

Recruiting Campaign for Girls.

March 25 is Lady Day. May 1 is Labour Day and May Day. Possibly in the near future June will become Maidens' Day, for on that day there is to be a big effort to recruit for the land 30,000 maidens. It will take the form of a grand march through Luton of an army of girls for the land, and should be almost, if not quite, as much a gala day as the Tank Day. An appeal has already been issued from the county organisation. It says that when we consider the gigantic scale on which the war is being waged on the Western front, and the horrors of destruction and desolation laying waste countries so near to us that the sound of the guns is heard in many a peaceful English home, it seems almost a paradox to assert that in direct relation to this war we have a campaign to wage in this island as vitally important as any of those in progress on the far flung battle front. Yet such is indubitably the case, and unless we pursue this campaign of ours to Victory, the prospect before our soldiers is gloomy and even threatening.

We refer to the struggle to obtain food from the land. Most of us have got into the habit of taking the harvest as a matter of course. It may be good, or it may be bad, but whatever it is somehow or another we get it. In this respect as in others the stern seasons of the war are bringing us back to first principles, and we begin to realise that to obtain the harvest we must prepare for and gather it. And the men who hitherto have done this for us are no longer available.— called to redder fields where a grimmer Reaper is at work.

To supply their place the country appeals to women and girls to come forward, and the Women's Land Army is the response to the call. At least 30,000 are needed, and needed at once. The work is hard, and, compared with other industries, seems at first slight remuneration in point of actual payment. But against this it offers advantages which other work cannot—the advantages of health-giving labour in pleasant surroundings, of the joys of country life, of getting close to the "nature" most of us know too little about. Hundreds—perhaps thousands—of women and girls who, before this present urgent call, took up farm work owe to it not only a most pleasant change, but renewed vitality and a larger, wholesomener joy of life, while with regard to the remuneration the men who gave up good businesses and incomes to fight the enemy did not stop to ask whether soldiering "paid." And it cannot be repeated too often that every woman and girl who comes forward to join the Land Army and work on the fields is as much fighting the foe in her own person as are the gallant fellows at the front.

We have no doubt of ultimate Victory, but it is in the power of the Women's Land Army to make assurance doubly sure, and to make the victory speedy as well as certain.

A committee has been formed in Luton, with the Mayor (Councillor C. Dillingham, J.P.) as Chairman, and it includes the Mayoress, Mrs. Crawley, Mr. B. Hartop, and many farmers. Miss Brown, of Highfield, Luton, is the hon. sec., and they intend making it a memorable day. The army of girls who have donned the smock, brooks and jezuzings, and have found rosy cheeks and a splendid doctor in the fields, will parade the town, and there will be a big meeting in front of the Luton Town Hall, addressed by Mrs. Trustram Eve, the Mayor, Councillor W. J. Primett, J.P., and others.

The new army is especially required for harvest work, for the Mayor, who is interested in farming, says there are prospects of a good harvest, but full advantage of the gift of a bountiful Providence can only be obtained by the response of girls to the call of labour, and he hopes that Luton will outstrip all other parts of the country in this respect. There will later be similar demonstrations at Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard, but all eyes at present are on Luton.