well as the men. The National Register is a complete statutory recognition of that point.

"Women can help, and help enormously. I believe that they can help us through to victory. Without them victory will tarry, and the victory that tarry means a victory whose footprints are footprints of blood. . . . On behalf of the nation I am entitled to thank you for tendering your services."

It now remains for the women to organize so that their services can be utilized to the best possible advantage, a task which may safely be left to their indomitable leaders, who have already shown their political acumen, by the way they have handled the situation, and obtained so conclusive a recognition of their right to serve.

We must however take exception to various suggestions in the press that the patriotism which inspires the women who claim this right is some new thing. For it is of precisely the same quality as that which in the past inspired them to work and suffer in order to obtain their political enfranchisement. They claimed that enfranchisement because they knew that to secure it was the surest way to gain the right to give patriotic service, just as nurses know that their profession can never rise to the height of which it is capable till they obtain their professional enfranchisement through State Registration.

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