

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

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THE opening of the new year should be the signal for the commencement of active operations in preparation for the Parliamentary campaign. It is announced that the Legislature will meet for the despatch of business on February 5th, and Mr. FORSYTH will avail himself of the earliest opportunity for the introduction of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill. He will endeavour to obtain a day before Easter for the second reading; it is therefore possible that the fate of the measure may be determined before the 21st of March. Our friends will note the extreme shortness of the interval during which petitions may be available for influencing the division on the second reading, and we earnestly exhort them, first, to prepare and forward as many as possible during January, that they may be ready against the opening of Parliament; and next, to keep up the supply incessantly while the Bill remains before the House of Commons. We refer our readers for particulars to the announcement respecting petitions in our advertising columns, and we beg that all who are able to collect signatures, be they many or be they few, and who are not already provided with a petition sheet, will at once apply to the office of this *Journal*, when they will be furnished with papers and full directions for their profitable use.

The efforts of our friends should receive an extraordinary stimulus by the comparison of the Parliamentary prospects this season with those at the beginning of last year. When we addressed our readers in January, 1874, we were looking forward to a division in a House which contained 328 members who had voted against the Bill, and 227 who could be counted as friends. Thus of the 555 members whose sentiments were known, there was a hostile majority of 101. If the 97 neutral members had all declared in our favour, they would not have counterbalanced the majority against us. In the present Parliament there are 453 members whose opinions have been declared. Of these 236 are in favour and 217 against the Bill. The majority of 101 against us in the last Parliament is therefore apparently changed into a majority of 19 in our favour. But there are 199 members whose views are unknown, and it is upon the influences that can be brought

to bear on these during the short period available for action that the issue of the division depends. Mr. JACOB BRIGHT obtained a majority of 33 for the second reading the first time he submitted the question to the House of Commons. Mr. FORSYTH may reasonably hope for a similar result if adequate measures be taken to give him effective support.

The meetings during the past month have been interesting and important. On December 9th a meeting was held in Hanover Square Rooms, under the presidency of Sir ROBERT ANSTRUTHER, M.P., which was well attended, and which was addressed by the Chairman, Serjeant COX, Miss RHODA GARRETT, Miss ANNA SWANWICK, Miss LILIAS ASHWORTH, Miss BECKER, and others. A petition to Parliament and memorial to the PRIME MINISTER and to Mr. GLADSTONE, in support of the Bill, were adopted. Meetings have been also held at Preston, Boston, Brighton, Huntingdon, and other places. Those who have attended the meetings since the commencement of the agitation do not fail to note a great advance in the position of the question. It is received with much greater earnestness by the supporters, and with much less of flippancy and frivolousness by the objectors, than formerly; and both parties seem to have made up their minds that it must be carried sooner or later. It may also be noted that the proportion of persons who hold up their hands against the resolutions is much less than it used to be. Generally only two or three hands in a meeting of hundreds of persons are raised against the proposition; also, while women vote for the resolution, the opponents are invariably of the other sex, and usually very juvenile specimens of their kind.

The activity of the promoters of women's suffrage is more remarkable by contrast with the attitude of those who desire other measures of reform. The Bill most nearly resembling the one in which we are engaged is that for extending the household franchise to counties, introduced by Mr. TREVELYAN last session. Mr. TREVELYAN'S Bill was rejected by 287 votes against 173—majority against 114—a majority exceeding by 47 votes that which defeated Mr. JACOB BRIGHT'S Bill in the last Parliament. Yet there is apparently no movement out of doors to

strengthen Mr. TREVELYAN'S hands. No meeting or petitions appear to be forthcoming in support of the County Franchise Bill, or at least none which will bear comparison with the demonstrations in favour of Mr. FORSYTH'S Bill. If these facts do not prove that women are seeking representation with more earnestness, enthusiasm, and determination than is displayed by any class which is asking for the further representation of men, we shall have to cease to place reliance on the ordinary methods by which persons manifest their desire for political reforms.

A rumour has obtained circulation through the press, and was alluded to by the chairman of the meeting at the Hanover Square Rooms, to the effect that the Government would give their support to Mr. FORSYTH'S Bill. We are not aware that there is any authority for the rumour, but it would not be surprising if the Government should take the subject into their serious consideration, after the public declaration of Mr. DISRAELI in 1873, that "the anomaly that the Parliamentary franchise attached to a household or property qualification, when possessed by a woman, should not be exercised, though in all matters of local government, when similarly qualified, she exercises this right," was "injurious to the best interests of the country," and that he trusted "to see it removed by the wisdom of Parliament;" after the votes which he and other prominent members of the Cabinet have recorded in favour of the removal of the electoral disabilities of women; and after the favourable comments on the proposal which have appeared in leading organs of the Conservative party in the press.

The late Government missed the opportunity of doing a great act of national justice when, after extending the municipal franchise to women, and after the House of Commons had, by a considerable majority, passed the second reading of a Bill extending the franchise to Parliamentary elections, they not only refused to proceed in the path on which they had entered, but stultified themselves by turning round and actively opposing further progress. We wonder whether the distrust of the possible effect of the women's vote on the prospects of the Liberal party, which is displayed by so many among their ranks, can proceed from the consciousness that the late Government treated the claims of women with scant justice and less courtesy, and used its influence to defeat the efforts that were being made to obtain the recognition of their constitutional rights. If the present Administration should pursue a broader and more truly Liberal policy; if their sense of justice should not be found blind only to the

claims of women; if they should invest with the protection of the suffrage that section of the community which is most in need of such defence, and least likely to use political power in a revolutionary or aggressive spirit with regard to the rights of others; and if, to use the words of Mr. GLADSTONE, they should resolve to give their support to a "safe and well-adjusted alteration of the law as to political power," and should see their "purpose carried onward to its consequences in a more just arrangement of the provisions of other laws bearing on the condition and welfare of women," it would not be surprising if women should share the opinion of Mr. GLADSTONE that the man who should do this would "be a real benefactor to his country," and if they should feel that a Government which had thus recognised and cared for them had the strongest claims on their gratitude and support. Mr. GLADSTONE threw away his own opportunity of becoming such a benefactor to his country. It is earnestly to be hoped that no succeeding minister will follow his example in this respect.

But in order to make it possible for the Administration to support Mr. FORSYTH'S Bill, a strong desire and demand for the measure must be manifested by means of petitions; and we end as we began, with an earnest appeal to our friends to let this demonstration be forthcoming.

THE "epidemic of brutality," as the course of repeated outrages on unoffending persons has been called, continues to rage with unabated violence. One of the Manchester papers, which regularly devotes a column to "kicking for the month," begins its last report as follows: "The women have suffered very heavily during the past month. Out of a total number of thirty persons violently kicked, six-teen, or more than half, were women." It is fortunate for the women that some of the victims were men. There is, consequently, a chance that men will endeavour to put down the offence. It is almost impossible to make men believe that any evil from which they are, either by their sex or their circumstances, totally exempt, can hurt women, and quite impossible to make them set about remedying such evil. As men cannot be wives, they are less sensible to the cruelties inflicted on wives than on those women who may, like themselves, be indifferent persons with regard to the aggressor. One of the cases reported at Stalybridge was that of a man who, on being convicted of an assault on his wife, remarked with an air of astonishment: "What—I can leather her if I like!" At Preston, a man was charged with having locked the

house door, put down the blinds, and then stripped his wife, flogged and kicked her, dragged her up stairs, kicked her again, and struck her on the forehead with a screw-driver, inflicting a fearful wound. He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour. On this a man called out that the sentence was "a sin and a shame." He was fined £5 for contempt of Court; but the incident may serve as an expression of the popular conception of marital rights. Another man, after assaulting his wife, set his dog at her; but the creature, though known to be "a savage animal," would not bite her. We ask which, in this case, was the "savage animal"?

