

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

VOL. VII.—No. 82. PUBLISHED MONTHLY.  
REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.

DECEMBER 1, 1876.

PRICE ONE PENNY.  
BY POST THREE HALFPENCE.

THE Annual Meeting of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage took place on November 29th, in the Town Hall, under the presidency of the MAYOR of MANCHESTER. After some introductory remarks from the Chairman, a letter was read from Mr. FORSYTH expressing regret at his inability to attend the meeting, his satisfaction that Mr. JACOB BRIGHT had resumed charge of the Bill, and his assurance that he would continue to support the measure to the best of his ability whenever it should be brought forward in the House of Commons.

The Report of the Society recorded a continuance of the support, both Parliamentary and general, which had been heretofore accorded, and noted many events having an important bearing on the progress and prospects of the measure which had occurred during the term of office of the Committee. The report proceeded to describe the debate of the last session, and the effect produced by the interposition of Mr. JOHN BRIGHT. Up to the rising of Mr. BRIGHT the improved tone of the debate and of the temper in which the House appeared to regard the question justified the expectation of a corresponding improvement in the division list. But, as on a former occasion, when the House of Commons had assented to the principle of the measure, further progress was arrested by the action of a professedly Liberal Government, so now when the House again appeared disposed to give favourable consideration to the claim, a check was interposed through the agency of a professedly Liberal statesman. The opponents of the Bill appeared to have been spurred to desperation by the smallness of their majority last year, and they brought forward the most powerful living advocate of free and representative government for men to contend against the application of the same principle to women. But though they succeeded in increasing the number of votes against the Bill, and in raising their majority from 35 last year to 87, it is a noteworthy proof of the strength of the movement that the eloquence of the most powerful voice in the House of Commons could not diminish, even by a unit, the numbers of those who stood firm by the principles of political justice without distinction of sex or class. Mr. BRIGHT'S speech was a remarkable one; it was characterised

throughout by a tone of doubt and hesitation very unusual with the speaker; it contained the admission that the claim might become irresistible some time; it was rather a string of tentative objections than a connected argument; and it did not appear to contain anything which need preclude the speaker from reverting to his original vote, should further reflection cause him to perceive the untenable character of most of the objections which he found to urge against the proposal. The votes for the Bill were the same as last year, namely, 152; the votes against, 239; majority against the Bill, 87. Several changes had occurred in the constituencies since the division; but, taking them as they then stood, it appeared that six of the three-cornered constituencies have given either their full vote or a majority of their vote for the measure. 34 constituencies have given their full vote of two each; 83 their full vote of one each; and that 119 constituencies, as against 94 in the last Parliament, appear as clearly and fully ranged in favour of the Bill. The changes which have occurred in the representation of several of these constituencies since the division do not seem to have a material influence on the calculations. The most noteworthy of these changes is the removal of Mr. DISRAELI from the House of Commons to the House of Lords as Earl of BEACONSFIELD. The Committee desired to recognise the services rendered by Mr. DISRAELI to the cause of just and constitutional representation. He was the first member of the House of Commons who declared, during the debates on the Reform question which preceded the Act of 1867, his conviction that political rights were not the sole heritage of men. Mr. DISRAELI consistently acted on the principles thus avowed by voting for the second reading of the Women's Disabilities Bill, when that motion was brought forward, whether by Mr. JACOB BRIGHT or Mr. FORSYTH. His vote was given in the divisions of 1871, 1873, 1875, and in 1876, and in gratefully recognising his past services to their cause, the Committee desired to record their sense of the great loss which they have sustained in the withdrawal from the arena of the next campaign of so powerful and consistent a supporter as the head of Her Majesty's

Government. During the session of 1876 there were presented to the House of Commons 11,171 petitions, signed by 376,166 persons in favour of the Women's Disabilities Bill. This far exceeds the number of petitioners for any other object during the session. The Committee had to deplore the loss by death of valued friends and supporters, especially of Mr. THOMASSON, of Bolton, Miss HUMBLE, and HARRIET MARTINEAU. With respect to the future conduct of the Bill in Parliament, the report referred to the intimation by Mr. FORSYTH of his desire to resign the charge of the Bill into the hands of its original author, and recognised the services he rendered to the movement in taking charge of the Bill in 1874, by his able guidance of the question during the sessions of 1875 and 1876, and for his promise of continued support to the measure whenever it shall be again brought forward in the House of Commons. The report referred to the Conference of the National Reform Union, held in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, in December of last year, when an amendment was moved by Miss STURGE, and adopted by the Conference by a large majority, which pledged the Union to agitate for an extension of the franchise to *all* householders in counties, it being understood that the word "all" was intended to include women householders. The recognition of the principle of women's suffrage by so large and representative a gathering was to be regarded as a mark of the advance of public opinion on the question, and as a proof that the claim could not be logically resisted by an organisation of men who were putting forth similar claims for themselves.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, M.P., in moving the first resolution, said that it appeared to him that there were just as signal marks of progress in the year that had just closed as could be found in any year in the course of that agitation. When greater combatants entered the arena of discussion, whether they took sides with or against them, it was a proof of growing interest in that question, and of its increasing importance. In the last debate, the most striking incident that occurred was the fact that Mr. JOHN BRIGHT took part in the discussion, and endeavoured to show that the Bill ought not to pass. It was of great consequence that everything that could be said against the movement should be said, and that it should be said in the ablest manner, because it assisted them to ascertain the truth of their own position. After years of deliberation, and with intense interest in the question, Mr. BRIGHT addressed the House, and when he had finished there was a general feeling that

his speech was the weakest he had ever delivered. If the speech were weak, it was not from want of power in the speaker, but from the extreme difficulty of making a case against the Bill. Mr. JACOB BRIGHT then proceeded to review in detail the points in Mr. JOHN BRIGHT'S speech, and the manner in which he did so deserves the most careful attention from all who may have been influenced by the speech. He said the speech sought to answer the extreme views or suggestions which always were to be found in every agitation, rather than to deal with the average views of those who were concerned in the movement. It was said that if the law was unjust to women it arose from the ignorance of Parliament. That they fully admitted. But Parliament was never ignorant in regard to the wants and wishes of those who had votes. Parliament must almost inevitably be ignorant of the wants and wishes of those who had not votes. A considerable portion of Mr. BRIGHT'S speech dealt with that part of the question which was always very much discussed in the House of Commons, and which would be discussed very largely until the question was settled. They were told that they were asking for a franchise based upon the rate-book—that they were only going to give the vote to ratepayers, and therefore that married women would not have votes. But the friends of that society were only treading on the old lines of the constitution when they took that course. From time immemorial in this country—even almost before we knew anything of Parliaments—that was the franchise,—the ratepayers had the vote. Within his own lifetime, on three distinct occasions, Parliament had re-sanctioned that principle—when the poor-law unions were founded, when the municipal vote was given to women, and when the School Board vote was given to them—in fact wherever men and women had voted together they had voted as ratepayers. So it seemed to them that that was a wise and practical way of settling that question. But let him appeal for a moment to Mr. BRIGHT himself, in a speech which he made some years ago during the Reform agitation. Mr. BRIGHT then said:—"I find a most admirable thing all ready at my hands. I find in all our parishes from the time of Queen ELIZABETH, and for anything I know from the time of ALFRED—I do not know how many hundred years it has lasted,—a franchise which everybody is contented with and nobody has condemned, and which has done no harm to law, or order, or the security of property. I find that when Parliament came to legislate for poor-law unions it adopted the

same franchise as the basis of the union franchise." That franchise, with which everybody was contented, and which nobody had condemned, was the franchise on which they were proceeding in this matter of women's suffrage. We must refer our readers to the full report of Mr. JACOB BRIGHT'S speech, which appears in another page, for the remainder of his analysis of Mr. BRIGHT'S speech—an analysis which we regard as one of the most important contributions to the debates on this question that has yet appeared.

The remainder of the resolutions were supported by the Rev. S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, Mrs. HEYWOOD, Mr. GEO. BOOTH, Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD, Dr. JOHN WATTS, Mr. J. P. THOMASSON, and Mr. R. D. RUSDEN. A vote of thanks to the Mayor, proposed by Miss BECKER and seconded by Miss ALICE WILSON, brought the proceedings to a close.

THE auspicious commencement of the campaign for the season should be the signal for earnest and devoted energy on the part of all interested in the movement. Members of Parliament and others, who have distinguished themselves by their advocacy of this particular measure of enfranchisement, have not done it lightly or hastily, but from a sense of grave duty; they have counted the cost, and they have paid the price—the heavy price of sacrifice and labour—without which no great good has yet been achieved by or for humanity. They have done this willingly and cheerfully, relying on the efforts of those for whose benefit they are giving their labours, to afford them adequate support, and to justify the claims made. They have a right to ask all who recognise the importance of the object for which they are striving, to come forward *now*, and determine that no time shall be lost and no effort spared to sustain the action of the leaders. We are glad to find increasing evidence of an uprising of thought and feeling on this question; we receive constantly, from persons hitherto unknown to us, communications asking for information, or expressing a desire to aid the cause. To all such, and to those who may be interested, but who have not yet communicated with the movers in this cause, we would address an earnest invitation to join the ranks of the society, and to afford such help as they can give in the work. It matters not much how little each one can do—it matters a great deal that each should take care that however little *can* be done, that little *shall* be done. Help can be given by collecting signatures to the petitions, by speaking on the question either in public or private; by

encouraging discussion, by writing to the newspapers as occasion serves, and by sending contributions of money to the treasury. Aid in all these ways may be given by both women and men—but there is a kind of aid which women only can give—and which those may give with great effect who may be debarred from helping in other ways. We ask women in the privacy of their home circle to speak their minds thoughtfully and plainly on this matter. Husbands and fathers and brothers and friends constantly ask their wives, sisters, daughters, and acquaintances whether women ought to have votes. Some ask gravely and respectfully—many lightly and jestingly—others scornfully and reproachfully, and the answers given to such questions, often on the spur of the moment, by women who have never bestowed a serious thought on the subject, are gravely adduced as representing the opinions of their sex, and we are told that "the best women" are against this Bill. The deliberate judgment of such women as Mrs. SOMERVILLE, Miss NIGHTINGALE, Miss CARPENTER, Miss COBBE, and a host of other distinguished ladies, is weighed in the balance of the judgment of the average M.P., against the careless declaration of their neighbour at the dinner table, or the thoughtless repartee of a light-hearted maiden who has never known care, and the latter is too often allowed to outweigh the former. So long as men form their opinions on such casual expressions of ideas, a serious responsibility rests on all women to take care not to express their views without due consideration, and especially on those who do believe that women should have political right to make their opinions known to all whom they can influence. To our old and indefatigable fellow-workers we would pass the word of encouragement for the past, and hope for the future. We invite their co-operation to make the work of the coming season worthy of our past history and our present prospects, and we trust that it may prove the precursor of a signal advance in the position of the Bill when next Mr. JACOB BRIGHT challenges the verdict of the House of Commons.