A lady lately brought under our notice another illustration of this peculiar estimate of a husband's privileges. Some charitable ladies engaged in district visiting, found, to their scandal, a number of couples living in all respects as man and wife, but not legally united. They persuaded several of these to obtain legal sanction for their union. On their next visit the ladies were met by a chorus of reproaches and lamentations from the newly-made wives, who said that the men used to be very kind to them, but that as soon as they were married they began to beat them.

We hold that there is a real connection between this systematic degradation of the personal rights of women and their political disabilities. In the Court of Common Pleas in 1868, when counsel was arguing that a revising barrister had no right to remove from the register the names of ratepayers who had been placed thereon by the overseers, and against whom no objection had been tendered, merely because the names were those of women, the judge interrupted him by asking if the revising barrister would not have the right to remove the name of a dog or a horse, if he found it on the register, and the judgment of the court was given on the assumption that such would have been a parallel case to that of the clients on whose behalf the plea was made. When we find women solemnly placed by judicial authority in the same category as to political rights with horses and dogs, it is perhaps not surprising that uneducated men should place their personal rights in the same class, and regard them as creatures whom they may batter and bruise at will.

It has been proposed to employ the lash to restrain the ferocity of these inhuman beings. This is not the occasion to discuss the propriety or efficacy of that mode of punishment. But whatever might be the immediate effect in restraining excessive violence, the strongest advocate of flogging would admit that before the state of feeling

which induces such outrages can be ameliorated, some more permanent influence must be brought into play. We hold that the most thorough corrective of the state of mind which leads a man to believe that he may without doing wrong "leather" his wife, would be to invest women with human rights as citizens, and make them, so far as ability to exercise the franchise is concerned, the political equals of men. They would then cease to be looked upon as inferior beings whose rights might be invaded without serious offence. Men would gradually come to think it a crime to illtreat them, and this habit of self-restraint would re-act, in its turn, on their behaviour to their fellows. Without expressing any opinion as to the measures necessary to check the present outbreak of ungovernable brutality, we unhesitatingly affirm that the enfranchisement of women would have a far more powerful and more enduring influence in humanising society in the dark places of the land than the flogging of men. It is a more humane remedy, it would not foster a revengeful spirit, and we submit that it deserves a trial.

WITHIN the past month we have been favoured with the utterances of two members of Parliament on women's suffrage. The palm for unreasoning panic must be awarded to the noble lord the member for Tavistock, who frantically shrieks that the question "threatens us with a very serious danger," that "our political freedom is too precious to be trifled with," and that women "will play the very devil with your institutions." We may venture on behalf of our sex to disclaim any such mischievous designs on our institutions in general; but with regard to the representation of Tavistock, it is just possible, after this declaration of the estimation in which he holds them, that women, if they should obtain votes, might consider that their political freedom could be in safer hands than those of Lord ARTHUR RUSSELL.

Mr. MASSEY, at Tiverton, makes the significant declaration that if you were to extend the franchise to the whole uneducated mass of agricultural labourers you could have no excuse whatever for refusing it to women. We believe that all thoughtful persons who do not take up the county franchise as a mere party cry will agree in this opinion. But the logic of his next proposition is not so apparent. He asks: "If you admit women, how can you exclude any man of sound mind and mature age?" We reply that we propose to admit women to vote on the existing basis of the franchise as householders and ratepayers, and not to destroy this basis for the purpose of admitting women.

By no process of reasoning can we make out that if women are admitted to the franchise because they are householders, therefore men ought to be admitted who are not householders. Yet Mr. MASSEY says this process is not only "logical" but "absolutely necessary." We fail to see either the logic or the necessity, and can only account for Mr. MASSEY'S reasoning on the theory that he has not read the Bill, and that he is under the impression that Mr. FORSYTH proposes to give votes to all women. When the right honourable gentleman comes to understand the nature of the proposal, and that it tends to confirm and not to destroy the existing basis of representation, he may find even in his objections to "an unqualified scheme for the extension of the franchise" grounds for supporting Mr. FORSYTH'S moderate, reasonable, and constitutional Bill.

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

HANOVER SQUARE ROOMS, LONDON.

A public meeting in support of the removal of the electoral disabilities of women was held in the Hanover Square Rooms on December 9th. The meeting was held in the large hall, which was nearly filled, the majority of the audience being women. Sir Robert Anstruther, M.P., took the chair. Among the friends and supporters of the movement on the platform, in addition to the speakers, were Sir John Murray, Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Ward, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Arnold, Lady Anstruther, Mr. F. Hill, the Rev. W. Edgell, Mr. and Mrs. Ashworth, Mrs. Lawrie, Miss Lloyd, Miss Rhoda Garrett, Miss Blind, Mrs. John Hullah, Mrs. Buckton, of Leeds, Miss Williams, Miss Reeves, &c.

The CHAIRMAN, after contrasting the first meeting held in these rooms on behalf of the movement with the present numerous and influential gathering, said he had seen no satisfactory reply to the arguments then brought forward either upon the platform or in the House of Commons. No public movement had advanced with such rapid strides since the late Mr. John Stuart Mill first advocated their claims in Parliament. The progress of the movement was due to four causes—the inherent justice of the claims made on behalf of women, the moderation with which those claims were advocated, the marked ability and grace which had characterised the speeches made by the ladies, and, lastly, the entire absence of party feeling which had distinguished the movement from first to last. Those who had read an article in the *Times* of the 16th of November last, which commented upon a successful meeting they held at Manchester, must have been struck by the different tone adopted by that journal from that which characterised it and other journals some years ago. The *Times*, indeed, argued the question in such a fair and friendly way that he could not do better than read a portion of the article. The writer said, "The chief gains from Woman's Suffrage would be—an improvement in the general moral position of woman, resulting from her being declared by law no longer incapable of an opinion; a benefit to the individual woman, whose dignity and value would be raised by her power of action on the outward world; and an improvement in the quality of the man's vote, not only because he

would often have to produce honest reasons for it, but also because the woman, having herself come under the operation of the political point of honour, would no longer act as a disturbing force on the man's conscience." He did not know whether the most enthusiastic advocate of Women's Suffrage could find stronger language than that in support of their claim. (Hear.) Two objections were no doubt urged, but they were not very deadly ones, and they were put in a very fair and friendly spirit. The first was that, "In every constituency there would be an energetic organisation of female electors for the purpose of nursing or creating these women's questions. Many women would undoubtedly be independent, and stand apart from any such organisation; still, the collective female vote would, as a rule, be decided by the concerted female action." Now, the advocates of the movement ought, in fairness, to concede that there was a danger, at first at all events, to which all newly-enfranchised classes were liable—namely, to consider their own interests before the public good. It was too much the habit of women to go in flocks, and he, for one, should rejoice if both men and women manifested more power and individuality in themselves. Mr. Cobden had, however, met the same argument in 1859, when it was used against the admission of working men to the franchise, and events had shown that he was right. Another argument used by the *Times* was that if women were allowed to vote for members of Parliament, they would claim a seat in the House of Commons for themselves. Speaking only for himself, he must say that the presence of a few enlightened women in the House of Commons would not make it less attractive. There was a great deal of pleasant conversation to be had in the house at present, and why it should not be further enlivened by the conversation of agreeable women he was unable to say. The claim was not likely to be ever made, but if it were thought undesirable that they should have seats, it would be easy expressly to bar their sitting and exclude them, as clergymen were now excluded. (No.) They were to be congratulated on the fact that on the whole the article in the *Times* was more favourable than hostile to their cause. There had been a Conference of an Electoral Reform Association lately, and a better field day for Women's Suffrage he had not seen for many months. Captain Maxse had rested the argument against female enfranchisement upon physical strength and force, but if so he would undertake to bring 100 young women from his fishing village in Fife who would beat 100 artisans from Manchester out of the field in twenty minutes. (A laugh.) He did not know whether Captain Maxse himself could stand this test, because he would undertake to bring a young lady from the same quarter who was developed in every sense, physical and intellectual, and who would walk Captain Maxse to death in five days. (Laughter.) If all the men who were physically and intellectually weak were to be eliminated from the electoral roll there would be sad havoc made with the present constituencies. The time had come when the Government would do wisely to take up this question, and he believed they would do so. (Cheers.)