THE premature death of the Duchess of AOSTA has cut short a life that promised at one time to bring honour not to Italy alone, but to letters and arts everywhere. The deceased PRINCESS was the wife of the second son of King VICTOR EMMANUEL, who had the misfortune to be proclaimed King of SPAIN. The attempts of the young KING and QUEEN to organise good government in that distracted country began and ended in disaster for them—

selves; and on their return to Italy after their abdication, the Duchess contracted the malady which ended her life. We learn from the *Manchester Guardian* that "the deceased Duchess of AOSTA was by her attainments the equal of the most cultivated minds of our time. She was not only a good Latin and Greek scholar, but had very few superiors in the walk of the higher mathematics. The ex-Finance Minister of Italy, Signor SELLA, might, if he chose, enlighten the world on that point, for the late PRINCESS had many a discussion with him on the subject in which he is most at home. The deceased lady was not distinguished merely for her mental powers of acquiring knowledge, she also possessed the judgment necessary to turn her knowledge to account, and what she assimilated from the common stock served only to increase her own originality of thought and expression."

When talents and knowledge are developed in a princess, or in a woman whose birth and station allow them due recognition among the political influences of the time, we find that they add lustre to rank, and secure for their possessor a respect and influence beyond that which she would have derived from her rank alone, while no one is in the least surprised that such talents should be found in a woman. It is recognised as in accordance with the laws of nature that queens and princesses should have political capacity and power; but when it is claimed on behalf of the women of the people that they also should share in the political privileges of the men of the class to which they belong, then an outcry is made that the claim is "against the laws of nature;" and strangely enough this cry is loudest, not from those benches on which, if anywhere, one would have expected to find the fossil remains of the race of politicians whose creed was Divine Right of Kings, but from those who would most strenuously deny, so far as their own sex was concerned, the existence of any special outpouring of political gifts and grace on the members of Royal houses.

THE MASTER of the ROLLS in Ireland lately gave judgment in a case, the particulars of which have been going the round of the papers, under the heading, "a muddled marriage settlement." The case is of public interest, mainly on account of the language of his lordship in reference to the preparation of marriage settlements. He was clearly of opinion that Mrs. WILSON, who claimed two annuities of £100 each out of certain estates in Wexford, had a legal right to them. "But by a misfortune which seemed to hang over some persons, she had her marriage

settlement prepared by some grossly ignorant and grossly careless person. It was a monstrous thing that a marriage settlement which was to regulate the lives of the parties and their children, should be committed to the preparation of a person who would not take care to make it intelligible to a reasonable mind. Every lawyer would see that by the strict legal limitation in this settlement this lady would get no annuity except she had no child, or that her children died during her lifetime under the age of twenty-one. She had a child still living, and if that child reached the age of twenty-one the mother would not, under the provisions of this deed, get a single shilling. In other words, unless she put her children out of the way, or Providence took them, this lady would not get her share. He could not get a single intelligible sentence out of the deed; and he could come to no possible conclusion as to what was meant, were it not that he had it under the hand and seal of the lady's father in other documents of what his intention was, namely, to give the annuity to his daughter during her life-time. It seemed as if the person who prepared it had some blundering notion that something about children under twenty-one should appear in a marriage settlement, but did not know the meaning of the language he was using; or he was a person who was born with an obfuscated brain or intellect, and was utterly incompetent to put pen to paper at all. In the preparation of the second deed of 1864 the parties appeared to have got into the same, or as bad, stupid, blundering hands as before; but it was plain the late Mr. JEFFARES intended by it to declare his daughter's right to the annuity under the first deed, and he confirmed that declaration in the deed of 1866. It required the most trained intellect to make a marriage settlement, yet they were drawn every day by the most ignorant minds, and resulted in litigation, costs, and expenditure to the parties." Much of the danger here indicated by the learned judge arises from the unjust condition of the law respecting the property of women, and the consequent necessity for complicated legal documents for its protection in case they should marry. We are aware, of course, that this is not the sole object of marriage settlements; they are beneficial and necessary in many cases to secure to a woman who marries, having no property, provision in the event of widowhood, and to guard the children of parents who have property from the caprice or mismanagement of fathers and mothers who might otherwise squander their property, and leave their children unprovided for. But the necessity for marriage settlements

would be greatly diminished, and the character of the necessary provisions immeasurably simplified did the law recognise the absolute ownership by women as well as by men of all property belonging to them, and did custom sanction the free use and disposition of their property by women as by men under the same circumstances. An enormous saving of property for the benefit of the owners and their families would be effected by dispensing with the complicated provisions of legal documents, and the risk of such blunders as those commented on by the MASTER of the ROLLS in Ireland would be very greatly diminished. No doubt some lawyers would exclaim that it was against the laws of nature for women about to marry to have free disposition of their own property, uncontrolled by their husbands and unfettered by trustees; but as no one proposes to hinder them from having it tied up by settlement if they think proper, it is plain that even under such a Bill as that proposed by Lord COLERIDGE the laws of nature would be allowed a free course.