Miss RHODA GARRETT moved the first resolution. When I look back to the early days of the agitation for conferring political freedom upon women, it seems to me little short of a miracle that in so brief a time such a change in public opinion should have been wrought as could bring together a meeting like this to-night; a meeting willing to listen with grave consideration to the discussion of a subject which only three or four years ago was contemptuously regarded as an agitation created by an insignificant section of ultra Radicals and a few "itinerant" lady lecturers. I hardly know how to account for the change, unless gentlemen turn round and throw back upon *you* the charge so unceasingly brought against us,—that we are

creatures of sentiment wholly carried away by our feelings. Shall I say that, in this case, you have been carried away by your feeling, so that you can no longer bear to refuse the request of "the ladies"? or is it that such arguments have been used, such courage and perseverance displayed in the conduct of this most difficult agitation that the minds of our countrymen are at last being awakened to the vitality and to the importance of this question, and that which you would not yield to sentiment, you will now grant willingly to justice and reason? We believe that it is so. Englishmen are eminently practical, and the enfranchisement of women is beginning to assume a practical aspect. We hear, now-a-days, much less about its being an abstract question, unless indeed we happen to attend a meeting of electoral reformers, by whom, alas! we are once more consigned to that region of helpless dependence and natural incapacity for logical judgment, from which we hoped we had emerged. It is scarcely more humiliating to find oneself legally classed with infants, criminals, lunatics, and paupers, than to go to a meeting of ultra-Liberal politicians, banded together for the purpose of securing electoral reforms, and to hear it said that we must not hope to be included in their scheme because we are favourable to arbitrary government and to clerical supremacy; averse to enlightenment and progress; without interest in national affairs; incapable of sympathising with great causes; naturally apathetic concerning politics, and, lastly (but I can't see that this is an altogether feminine failing), the electoral reformers accuse us of having a vivid sense of the value of property. We are not informed if this means that we are naturally parsimonious; or that we so seldom have any property that when perchance we do get it we should prefer to keep it. Now as I am only a woman it is no use for me to try and be logical, or I should infer from the arguments of the electoral reformers that, in their opinion, persons having the natural disadvantages just described ought not to be enfranchised. How then can they advocate the assimilation of the borough with the county franchise? for it has yet to be proved that agricultural labourers possess all those intellectual and moral qualities, the want of which, they say, should debar us from the rights of citizenship; it has yet to be proved that the lady of the manor is too ignorant, too servile, and too obstructive to be entrusted with the power which is granted to her ploughman and her shepherd. But now let us leave the electoral reformers to their own conception of the word "Liberal," and let us consider for a moment how the interests of women are considered in the industrial world—at Kidderminster, for example. If I were asked what I believed the most practical, the most urgent reasons for the political elevation of women, I should, without hesitation, answer, "their need for freedom in the labour market." It can scarcely be necessary to illustrate to you how far from free the labour of women at present is. You all know, probably, the history of the strike among the carpet weavers at Kidderminster. How 260 men struck work, at Mr. Brinton's carpet factory, because he contemplated the employment of women in the more remunerative work on the tapestry looms. But this the men resisted with all their might; and at a meeting held of the Weavers' Association, they openly declared that they would not have women's work—there was plenty of work for them elsewhere, let them earn their living in the "right way," which "right way" appeared to be this:—The rate of pay which the men wished to maintain was 1d. a yard for women, and 1½d. a yard, with 20 per cent, for men, so that a woman receives 12s. for turning out the amount of work for which a man receives £1. 1s. Now, this is the carpet weavers' view of the "right place" for women, and I think this same view was held also by the supporters of the Factory Acts last session; by the doctors and

medical students, who from time to time prevent the admission of women to any medical school; by the post-office employes, who two years ago held an indignation meeting to protest against the employment of women as post-office clerks; and yet, sir, there are about three millions of self-supporting women in this country, and notwithstanding the verdict of the carpet weavers, of the trades unions, of the medical students, and of the post-office clerks, these women cannot live by sentiment alone; sentiment which would prevent them undertaking remunerative work, because remunerative work is unfeminine; sentiments which would cherish their helplessness, their incapacity, and their dependence, and which would protect them by forcing them into the penitentiary and the workhouse. You ask us what good a vote for a member of Parliament will do women, and we refer you to such facts as these. We tell you that in the opinion of those men and women who have most gravely considered the question, political power and political independence go hand in hand with industrial power and industrial independence; and that the political enfranchisement of women will help to place them in a position at once more advantageous for themselves and in the long run more beneficial to men. Women do not ask for freedom that they may misuse it, that they may thereby forget their sex, forget their duties as wives and mothers, or forget the unalterable lines of separation which nature and *not* society has placed between the lives of men and women. But we do not think it too much to ask for the removal of all artificial restrictions upon the employment of our faculties, in whatsoever direction it shall seem to us desirable. We do not ask that women shall be admitted to any employment for which they are untrained, and therefore unfit; but we do ask that such tyrannies as those of which I have spoken shall be made impossible, and the first step towards this would be to endow us with political freedom. We maintain, moreover, that you have no right to require of us qualifications for the franchise which have never yet been demanded from men. For instance, it has never been asked that agricultural labourers shall make good their claim to the franchise by a knowledge of the science of logic, yet I believe there are some people who would like to add to the Bill for the enfranchisement of women a clause requiring them to solve a mathematical problem upon the voting paper before dropping it into the ballot box. A great man once said that "a woman was a thing that couldn't reason, and that poked the fire from the top." Since that time many changes of opinion have taken place, even as to the best method of poking a fire, and perhaps some contemporary may yet record of us that "it has been discovered that woman is, after all, a reasonable being, who, while not neglecting the domestic hearth, has learnt to poke the political fire without either burning her own fingers or setting the country in a blaze." And so, my friends, we take courage, remembering that the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. We have on our side the quiet persistency that belongs to the right, and we have in our hearts the assurance that in due time we shall reap if we faint not.

Mr. Serjeant Cox, who supported the resolution, said he had come up from the Carlton Club to support the hon. baronet, who had come from the Reform Club to preside over their meeting. He argued that the present was not a party question.

Miss ANNA SWANWICK, who claimed the indulgence of the meeting upon the ground that she had never before stood upon a platform or addressed a public meeting, contended in an eloquent and perspicuous speech, that the enfranchisement of women would raise the whole tone of social and political life. The assertion that women do not desire the franchise is so constantly alleged as a reason for not granting it, that it