It has been imagined that the practice of destroying the feet of women in China had its origin in an arbitrary measure for keeping women to their own homes, since there is great jealousy among the Chinese as to the interference of women in matters which they conceive do not belong to them. Thus a Chinese poem, translated by MORRISON, is in the following strain:

A beautiful and clever woman should be regarded  
As a hoarse and hateful bird.  
State commotions come not from Heaven,  
They are born by, and come forth from Woman.

Chinese sages have sought to avert these evils by crippling the feet of their women. Englishmen have tried to do the same by crippling their minds. With better light, and more humane experience, it is to be hoped that this cruel and revolting practice will disappear in China; and that it may in time dawn on the conscience of Englishmen that it is as great a wrong to refuse to allow women to exercise their brains as their extremities.

NEW ZEALAND.—Sir Julius Vogel, in his speech to his constituents at Wanganui, stated that he was in favour of extending the franchise to women.

It is said that Herr Wagner was so delighted with the "Life of Schopenhauer," lately published by an English lady, that he presented her with a ticket for the performances at Bayreuth.—*Athenæum*.

The Empress of Austria has forwarded to Mrs. Burton a magnificent gold locket, with her Majesty's monogram and imperial crown in diamonds, as a mark of her appreciation of Mrs. Burton's work, "The Inner Life of Syria."

## PUBLIC MEETINGS.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The ninth annual meeting of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage was held in the Mayor's Parlour, at the Manchester Town Hall, on November 29th. There was a large attendance, many of whom, including ladies, could not obtain seats. The Mayor of Manchester (Mr. Alderman Heywood) presided.

THE MAYOR, in opening the proceedings, said that the question of women's suffrage ought not to be regarded, and was not regarded, as a party question, for gentlemen of almost all shades were found supporting the principles of the association. The two Liberal and the one Conservative member for Manchester alike supported the Bill. The Town Council, which represented the opinions of all classes of people, had for several years petitioned the Legislature on behalf of the measure. Though the majority against the measure in the House of Commons on the occasion of the last division was larger than in the previous year, yet the same number of representatives—152—voted for the measure. Speaking for himself, he said he was inclined to think that there had been, especially among the more liberal portion of the electors, a lull with regard to the expression of their opinions on this question. They could not shut their eyes to the fact that some gentlemen on both sides of politics thought that this question ought not to be pressed before Parliament and the country. It was not for these gentlemen to determine what the association must determine for itself, viz., what was the right and proper course for them to take. This question was not one for the lukewarm on either side to decide, but for those who took an earnest and anxious view of the question, not only as it affected themselves, but as in their opinion it affected the country generally. (Cheers.) Before sitting down, he could not refrain from saying that the careful and economical management of the association was due in a great measure, if not entirely, to Miss Becker, who took so deep an interest in its objects. (Hear, hear.) He was proud to have an opportunity of making that remark, because during the nine years of the society's history it had been conducted in such a manner as to ensure for it, if not the support of everybody, at any rate universal respect. (Hear, hear.) He should also have the pleasure of calling upon Mr. Jacob Bright to move a resolution. Without expressing any opinion against any class of his fellow-citizens, he thought that in honouring Mr. Bright by sending him to Parliament they had also done honour to themselves. (Cheers.)

MISS BECKER read the following letter from Mr. Forsyth, M.P.:

"Athenæum Club, Pall Mall, S.W., Nov. 6, 1876.

"My dear Miss Becker,—I shall not be able to attend the annual meeting of the Women's Suffrage Society at Manchester, but this is the less necessary as I understand that Mr. Jacob Bright has undertaken the conduct of the measure which for two successive years I introduced into the House of Commons. For reasons which I thought sufficient, I was of opinion that it was better not to bring forward again in the present House of Commons the Women's Suffrage Bill. But I may be wrong in this, and I am glad that it has been given over to the hands of Mr. Jacob Bright, who is eminently entitled by his past services to have the leadership of the question. Indeed, if he had been returned to the House of Commons in 1874, he, and not I, would undoubtedly have brought forward the measure, and

I am glad that it has been restored to his hands. As my opinion of the justice of the claim of women who are subject to the burdens of taxation to have a voice in the selection of those who are to impose those burdens remains unchanged, I will steadily support the Bill whenever it is brought forward.—  
Yours very truly,  
“W. FORSYTH.”

Letters had also been received from the Right Hon. James Stansfeld, M.P.; Mr. Gorst, M.P.; Mr. Hopwood, M.P.; Mr. Rylands, M.P.; Miss Sturge, Miss Rhoda Garrett, Dr. Pankhurst, Mr. T. Dale, Mr. J. W. Maclure, Rev. Dr. McKerrow, and others. Miss BECKER then read the annual report, which is published in another form.

The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL (the treasurer) submitted a statement showing that the income for the year, including subscriptions and donations, amounting to £1,739. 18s. 2d., had reached £2,185. The expenditure had amounted to £2,028. 17s. 10d., leaving a balance of £156. 2s. 2d. They had liabilities amounting to about £200, and bills owing them to the amount of about £50; so there was still a balance on the right side of the account. (Applause.)