behoves all women who feel strongly interested in the subject, to come forward and to state their wishes and opinions with reference to it, and also their reasons for holding them. The exclusion of women from all participation in public affairs, rests upon the theory that the home is her only legitimate sphere, and that her powers and capacities find ample scope within the narrow circle of domestic life. That the monopoly of politics by men has not worked advantageously for the weaker sex is shown by the flagrant inequalities of the law wherever the interests of women are involved. Upon this aspect of the question, however, it is not my intention at present to dwell, but rather, as it regards the general interests of society, more especially with reference to the male portion of the community. England has been characterised as a money-getting and a money-spending country, it has also been characterised as a pauper-ridden and drink-stricken country; we have only to pass from the palaces of the west end of this great city to the squalor and misery of St. Giles's and the east, to recognise the truth of both descriptions. Now these enormous inequalities of social condition, fraught, as has been pointed out by our modern Cassandra, with ever-increasing danger to the commonwealth, form one of the most appalling aspects of our modern civilisation. Knowing as we do the conditions which are absolutely essential to health, and also the over-powering influence exerted by external circumstances upon the characters of men, nothing is more astonishing, considering the vast wealth of England, than the state of wretchedness and squalor in which generation after generation of our population is suffered to grow up, and too often to grow rotten—body and soul. Of one class of institutions England may well be proud. I refer to those which minister to physical ailments and privation—her hospitals, asylums, and infirmaries, are on a truly noble scale: but where are our institutions for promoting the physical and mental health of the community? It was said by one of old that for the soul to be without knowledge is not good; but where are our libraries? Where are our museums? Where are our public halls, in which our toiling millions may be brought under civilising influences, and which could, with any prospect of success, compete with the gin palaces which flare at every corner, and form the brightest, and at the same time the darkest, features of our London streets? Now among the causes which have led to this deplorable state of things, one of the most influential is, I believe, the fatal theory that women find ample scope for their energies within the narrow circle of home. Woman is not a tame animal to live contented in a narrow cage; she, like man, is a being endowed with high capacities and powers; confine her within a limited sphere and that sphere will expand till it harmonises with the requirements of her nature; when a woman, endowed with taste, energy, ambition, has ample wealth at command, trained as she is from her cradle to limit her hopes, desires, and aspirations, within the narrow circle of home—that home will become a palace of art, where every appliance which wealth can procure will minister to physical and mental gratification. Now in England what is called rising in life may be regarded as a social institution, every grade of society presses closely on the one immediately above it, and adopts, as far as means will allow, its style of living and expenditure; and the ideal standard of the English home being one invested with splendour and magnificence, the reign of luxury is inaugurated, with the triumph of selfish and material aims over those which are generous and spiritual. Meanwhile how fares it with the money-getters? There are few spectacles more sad than the deterioration of noble minds; yet how many young men who enter life with generous aspirations, determined to make their callings and professions subservient to the higher interests of humanity,

find themselves constrained, as it were, by the force of circumstances, to abandon their high resolves, and to join the eager crowd bent only upon the accumulation of wealth. We have here a striking illustration of the retribution which ever attends the violation of the divine law. We see men virtually the slaves of the women whom they had doomed to a position of social and political inferiority. Depend upon it, if we would have public virtue in our men, we must have it in our women. Remove their political disabilities and they will be awakened to the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, and this widening of their horizon cannot fail to be accompanied by a corresponding elevation of character, and of nobleness in their aspirations and pursuits. We are told that we must not vote because we cannot fight. At the time of the great civil war, when Milton was upbraided for not enrolling himself in the army, he defended himself by the plea that having always been more powerful in his intellect than in his body, avoiding the labours of the camp in which any robust common soldier could have surpassed him, he betook himself to the weapon which he could wield with most effect; that weapon was the pen, with which he wrote "The Defence of the People of England," and vindicated the freedom of the press. Never, surely, were the duties of the citizen more worthily discharged than by the great patriot-bard. And so on the battlefield of life, where the powers of evil and of good are arrayed for mortal combat, the forces which are needed are not physical but spiritual forces; not powerful limbs, but hearts and brains, and in these women are not deficient. Give them a sound practical education, remove their social and political disabilities, and in their energy, sympathy, conscientiousness, and tenderness, we shall, I believe, have a reservoir of power which will lift this great nation to a higher level of social and political life. That our claim is founded upon right I have the firmest faith, and consequently that its recognition is only a question of time,—

For Right is Right, since God is God,
And Right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.

Miss LILIAS ASHWORTH said that a speaker had asserted at the Electoral Conference, that women were incapable of sympathising with great causes. He must have forgotten their labours in the anti-Corn Law movement, and their zeal in the anti-Slavery agitation in America. The success achieved by the agricultural labourers in their agitation was largely due to the encouragement which it had received from women. When, too, the late Government had passed certain unconstitutional measures, women had left homes as luxurious and as safe as any in the land to defend their unprotected and less fortunate sisters. (Cheers.) Lastly, the present movement for obtaining the suffrage for women was a final answer to these assertions. Unless the exigencies of party interfered, it was clear that the women's Bill would have a stronger hold upon Parliament than the County Franchise Bill. If the Bill should pass, about 200,000 women would be registered as voters. These, however, would be pretty evenly distributed over the constituencies, and they would not disturb the proportion between the electors in county and borough constituencies. Women had now for some years voted in local elections of various kinds, and so well had they used their power that they brought to their side many influential members of Parliament who had formerly opposed their enfranchisement. There was, however, a class of Liberals who had spoken in favour of extending the representation because it had served as a convenient party cry. They found at the last election that the extension of the suffrage did not always mean the return of their candidates, and they now feared that the extension of the suffrage to women

would be a further political loss. Mr. Gladstone had declared that they were all the same flesh and blood (a laugh), and the same causes which had influenced the male electors, in desiring a change and "giving the other side a turn," might, no doubt, affect women in the same manner. If women found that their interests and claims were disregarded by one political party, they would assuredly try what the other would do for them. There were those upon the platform who had appealed to the constituencies, and they knew well that the cause of female political enfranchisement in this country was virtually won. (Cheers.)

The resolution was then put and carried, about half-a-dozen hands being held up against it.

Miss CAROLINE BIGGS moved the next resolution:—"That memorials be presented from this meeting to the Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, M.P., First Lord of the Treasury, and to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., praying them to support the Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women; that a petition to both Houses of Parliament, in favour of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill, be signed by the chairman on behalf of the meeting, and forwarded by him." She said that this was the only question upon which Mr. Disraeli and Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Ward Hunt and Mr. Peter Taylor were at liberty next session to go into the same lobby together. To show that this was not a party question, it was sufficient to state that their Bill passed out of the hands of Mr. J. S. Mill into those of Mr. Jacob Bright. It was now in the hands of Mr. Forsyth, and it would be supported by men who differed as widely in politics as Mr. Henley and Mr. Mundella, Sir S. Northcote and Mr. Fawcett. It had received the support of 15 members of the present Government, and there was cause for hoping that the next session would not pass away without the Bill becoming law. When Mr. J. S. Mill first introduced the Bill there were only petitions from 1,500 women in its favour. Last session there was 1,400 petitions, signed by no less than 420,000 persons. It was said that women did not want to vote. One of the members for Bristol asked for some assurance on this point. It was believed that there were about 1,400 women in Bristol who would be entitled to vote, but the number turned out to be 2,000, and in a few days a memorial was presented from 1,240 women-householders in favour of their Parliamentary enfranchisement. The same feeling had been shown in Taunton and other towns, and they were now entitled to say that their enfranchisement would not only be supported by the House of Commons, but would also receive the concurrence of the women of England. (Cheers.)

Miss BECKER supported the resolution. If they wanted to know whether the women of her native county (Lancashire) required protection, let her remind them of those brutal and revolting outrages committed upon wives by their husbands—outrages which, if they occurred in more distant lands, would cause an outburst of indignation and an outcry that they should be stopped. (Cheers.) After citing some recent cases of murderous assaults upon women, for which the lash was said to be the only suitable punishment, Miss Becker said she believed that the enfranchisement of women would humanise public opinion far more effectively than the flogging of men. (Cheers.) Referring to the late election for Manchester, she said it had been a bitter thing for those women, whose champion Mr. Jacob Bright had been, to think that they had not a vote to give him to save him from political extinction. The assistance of women was found more and more indispensable in carrying out the details of the Education Act, and education was a question in which women were peculiarly interested. The disestablishment of the Church of England would one day come up for legislative decision. It was as much the church of the women

as of the men, and what right had Parliament to disestablish the church without the consent of the women of England? (Cheers.) Mr. Gladstone appeared to base his objection mainly upon the difficulty of women recording their votes. Since the grant of the municipal franchise, however, there had been an assimilation of the method of voting. She had herself voted in six elections, and she felt it hard that she was not allowed to go into exactly the same place and do the same thing because the seventh election happened to be for a member of Parliament. (Hear, hear.) One thing was clear, that they had made it impossible for any future Reform Bill to be introduced into Parliament which did not include the enfranchisement of women. (Cheers.)

The resolution was put and carried.

The usual compliment to the chair, moved by Mr. F. HILL, and seconded in a few graceful sentences by Miss FRANCES POWER COBBE, brought the proceedings to a close.

BRIGHTON.

A public meeting was held in the Town Hall, Brighton, December 1st. There was a good audience, the majority of whom were ladies. The Mayor (Mr. Alderman Bridgen) presided, and was supported by the Rev. A. A. Morgan, Rev. J. M. Fincher, Dr. Buchanan, Mr. F. Merrifield, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Shirley Woolmer, Mr. W. Wilkinson, and several ladies. The meeting was addressed by Miss Beedy and Miss Downing. Mr. F. Merrifield, Mr. Wilkinson, the Rev. J. M. Fincher, and Mr. Councillor Wood were amongst the speakers, and resolutions affirming the principle were carried. Votes of thanks concluded the proceedings.

HUNTINGDON.

A meeting was held in the Town Hall, Huntingdon, on the 4th December. There was a large audience, who listened with remarkable attention and interest. The chair was occupied by James Freshfield, Esq., Mayor of Godmanchester. The first resolution was moved by the Rev. J. H. Millard, and seconded by Mr. H. Randall. Miss Beedy spoke in support, and the resolution was carried, only two holding up their hands against. The Rev. R. S. Brown, on attempting to speak in opposition, was heard with great impatience, and the next resolution, "that a petition be adopted and memorials sent to Sir John Karslake, M.P., E. Fellowes, Esq., M.P., and Sir H. Pelly, M.P.," moved by Mr. Honey, seconded by Miss Downing, was carried unanimously.

PETERBOROUGH.

On the 15th December, a public meeting took place in the Drill Hall, Peterborough. The Rev. A. Murray occupied the chair, Miss Downing attending as a deputation from the National Society. A resolution to adopt petitions and memorials to the members of the city of Peterborough, moved and seconded by Mr. Clarabut and Mr. J. F. Bentley, was carried unanimously. The Rev. W. R. Thomas also spoke in favour of the movement. Votes of thanks to Miss Downing and the chairman brought the meeting to a close.

DEVONPORT.

On Wednesday, December 16th, an influential meeting was held in the Guildhall, Devonport. The Mayor (Mr. A. Norman) presided, supported by the Rev. F. Bellamy, Messrs. J. Beer, J. W. W. Ryder, J. Hine, W. P. Swain, W. F. Collier, R. Bishop, and Dr. Row. Several ladies were also present upon the platform. The Chairman opened the proceedings by expressing himself very strongly in favour of granting the Parliamentary franchise to those who already vote for school boards and the municipal bodies. Miss Beedy delivered an able and argumentative speech, which was received with great at-

tention and frequent applause. Mr. W. P. Swain moved the first resolution, seconded by Mr. W. F. Collier. Mr. John Beer moved the adoption of a petition to the House of Commons, and memorials to Mr. J. H. Puleston and Captain Price, members for Devonport, and to Sir Massey Lopes, and Mr. Carpenter Garnier, members for South Devon, requesting them to support Mr. Forsyth's Bill. Mr. Beer stated that he would not undertake to say what the members for Devonport would do in the matter, but that he should inform them that a meeting of a large number of their constituents had been held, and that the question of women's suffrage had been well received and discussed in Devonport. This resolution was seconded by the Rev. F. A. S. Bellamy, and carried by the meeting. A vote of thanks to the Mayor, moved by Miss Beedy, closed the proceedings.

TRURO.

A meeting was held on Thursday, December 17, in the Concert Hall, Truro; Thos. Solomons, Esq., J.P., presided, and strongly supported the object of the society. The usual resolutions were proposed and seconded by Mr. J. B. Job, Mr. J. E. Richards, Mr. W. J. Ferris, and Mr. E. W. Cullen. Miss Beedy addressed the meeting as the deputation of the society, and expressed her satisfaction at the great support and encouragement which she had met with in every place she had visited in Cornwall. In only two instances did she meet with a gentleman opposed to the measure she advocated. The meeting was very numerously attended, and the resolutions were unanimously carried. A good report of the meeting, and an able article advocating its claims, appeared in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*.

PENZANCE.

On Friday, Dec. 18th, a meeting was held at St. John's Hall, Penzance. At least 600 persons were present. The Mayor (Mr. William Henry Rodd) took the chair. The Revs. A. W. Johnson, Independent minister, and Thomas Llewellyn, Wesleyan, having moved and seconded a resolution against the exclusion of women from the Parliamentary franchise, Miss Beedy, M.A., addressed an attentive and appreciative audience for three parts of an hour, that lady's clear statements, cogent arguments, and touches of humour telling with excellent effect. The audience authorised the chairman to sign a petition to Parliament in favour of the extension of the franchise to women who have property qualifications.

PRESTON.

A great meeting was held on December 15th, in the Guild Hall, Preston. There was a very large attendance, the room being crowded in every part. The Mayor (C. Fryer, Esq.) presided, and was supported on the platform by Miss Becker and Miss C. A. Biggs, who attended as a deputation from the National Society for Women's Suffrage, and by Alderman Myers, J.P., Councillor Benson, J.P., Rev. F. W. Walters, Rev. A. Legge, Messrs. W. P. Park, J.P., Whateley Cooke Taylor, S. Hermon, W. B. Roper, G. B. Dolby, W. R. Thorp, J. Jesper, W. P. Wesley, and others. Resolutions in favour of the Bill were moved, seconded, and supported by the above-named ladies and gentlemen, and carried with only two dissentients. Votes of thanks to the deputation and the Chairman concluded the proceedings.

LORD ARTHUR RUSSELL, M.P., ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a meeting held at Tavistock, on Dec. 17th, Lord Arthur Russell, in the course of his speech to his constituents, said, With regard to women's suffrage, I really do not know whether

that question has gained or lost supporters in the present Parliament, because we have had no vote upon it, and Mr. Forsyth, who has now charge of the measure since Mr. Jacob Bright is gone, has not yet taken the sense of the House on it. My determination to oppose it, gentlemen, is firmer than ever, especially since Mrs. Jacob Bright and her friends have declared that the agitation is not to cease after the widows and spinsters, for whom alone the suffrage is now claimed, have obtained votes, but that the claim of married women to vote will next be taken up, and since other leaders of the movement have admitted that they will not rest until women are entitled to sit, speak, and vote in Parliament. The meeting held last week in London shows that I do not misrepresent or exaggerate their hopes. That this was the ultimate object of the political ladies I had always foreseen, and it was easy to gather their meaning from their speeches. As I consider that the presence of women—especially if pretty and lively—in the House of Commons would seriously endanger our institutions, I shall oppose their admission as long as I can. Gentlemen, our political freedom is too precious to be thus trifled with. Mr. Goldwin Smith, whose sincere devotion to Liberal and Democratic principles no one can doubt, wrote last summer a very powerful and thoughtful paper on women's suffrage—you may have noticed it. He considers that to entrust women with political power would imperil those institutions on which the hope of the world rests. The love of liberty and respect for the law are masculine virtues; he says, while the bias of women is opposed to law and liberty, and leans towards personal government. But, to comfort us, we are told by the supporters of the cause of women's suffrage that, with the progress of education, women will be gradually turned into men, and that all intellectual differences between the sexes will cease and vanish. When that result has been accomplished I shall, of course, be ready to reconsider my vote. Mr. Goldwin Smith says that he did himself once sign a petition for female suffrage which had been got up by Mr. Mill, but since that fit of juvenile enthusiasm he has had an opportunity of studying the public life of women in the United States of America, and he considers that the admission of women to the Parliamentary suffrage would greatly aggravate the violence of political passion and strife. In support of his view, Mr. Goldwin Smith quotes the great French Revolution, the reign of the Commune in Paris, and the Civil War in America—in all of which he reminds us that the women rivalled the men in fury. In the spring I was present at the house of a friend at a conversation between Mr. Goldwin Smith and some members of Parliament, supporters of female suffrage. "Depend upon it," he said, "if you entrust the women with political power, they will play the very devil with your institutions." (Laughter.) And I quite agree with him. In debate, this question is usually treated as a joke, but it is no matter for joking, and it threatens us with a very serious danger. During the last debate we had on the subject an extraordinary thing occurred—four members jumped up and declared that though they had formerly voted in favour of female suffrage, they now saw the danger and folly of what they had done, and were going to vote against it. Such a change never happened before in the House of Commons, I believe. I was talking over this question last summer with a leading member of the Radical party, and he remarked that he quite felt how undesirable it would be to admit ladies to sit in the House of Commons; but as we have qualified them to sit on School Boards, he added, I do not see how we can, with logical consistency, refuse to admit them to sit in Parliament. This mistaken desire for logical consistency, gentlemen, misleads many political men. The end practical men should look to is the good government of the country. (Hear, hear.)