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, M.P., moved the adoption of the report and financial statement. He said: The state of the public mind just now is not very favourable for the discussion of home questions. But notwithstanding this, I see you assembled to-day in larger numbers than I have ever found you assembled in this room before. On these annual occasions we are accustomed to look back to the past year and ask ourselves if there are any signs of progress. It appears to me that there are certainly as signal marks of progress in the year that has just passed as could be found in any year in the course of this agitation. For example, when greater combatants enter the arena of discussion, and take sides for or against you, that is a proof of the increasing interest in this question and a sign of its growing importance. In the last debate in the House of Commons, the most striking incident that occurred was the fact that Mr. Bright took part in it and endeavoured to show that you were wholly wrong, and that this Bill ought not to pass. You have no reason to regret that that speech was made. It is of great consequence that everything that could be said against your movement should be said, and that it should be said in the ablest possible manner, because that assists you to ascertain really the truth of your position. After years of deliberation, as was admitted in the speech, and with intense interest in the question, Mr. Bright addressed the House; and when he had finished there was a general feeling among his audience that his speech was the weakest speech which he had ever delivered. (“Hear, hear,” and laughter.) If the speech were weak, it was not from want of power in the speaker. It arose from the extreme difficulty of making out a case against us. It was not an easy thing for a man who had done more than any other to enfranchise the homes of the people of England to convince his audience that a certain portion of those homes, bearing the same burdens, and having the same relation to imperial and to local government, should be for ever unrepresented. Nor did he succeed in convincing his audience, for when he sat down one hundred and fifty-two men walked into the lobby and voted for this Bill on a Wednesday afternoon—just as many as had voted for it on the previous occasion. I do not think that those who are unaccustomed to watch closely the proceedings of the House of Commons are quite aware of the significance of this vote. I doubt—I am open to correction if I am wrong—but I doubt if you could find an instance where a motion for enfranchisement had ever received so many votes as this, unless supported either by the Government or by one of the two great political parties. Some weeks afterwards, when Mr. Trevelyan

brought on a motion to give votes to the agricultural labourers, although assisted by powerful speakers on the ex-ministerial benches—though, I think, every man connected with the late Government, except Mr. Lowe, supported him; yet, on a vote, he counted only the support of 165 men. The speech of Mr. Bright had one characteristic in common with almost every speech made against claims for the franchise, or indeed any other claims. It sought to answer the extreme views and suggestions occasionally heard during the agitation rather than to deal with the general and average view of those who are concerned in the movement. We were told, in vehement language, that the Bill was based on the principle of irreconcilable hostility between the sexes, whilst we know that the Bill has no such basis. We know that the true interests of one sex are the true interests of the other. The Bill, according to my view, is based upon this principle, that every human being is entitled to the same measure of justice from the law. Further on it was said that if Parliament was unjust to women—if the laws between men and women were unequal—it arose from the ignorance of Parliament. That we fully admit. That we have always maintained. But we also maintain that there is only one way to remove the ignorance of Parliament—that is, by giving a substantial representation to the whole people. Parliament is never ignorant of the wants and wishes of those who have votes. Parliament must inevitably be ignorant of the wants and wishes of those who have not votes. Parliament has very little time. It is pressed upon every side, and naturally it gives attention to those who can use pressure upon it, and not much to anybody else. Then the allegations that are made with regard to unjust legislation were summarily cast aside as of the flimsiest character. But it seems to me that the world is accustomed to judge of the weight of the burdens that people have to bear by the declarations of those who bear them, and we know very well what is the opinion of women upon this question. If the ablest landowner in the House of Commons were to get up, and, in contemptuous tones, were to say that the allegations of injustice on the part of the agricultural labourers of England, because they were not represented, were of the flimsiest character, I should pay very little attention to what that landowner should say. I would say, “I should rather turn to Joseph Arch and his co-workers, feeling sure that they have a practical knowledge of the injustice from which they suffer, where other men have not.” (Hear, hear.) Then it was said that in some respects women are more favoured than men, and three instances were given to show that that was so. We were told that fewer female than male criminals were hung; that women will get verdicts in cases of breach of promise of marriage where men won't; and also that there is a slight tax upon male servants where there is none upon female servants. I am quite sure that you will renounce at once these crumbs of more than doubtful charity for one single measure of justice in regard to any question on which you have petitioned Parliament. (Cheers.) Then a considerable portion of the speech dealt with that part of the question which is always very much discussed in the House of Commons, and which will be discussed there largely until this question is settled. We were told that we were asking for a franchise based upon the rate-book; that we were only going to give the vote to ratepayers, and therefore, in the main, married women would not have votes. But we are only treading on the old lines of the constitution when we take this course. From time immemorial in this country, almost before we knew anything of Parliaments, that was the franchise—the ratepayer had a vote. Within my own lifetime, on three distinct occasions Parliament has sanctioned that principle. When the poor-law unions