Questions having been invited by his lordship, Mr. SECCOMBE urged that it was only fair that a woman with the same property qualifications as a man should have the same franchise. It should be a mere matter of qualification and not a matter of sex. At present women exercised political influence.

Lord A. RUSSELL said he thought he had already spoken very plainly on the question of women's suffrage, and he did not think he could add more to what he had already said. He considered that women had their own functions to perform in the economy of human life, and therein their responsibility was a great and important one. His own opinion was that they could get on better by a division of labour—(hear, hear);—that women were not fitted for the exercise of political rights, and that their interference with political questions would be mischievous and dangerous to the Government of the country.

Mr. W. JONES referred to the fact that when Lord Arthur Russell last appeared before the constituency (at the general election) the proceedings were not so quiet as they had been on this occasion. He did not know whether the opposition had died out or whether the election had become apathetic, but Lord Arthur had put before them a progressive programme which the Liberal party ought to be very willing to follow. (Hear, hear.) There might be one or two topics upon which his lordship might want a little pushing. (Hear, hear.) With regard to female suffrage his idea was that as the agricultural labourer was to be enfranchised he thought their mistresses who employed them and knew more about politics than their men should have a vote. As a broad general principle he did not believe it would be objected to that every person who was named on the ratebook should have a vote without any question of sex. A great deal of harm to this cause had been done by some clever ladies going about saying too much about themselves, and it would have been much more benefitted by their staying at home in their proper places. (Hear, hear.)

Lord ARTHUR expressed his obligation to the last speaker for the kind and indulgent way in which he had spoken of him. He was very conscious that he required a little stimulating on some questions, and believed more interesting political times were in store for them.

The following correspondence has taken place since the meeting:—

Dec. 21, 1874.

My Lord,—My attention has been called to the report of a speech delivered by you, at Tavistock, on the 17th instant, and if the words attributed to you in the *Western Daily Mercury* are correct, I beg that you will be good enough to furnish me with your authority for the following statement: "Other leaders of the movement have admitted that they will not rest until women are entitled to sit, speak, and vote in Parliament." If you spoke advisedly, your lordship is much better acquainted than I am with the intentions of the leaders of the movement.—I am, my Lord, your obedient servant,

Lord Arthur Russell, M.P.

LYDIA E. BECKER.

Woburn Abbey, 23 Dec., 1874.

Madam,—The speech I made at Tavistock, on the 17th, has been correctly reported.

The opinion I expressed was based on Mr. Cairnes' reply to Prof. Goldwin Smith in Macmillan's Magazine. He says that he is in favour of removing all legal impediments to the admission of women to Parliament, and that he considers their exclusion "more than a theoretical wrong," if I remember his words. On Sir Robert Anstruther's speech, as chairman of the meeting in favour of Women's Suffrage, held in London a fortnight ago, and on conversations in Parliament with supporters of your

cause who complained that their hands were weakened by the indiscreet admissions of zealous friends, and who regretted that the argument that all agitation would cease after the claims to vote of widows and spinsters had been settled, could now no longer be put forward.—I remain, Madam, yours faithfully,

ARTHUR RUSSELL.

P.S.—I can have no objection to the publication of this letter.

A. R.

Dec. 24, 1874.

My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, and I beg respectfully to point out that the authorities you quote do not bear out your assertions that "other leaders of the movement have admitted that they will not rest until women are entitled to sit, speak, and vote in Parliament." Professor Cairnes expresses an abstract opinion on a question of political justice, which may or may not be sound, but which does not commit either himself or others to a continuance of the agitation after the present practical question has been disposed of.

Sir Robert Anstruther's speech, as chairman of the meeting lately held in London, directly contradicts the inference you draw from it. He is reported in the *Times* as saying, in reference to the claim of women to sit in the House of Commons, "The claim was not likely to be ever made, but if it were thought undesirable that they should have seats, it would be easy expressly to bar their sitting, and exclude them, as clergymen were now excluded."

The objections of those of our Parliamentary friends who may be apprehensive lest further claims should be made on behalf of women, have been effectively dealt with by Mr. Forsyth, who, in a recent speech at Manchester, said, "It appeared to him a very unworthy argument to say that they were to refuse to concede what was right in itself because they might afterwards be called upon to refuse what was wrong. He knew distinctly what he was prepared to grant on this question, and supposing his Bill passed, and a demand was afterwards made which he thought to be unreasonable, he should firmly and consistently oppose it." Men who feel otherwise appear to betray unmanly distrust of their own judgment and firmness.—I am, my Lord, your obedient servant,

LYDIA E. BECKER.

THE RIGHT HON. W. N. MASSEY, M.P., ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

On December 19th Mr. Massey, in addressing his constituents at Tiverton, said:—"If you were to extend at once to the whole uneducated mass of the agricultural labourers that franchise which you have confided to the intelligent artisans of the cities, you could have no excuse whatever for refusing the extension of the franchise to women. (Hear, hear.) I don't say whether that is right or wrong, but if you admit women to the franchise how can you exclude any man of sound mind and mature age? You would then by a process, which is not only logical but which is absolutely necessary, be at once landed in universal suffrage. I may be old fashioned in my notions, and I am not prepared to say that the time may not arrive when an educated people may exercise universal suffrage. But I am not prepared to say that the time has arrived, for it seems to me to be far distant. Therefore, without committing myself to any positive opinion upon this programme, which is so confidentially put forth by certain persons who assume to be the dictators of the Liberal party, I must say I am not prepared to give my adhesion to a headlong project of disestablishment or an unqualified scheme for the extension of the franchise."

AN ACTION BY A MARRIED WOMAN AGAINST
HER BANKER.

The case of "Summers v. the City Bank," which was decided by the Court of Common Pleas last term, is one of considerable importance both to bankers and married women. The facts are these:—The plaintiff, who was a married woman carrying on business in the City of London, had an account at the City Bank. She brought an action against the bank for damages—1st, for the bank not having presented for payment a bill of exchange entrusted to them for that purpose; 2nd, for the bank not having given her notice of the dishonour of a bill of exchange entrusted to them for collection; and, 3rd, for dishonouring a cheque drawn by her, they having at the time funds of hers to meet it. The case raised for the defence was that the plaintiff being a married woman, could not maintain the action, as it did not fall within the 11th Section of the Married Women's Property Act, 1870, which provides that "a married woman may entertain an action in her own name for the recovery of any wages, earnings, money, and property belonging to her before marriage, and which her husband shall, by writing under his hand, have agreed with her shall belong to her after marriage as her separate property; and she shall have in her own name the same remedies, both civil and criminal, against all persons whomsoever, for the protection and security of such wages, earnings, money, and property, and of any chattels or other property purchased or obtained by means thereof for her own use, as if such wages, earnings, money, chattels, and property belonging to her as an unmarried woman." The court decided in favour of the plaintiff. Lord Coleridge, in delivering judgment, said that in bringing an action against her banker for dishonouring her cheque, the plaintiff was seeking a remedy for the protection of her earnings within the meaning of the above quoted section, and that the section would become almost useless if a married woman otherwise within its provisions could not maintain such an action. In so far as the plaintiff claimed damages in respect of the bills of exchange, his lordship thought that a somewhat broader question was raised, and that the action was in this respect also maintainable under the above quoted section. To hold otherwise, he said, would be in effect to say that a married woman could not safely have any of her earnings paid to her by bills of exchange, for that she would have no protection against the negligence of the bankers to whom she entrusted them. His Lordship stated, by way of caution, first, that it does not necessarily follow because a married woman may sue her banker for dishonouring her cheque that she can maintain an action for damages for the breach of every contract; secondly, that the Court must not be taken to affirm as a general proposition that under the Married Women's Property Act, 1870 and without reference to particular circumstances, a married woman can contract.

We would call attention to the fact that the principle settled by the case under notice only applies where the money or bills deposited by a married woman with her bankers are her earnings within the above quoted section.—*Financier.*

EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN IRELAND.

A deputation, seeking government aid for the higher education of women, by means of grants for prizes at local examinations, scholarships, &c., waited on the Lord-Lieutenant on December 14. It was headed by the Archbishop of Dublin, and comprised nearly all the heads of the Queen's University. His Excellency intimated that he considered the time had hardly yet arrived for the government to make special arrange-

ments for the higher education of women, and recommended the heads of colleges who were present to utilise to the utmost the teaching and examining powers they possessed. At the same time he promised to consider the subject.

LADY STUDENTS AT CAMBRIDGE.

Two students of Girton College have been examined in the natural science tripos. Miss Kingsland, daughter of the Rev. N. Kingsland, Congregationalist minister, Bradford, passed equal to second class, and has been appointed assistant lecturer in natural science and mathematics at Girton College. The other student, Miss Dove, daughter of the Rev. J. Dove, vicar of Cawbit, Lincolnshire, would have been entitled to the ordinary degree, and has been appointed to an assistant mistressship at Cheltenham Ladies' College, with a special view to her teaching physiology. These ladies passed the *viva voce* examination, and also passed in physiology and chemistry.

In the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 16th inst. it was stated, on the authority of a Cambridge correspondent to the *Leeds Mercury*, that in the Moral Science Tripos the papers had been set to two or three of the lady students of Girton College; that two had done well, while one, the granddaughter of Dr. Paley, author of the "The Evidences," was said to have obtained more marks than the senior in the Tripos.

The latter part of the statement was at once corrected by another Cambridge correspondent, who wrote to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "that the lady in question, though passing an exceedingly good examination even from a masculine point of view, did not obtain more marks than the senior moralist." He then proceeded to say, "as your statement (copied from the *Leeds Mercury*) if accepted as true might, and probably would, have been an important 'fact' for the women's rights agitators, I thought it needful that it should be corrected." It is the *naïveté* of this last remark which causes us to notice the correspondence. The writer does not correct an erroneous statement for the sake of accuracy, but from fear that the "Women's Rights agitators" might derive satisfaction and encouragement from it. However, while he endeavours thus to guard against any undue encouragement, he himself provides them with all that they can desire.

That the women-students at Girton should stand on a fair level with the men-students in Cambridge is precisely the kind of testimony that these same "Women's Rights agitators" most desire, in order to make good their ground, that in the deepest human interests there is not superiority of one sex over another, but equality. That this lady should pass "an exceedingly good examination even from a masculine point of view," is already an additional justification of their conviction that with similar advantages men and women students will produce similar results, and as such, is perhaps even more useful than a superiority which might in any degree tend to foster prejudice, such as the *Pall Mall's* correspondent would seem to entertain, which sees in "Women's Rights" a sort of hostility to men, instead of a more complete harmony in the nobler lines of culture.—*Women and Work.*

PRIZES TAKEN BY GIRLS.—Sir Andrew Fairbairn, chairman of the Leeds School Board, speaking at the distribution of prizes to the successful pupil teachers at the quarterly examinations in St. Peter-street Schoolroom, referred to the circumstance that, with one exception, the whole of the prizes were borne off by girls.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Women's Suffrage Journal.

Madam,—There are two feelings commonly entertained among a certain large class of women that do much to hinder the cause of the suffrage, and which therefore deserve recognition.

Women have an innate perception that their strength lies in self denial, and in the influence that the admiration of this virtue brings. This truth has in some way become opposed, in the minds of many, to the prominent part that the suffrage would compel women to take in the business of the nation; if this idea can be shown satisfactorily to have no other foundation than misapprehension, I feel that it will not be labour entirely thrown away.

Let it be taken for granted that woman's dearest right is to sacrifice herself for those she loves; shall we see anything but the confirmation of this in her present attitude and demand? Do those who seem frightened at the thought of woman demanding her rights, see that in this claim she is asking for her privilege to give? There is a sharp cry going up from the weaker sex for protection; in desiring the power of voting, woman is desiring the power to give this protection. Mindful of the fact that for every fresh possession there must be a corresponding giving up, woman offers her ease, her love of retirement, the quiet rest of home, in exchange for the ability of caring efficiently for the wants of these her sisters, whose trials have been so long brought to a bar where no counsellor willing and able to plead the case fairly, has been allowed. Can this be said to be woman stepping from her natural sphere? Is it not rather the pulsation of love that is raising her up to meet the wants of the time? Is not this willingness of woman to put aside her most cherished retirement for the common good, the very outcome of her womanhood, with its willingness for self-denial? Does it not show that she, ever quicker than her stronger brother to see the signs of the times, is also able to conform herself to them, and meet them with the needful courage and sacrifice? Those who say that woman in demanding her rights is stepping from the beaten path of custom do not look deep enough; they gaze only at the surface instead of penetrating to the hidden depths below. Rather should all the world be quick to recognise that the present movement in the minds and hearts of women is but the force, so long accumulating, at length by the pressure of circumstances, turning itself to account in action.

Let us look at woman's influence, of which we hear so much, in which we believe so thoroughly, and which we are told will be so materially lessened by her assuming power in her own person. In what do those who talk thus suppose her power to consist? Surely they fail to recognise the fact that woman's influence rests on the respect and admiration she inspires from her obedience to the laws of love and charity. Do these doubters suppose that this respect and admiration is likely to be increased by calmly submitting to wrongs not inflicted on herself only, or even principally, but on her, too often, most weak and defenceless sisters? Do they even suppose it complimentary to the penetration of men to admit that they are likely to be influenced less by brave, capable women, who, for their thought of true justice, will give up so much that is precious to them, than by those who only raise a feeble lip-protest against wrong and oppression, but never stir hand or foot to remove the load?

If there are any who, in spite of the noble, untiring devotion that the women's suffrage movement has called forth, still assume that it is self-assertion and not self-denial that it springs

from, I shall esteem it a favour if, through the medium of your columns, it is permitted to me to ask of them to look again, more earnestly and more deeply.

ONE DEVOTEDLY INTERESTED IN ALL THAT CONCERNS WOMAN.

THE LASH.

The following letter has appeared in the Manchester newspapers:—

"There is just now an incitement in the public mind for the purpose of an indefinite extension of the punishment of the lash. I do not propose on this occasion to argue the general question whether the lash may ever be properly inflicted. I simply wish to point out that wherever it has been tried in this country in such a manner that its effect may be tested it has totally failed.

1. Our forefathers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries tried the lash for almost every crime which it was possible to commit, and yet the punishment failed so completely that they subsequently had recourse to hanging wholesale.