were formed, when the municipal vote was given, when the School Board vote was given—whenever men and women have voted together they have voted as ratepayers, and it seemed to us that this was a wise and practical way of settling the question. Let us appeal for a moment to Mr. Bright himself. In a speech he made some years ago, during the Reform agitation, he said: “I find a most admirable thing already in my hands. I find in all our parishes from the time of Queen Elizabeth—for anything I know from the time of Alfred; I do not know for how many years—a franchise which everybody is contented with and nobody has condemned, and which has done no harm to law or order, or security of property. I find that when Parliament came to legislate for poor-law unions it adopted the same franchise as the basis of the union franchise.” This franchise, which “everybody is contented with and nobody has condemned,” is the franchise which is being proposed on this occasion. (Cheers.) I am not bigoted personally as to how people should be represented in the House of Commons. I want every portion of the people to have some substantial kind of representation; but by what mode it is brought about I am careless. If our friends will shape a bill or a mode better than this, I will admit it immediately. Something was said by Mr. Bright in some impressive sentences on the demoralising character of elections, and, therefore on the undesirability of women having votes. I have had a great deal to do with elections, but I have not found them to be demoralising. There is a great deal of good and evil in elections, as there is in everything human, but the good vastly preponderates over the evil; and I believe that to have two or three weeks' canvassing and speech-making during an election, furnishes a very beneficial excitement to people—something to lift them out of the ordinary routine of business, and to remove their minds for at least a short time from their sordid cares. I see no reason why, because a few men in every constituency may be corrupt, that therefore women should be excluded from the polling booth. Then it was said that the influence of priest, parson, and minister would be increased by this Bill. I do not think the clerical influence is an increasing influence in any country in Europe. On the contrary, I believe the lay influence is everywhere a growing influence. There are influences, powerful influences, which operate at elections, and which often operate in a manner which we deplore. You may have a number of large millowners in a given district, and they will tell for a considerable weight during an election. We know that if you inquire as to the politics of the landowners in almost any county in England you see where the majority of Conservatism or Liberalism lies, and there you carry the county. An influence upon the humbler class of voters is exercised. Again, you have an enormous brewing and public-house interest in this country which becomes almost dangerous at the time of an election. Amidst all these various influences, I do not think that the influence of a minister of the Gospel would be amongst the worst, and because ministers of the Gospel have considerable influence over their congregations and the population amongst whom they reside, I see in that no reason whatever for the political extinction of woman. (Cheers.) We were told that the best women everywhere were against this Bill. Of course that statement would not have been made if a sound argument could have been put in its place. (Laughter.) It is an old and rusty weapon in political agitation, one which has been used in turn by everybody who was opposing the representation of the people. Why, Mr. Bright himself has been pronounced by scores of newspapers—by scores of public speakers—as one of the worst specimens of humanity by those whom he sought to disturb. Working men—those of them who have had public spirit in

them to endeavour to improve their position, and to wrestle with Parliament for their political rights—have been always held up as demagogues; and those who were quiet at home and neutral and ignorant and careless—these were the specimen working men, the real respectable men of the class. Again, with regard to Dissenters. A Dissenter who happened to have more courage and independence than his fellows, and therefore who demanded something like religious equality, was stigmatised as a political Dissenter, and the real respectable man was he who was quiet at home. Now, how are you to ascertain the character of the people who are conducting any particular movement? I should say the best way would be to select from amongst them the names of those persons who are most known throughout the country. Ascertain their character. If you find they have a high character, the probability is that those with whom they consort for political objects have not a low character. I could instance many women. I will take only three or four whose names are known to the nation. The late Mary Somerville—I dare say many here have read her Memoirs (if not, you will have pleasure in doing so)—was not more distinguished as a woman with remarkable scientific knowledge than she was the ornament of her own household and family. The name of Harriet Martineau has already been mentioned to the meeting. You have read her history, her admirable novels, her works upon a great variety of subjects. I have had the pleasure of knowing her personally, and have more than once visited her at her own home. There was not a more domestic woman living than Harriet Martineau—no woman who knew more of domestic concerns or had a more thorough pleasure in them than she had. Take the name of Florence Nightingale. She is living, and I need not say anything in regard to her. But there is probably no woman in England who is held in higher esteem, or who more deservedly commands our admiration. I might speak of Mary Carpenter, or of Frances Power Cobbe, and of many others, but it is unnecessary. These ladies have again and again petitioned the House of Commons in favour of this Bill. They have, of course, a wide intellectual outlook, and are likely to know better than those who are always at home, with home concerns, what is good for their sex. We have been told over and over again on very good authority, that wherever you find women in the race of competition for a livelihood, whether as artists or writers, or in any other walk on which women can enter—that five out of six such women are anxious to have some political influence, believing that it would give them greater consideration and that it would make their lot in life easier. As that is the case with men, it seems to me they were entitled to believe it would be the case with themselves. But in the course of Mr. Bright's speech there was one passage which I must read to you. It is a passage, I think, that will perhaps be gratefully remembered by those who are in favour of this cause. He said: “An argument which tells with many persons who sign the petitions to this House is the argument of equal rights. They say that a man who lives in a house votes; a woman lives in another house, why should not she vote also? That is a very fair and a very plain question, and one not always quite easy to answer. It is said there can be no harm to the country if women should vote. I confess that is a thing which many of us, even those who have opposed this Bill, may admit. It is not a question which depends upon a principle of that kind. As to the actual right, I will say nothing about it.” Those who sat round Mr. Bright when he made that statement—those who were jubilant because they had obtained him as their mouthpiece—might, I think, have fairly said with one of our old, “We took thee to curse our enemies, and behold thou hast

altogether blessed them." (Laughter.) With regard to the signs of progress, I say they are unmistakable. Reference has been made to the conference of the National Reform Union which has taken place in Manchester since your last annual meeting. In that conference 128 towns were represented. And who were the representatives that came from those 128 towns? Why, the most earnest and the most energetic of the politicians of those places, probably those who read much and who feel much upon political questions. As has been said, the question was submitted to them, and by an overwhelming vote they were in favour of all householders having the franchise; but somebody present, being a little startled at this conclusion, made an appeal to the chairman, and said the meeting had been taken by surprise, and the vote had not been perfectly understood, whereupon the question was deliberately, and with the knowledge of everybody, put a second time and with the same result. Some may say, "Oh! but at this conference you have enthusiastic people who advocate extreme measures, who don't sufficiently deliberate about what they are doing," and so on; but I say this conference knew what it was about, and to show that it was not in favour of what was extreme and what was impracticable, I must tell you that a motion was put that manhood suffrage was a fit subject for immediate agitation, and beyond the mover and seconder there was not another man in the room who would countenance that proposal, and it fell to the ground because there was nobody to vote for it. That shows that you had not got a wild or enthusiastic lot of men who wanted everybody in the world to vote. For another sign of the progress of this question you must look at what the large towns are doing. Since your last meeting the committee of the 400 in Birmingham—a committee which is appointed by the whole population of Birmingham in order to select candidates and transact the political business—at a meeting of that committee, very largely attended, it was decided unanimously to petition Parliament for this Bill. There is another body in Birmingham much interested in this question. That is King Edward's School—a school which is very well known, a most important institution, with I do not know how many masters; and at that school every master petitioned Parliament for this Bill. (Hear, hear.) So much for the past. You are now engaged in sowing the seed without knowing exactly when or by whom the harvest may be gathered. In 1819 there was a great assemblage of men and women of the working classes, with various political ideas in their minds, but with this as their chief aspiration, that there should be household suffrage throughout this country. Until 1868 working men had no votes in this country. Therefore fifty years, within one, elapsed from the time they gathered together with that prayer, until to a certain extent their brethren coming after them had votes. I say only to a certain extent, because in Middleton and many other places from which contingents came to the great meeting at Peterloo the working men are just as much disfranchised as they were at that time. I mention this to show you that political progress is not very quick in this country. Happily it is steady, and we generally keep what we acquire. It is true that we move faster now than we did then; but, still, whoever gives work in this course must be prepared, if need be, to exhibit a good deal of patience and forbearance, and not to expect their labours to be immediately crowned with success. (Hear, hear.) Before I sit down I should like to congratulate the meeting upon the fact that the chief magistrate of this great city is president of the meeting, and that he is in warm sympathy with your cause. (Applause.) It is not simply that the Mayor of Manchester is your chairman, but that in the Mayor of Manchester you have a man who from his very youth has partaken in almost every struggle for the

extension of human freedom. (Cheers.) I wish most sincerely—and I am sure you will allow me to express the wish in your name—that his health and strength may be preserved not only for the fulfilment of the high duties he is now called upon to perform in connection with this city, but may be preserved for other duties of varied kinds in which he has ever taken delight. (Cheers.)

The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL seconded the adoption of the report, which was agreed to.

Mrs. HEYWOOD proposed the election of the executive committee, which was seconded by Mr. GEO. BOOTH, and agreed to unanimously.

Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD proposed a vote of thanks to the members of Parliament who had backed and supported the Bill, and the resolution was supported by Dr. JOHN WATTS, and adopted.

The meeting was afterwards addressed by Mr. J. P. THOMASSON, Bolton, and Mr. R. D. RUSDEN, who spoke to a resolution requesting Mr. Jacob Bright to reintroduce the Bill in next session of Parliament, and afterwards, Mr. Steintal having taken the chair, on the motion of Miss BECKER, seconded by Miss WILSON, a vote of thanks was passed to the Mayor for presiding and for the use of his parlour, and the meeting separated.

#### FAILSWORTH.

A crowded and enthusiastic meeting was held on Nov. 28 in the Bethel Schoolroom, Failsworth, near Manchester, under the auspices of the Failsworth Liberal Association, in support of the Women's Suffrage Bill. The Rev. H. Thomas occupied the chair. Miss Becker delivered an address, and resolutions in support of the principle and adopting petitions to both Houses of Parliament were moved and supported by Mr. Dunkerly, Mr. Butterworth, Mr. Dawson, and carried unanimously. Votes of thanks concluded the proceedings.

#### KEIGHLEY.

On November 6, a public meeting was held in the Keighley Mechanics' Institute for the purpose of advocating the extension of Parliamentary suffrage to women. There was a very good audience, largely composed of ladies. Mr. J. W. Laycock occupied the chair, and amongst those on the platform were Miss Sturge, Birmingham; Miss Le Geyt, Bath; Mrs. Atherton, Miss Robinson, Messrs. John Clough, W. S. B. McLaren, W. Emmott, J. Bottomley, R. A. Milner, &c. The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, read a letter from Sir Mathew Wilson apologising for his inability to be present at the meeting, and wishing all success to the movement for obtaining justice and equality for women. (Applause.) He (the chairman) said it appeared that their member for the county thought that women were denied justice and equal rights. He thought that the arguments used against the granting of the right of voting to women were not very strong, and were chiefly based on what was not now sought for, but which might or might not happen. He did not think that the fear of consequences ought to form any argument when right and justice were at stake. If justice demanded that the suffrage should be given to women the consequences might then be met as they arose. (Hear, hear.) The same argument had been raised against the repeal of the Corn Laws and the extension of the suffrage to men without any evil consequences arising; and he believed that women would be as much led by reason and by discretion as men when a matter was placed before them.—The usual resolutions were moved and supported by Mr. John Clough, Mr. W. A. Robinson, Miss Le Geyt, Mr. R. A. Milner, Mr. W. B. McLaren, Miss Sturge, Mr. Wm. Emmott, and the Rev. S. Kennedy, and carried unanimously.—On the motion of Mr. Daniel Smith, seconded

by Mr. John Bottomley, a vote of thanks was passed to the chairman and speakers, and the proceedings terminated.