2. The act passed in the session of 1863 (26 and 27 Vict., c. 44) to punish with the lash crimes of robbery with violence has likewise totally failed, though nothing is more common than to hear that "the lash has stopped garrotting." In proof of my assertion I would refer to page 52 of the Judicial Statistics for England and Wales, published in last year. By those statistics it appears that the number of committals for robbery and assaults to rob by persons armed and in company from the years 1853 to 1862 inclusive, was 3,261. In 1863 these offences were made punishable by the lash. From 1864 to 1873 inclusive the number of committals was 3,380; thus, so far from the crime being stopped, the number of committals actually increased.

Committals for assaults with intent to rob, and demanding property with menaces, have, on the other hand, diminished; the number being 416 in the years 1853-62, and 37 in the years 1864-73.

Committals for all offences against property with violence have likewise diminished, the numbers from 1853-62 being 18,836, and the numbers from 1864-73 being 18,074.

If we take periods of five years before and after 1863, the contrast is even more striking; the committals for robbery and assaults to rob by persons armed and in company being 1,450 from 1858 to 1862, and 1,910 from 1864 to 1868, making an increase of 32 per cent; committals for assaults to rob and demanding property with menaces, 229 from 1858 to 1862, and 211 from 1864 to 1868, making a diminution of 8 per cent; committals for the entire class of offence against property with violence were 9,098 from 1858 to 1862, and 10,133 from 1864 to 1868, making an increase of 11 per cent, of which one half is due to the increase of committals for offences punishable with the lash under the Act of 1863.—I am sir, yours obediently,

A BARRISTER."

LISKEARD.

A well-attended meeting was held in the Temperance Hall, Liskeard, on Dec. 22, when Miss Beedy, M.A., attended as a deputation from the society. The Mayor (Mr. John Elliott) occupied the chair, and, in opening the proceedings said the subject was an important one. There were 640 burgesses on the municipal roll, of whom 540 were men and 100 women. There were sixty-three widows and thirty-seven unmarried women. The usual resolutions were supported by Mr. Sanders and the Rev. J. Simpson, and carried.—*Abridged from the Western Morning News, Plymouth.*

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS RECEIVED DURING DECEMBER, 1874.

	£	s.	d.
Miss Elizabeth Lillian Mackworth Praed	2	0	0
Mr. W. R. Callender, M.P.	1	1	0
Mr. W. M. Rossetti	0	10	6
Miss Louisa Nicol	0	10	0
Mr. J. Lloyd	0	5	0
Mr. F. A. Hardcastle	0	5	0
Mr. C. J. Whitwell	0	5	0
Mrs. Murray (Dumfries)	0	5	0
Mrs. Brine	0	2	6
Mr. G. E. Farmer	0	2	6
Miss Mary Gurney	0	2	6
Miss Amy Gurney	0	2	6
Miss Lomas	0	2	6
Miss Emilie Lohner	0	2	6
Mr. J. B. Evans	0	2	6
Miss Wade	0	1	0

SOUTHPORT (continued).

Mr. Councillor Atherton	1	1	0
Mr. John Sheppard	1	0	0
Rev. J. L. Rentoul	0	10	6
Dr. Whiteside	0	10	6
Mrs. Simpson	0	10	0
Mrs. Rimmer	0	5	0
Miss C.	0	5	0
Miss Nixon	0	3	0
Mr. J. Noton	0	2	6
Mrs. Chatterton	0	2	6
Miss Crook	0	2	0
Mrs. Sergeant	0	2	0

BLACKBURN.

Mr. James Briggs	2	2	0
Mr. William Chambers	1	0	0
Mr. John Deane	1	0	0
H. S.	1	0	0
Mr. Thos. Higson	0	10	6
Mr. James Beads	0	10	6
Mr. William Taylor	0	10	6
Mrs. E. Hindle	0	10	0
Mrs. James Eccles	0	10	0
Mr. William Barron	0	5	0
Mr. Councillor Kay	0	5	0
Mr. W. Harwood	0	4	0
Mr. R. P. Lawson	0	2	6
Mrs. Lawson	0	2	6
Mr. Walmesley	0	2	6
Mr. Thompson	0	2	6
Mr. Giles Partington	0	2	6
Mrs. Unwin	0	2	0
Mr. James Waugh	0	2	0
Mrs. Eccles (Lower Darwen)	1	1	0
Mr. Wraith	0	5	0

PRESTON.

Messrs. Thorp Brothers	2	2	0
Mr. R. Benson	1	1	0
Mr. Chas. Fryer (Mayor)	1	0	0
Mr. W. P. Park	1	0	0
Mr. W. B. Roper	1	0	0
Mr. Thos. Powell	1	0	0
Mr. C. T. Taylor	0	10	6
Mr. Alderman Myers	0	10	0
S. J.	0	10	0
Mr. C. R. Jacson	0	10	0
Mr. John S. Oliver	0	10	0
Miss L. Thompson	0	10	0
Mr. E. H. Booth	0	5	0
Mr. Geo. Garrett	0	5	0
Mr. W. Blackburn	0	5	0
Mr. Holland	0	5	0
A. W.	0	2	0
A Friend	0	1	0

£32 10 6

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.

Cheques and Post Office Orders should be made payable to the Treasurer, Rev. S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, and may be sent either direct to him at 107, Upper Brook-street; or to the Secretary, Miss BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

Contributions to the funds of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, 294, Regent Street, London, W., from November 20th, 1874.

	£	s.	d.
The Misses Ashworth	100	0	0
Mr. Mark Marsden	2	0	0
Mrs. Rutson	0	10	0
A Friend (Boston)	0	5	0
A Friend	0	2	6
Mr. Maltby	0	2	0
Mrs. Taylor	0	0	6
Mr. Lee	0	0	6
Electoral Reformer	5	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. W. Malleson	3	3	0
Mr. Charles Smith	2	0	0
A Lover of Justice	1	1	0
Miss Bostock	1	1	0
Mr. J. G. Fitch	1	1	0
Mrs. Andrew Laurie	1	1	0
Mr. Owen Roberts	1	1	0
Miss Thomas	1	1	0
Mr. Frank Burton	0	5	0
Mr. S. C. Wilkins	0	5	0
Miss A. Wright (Boston)	0	5	0
A Working Woman	0	5	0
Mr. Thos. H. Bailey (Boston)	0	2	6
Mrs. Hood (Boston)	0	2	6
Mrs. Scott	0	2	6
Mr. Emerton	0	2	6
Mr. Ingemunds	0	2	6
Mr. Everitt (Boston)	0	2	0
Miss Obbinson (Boston)	0	1	0

ALFRED W. BENNETT, Treasurer. £121 5 0

EDINBURGH NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED DURING DECEMBER, 1874.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Thomas Coats	10	0	0
A Friend, per Miss Burton	5	0	0
Mr. Scott	5	0	0
Mr. J. Morton	2	0	0
Mr. J. Polson	2	0	0
Mr. W. Wotherspoon	1	0	0
Miss Janet Coats	1	0	0
Provost Murray	1	0	0
Mr. James Clerk	1	0	0
Mrs. Kerr	1	0	0
Mrs. A. Coats	1	0	0
Mrs. Stewart Clerk	1	0	0
Mr. Duncan	1	0	0
Major Leatham	1	0	0
Mr. R. Steele	1	0	0
Mrs. Caird	1	0	0
Mrs. Hope	1	0	0
Mrs. Mackean	0	10	0
Mr. Laird	0	10	0
Mr. Lade	0	10	0
Mr. Lang	0	10	0
Mr. E. Wilson	0	10	0
Mr. J. C. Hunter	0	10	0
Mr. J. M. Hutchison	0	10	0
Mr. G. Brymner	0	10	0
Two Friends, per Miss Burton	0	10	0
Miss Eddington	0	10	0
Mr. Anderson	0	5	0
Mr. J. Thomson	0	5	0
Miss Macrae	0	5	0
Mrs. Baird	0	2	6
Mr. W. Muir Mackean	0	2	6
Miss A. R.	0	2	0
Collected by Miss Henderson	10	17	6

£53 0 0

6, Carlton Street.

Miss CRAIG, Treasurer.

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