#### BRIGHOUSE.

The following letter has been received from Sir Mathew Wilson, Bart, M.P., in reply to the memorial adopted at the public meeting recently held in Brighouse, and forwarded by the chairman, Thos. Ormerod, Esq. :—

"28, Upper Brunswick Place,  
Brighton, Monday, Oct. 30, 1876.

"Dear Sir,—I am much obliged to you and to the inhabitants of Woodfield, whose memorial you have enclosed, expressing their approval of my support of Women's Rights. Children gain their first and indelible impressions from their mothers, and everything that tends to educate and to elevate a woman's character will be found reflected in her children.—Ever, believe me, yours very sincerely,  
MATHEW WILSON.

"Thomas Ormerod, Esq.,  
Woodfield, Brighouse."

#### TEWKESBURY.

A public meeting in support of the Bill for extending the Parliamentary suffrage to women householders was held on November 14th, at the Music Hall, Tewkesbury, under the presidency of the Mayor (J. H. Boughton, Esq.), supported by the Revs. H. S. Warleigh, T. Webster, and T. Wilkinson, and other influential residents of the neighbourhood. The Chairman read the following letters he had received from J. R. Yorke, Esq., M.P., and Capt. W. E. Price, M.P. :—

"Carlton Club, Pall Mall, Nov. 11th, 1876.

"Dear Sir,—I regret very much that I shall be prevented by business engagements from returning home until the 15th, or I should have had much pleasure in welcoming the lady advocates of the female suffrage cause to our neighbourhood. I have been a consistent supporter of the movement in Parliament since its first introduction to the House of Commons 10 years ago. I believe it is destined to succeed, and that it will prove to be of great benefit to the country. Regretting that I cannot be present at your meeting,—I remain, yours faithfully,  
J. R. YORKE.

"The Rev. Mr. Wilkinson."

"Tibberton Court, Gloucester, Tuesday.

"Dear Mr. Wilkinson,—I am sorry that I cannot be present at your meeting next week. I am, however, engaged from next Monday until the following Saturday week on a series of visits which I cannot now put off. I have not been away from home for the last two months except on business, and I have kept myself free for this next fortnight in order to be able to pay these two visits to my Parliamentary friends. I shall support by my vote, as I have done before, the proposal to extend to women the same privileges as regards Parliamentary as they now enjoy in municipal elections.—Faithfully yours,  
WILLIAM E. PRICE."

After reading these letters the Mayor stated in a short speech that he was pleased to see so many present, and heartily agreed with the objects of the meeting.—The usual resolutions were moved and supported by the Rev. T. Webster, Mr. W. Knight, Miss Lilius S. Ashworth, the Rev. T. Wilkinson, Rev. H. S. Warleigh, Rector of Ashchurch, and Miss Sturge, and carried unanimously. A vote of thanks to the Mayor concluded the proceedings.

#### DEBATING SOCIETIES.

SCARBOROUGH.—At a recent meeting of the Scarborough Debating Society, the subject for debate was, the question, "Should sex be a disqualification for the franchise." The affirmative was maintained by Mr. T. P. Whittaker, Mr. Middlemist, Mr. Turner, and Mr. Weddle. The negative by Mr. H. M. Cross, Mr. Maude, Mr. M. T. Whittaker, and Mr. Yeoman. The question was put to the vote, and the division showed a majority of one in favour of the proposition that sex should not be a disqualification for the franchise.

MANCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL.—The subject of women's rights was recently discussed in the debating society of the Manchester Grammar School. Mr. Cockburn moved that women's rights as they are, are sufficient. Mr. Marcus followed with an amendment that their political rights are sufficient, but socially, they need improvement. Mr. Kelly rose, and feeling that a mere negation of the resolution and amendment was

not sufficient, proposed a second amendment, that the political rights of women being at present *nil*, ought to be co-extensive with those of men. After an interesting debate Mr. Kelly's amendment was carried by a large majority.

At the Manchester Literary Society, after a debate on the same subject, the division resulted in a tie. The chairman declined to give a casting vote. The debate was a good and instructive one.

TORQUAY.—A public meeting was lately held to consider the advisability of forming the "Torquay Literary Society," and when the rules were discussed, that excluding ladies from the debating and essay class of the society gave rise to considerable discussion. Several speakers supported the admission of ladies as calculated to improve the intellectual position of young men, and eventually the rule was repealed unanimously, and it was resolved to admit ladies to the class.—*Torquay Times*.

#### VICTOR HUGO ON THE CONDITION OF WOMEN.

The French Society for the Improvement of the Condition of Women made an appeal to Victor Hugo, to which the poet replied as follows:—"Mesdames,—I have received your address. It does me infinite honour. I am not ignorant of your noble and legitimate demands. As society is formed to-day woman suffers. She is right to demand a better fate. I am merely a conscience, but I understand your rights, and to obtain them has been one of the duties of my life. Man was the problem of the 18th century; woman is the problem of the 19th century. Who says woman, says child—that is to say, the future. The question thus laid down appears in all profundity. On its solution depends the supreme social appeasement. Strange and violent situation! In reality, man depends on you—woman holds the heart of man. Before the law she is a minor; she is incapable, she is without civil power, she is without political right,—in short, she is nothing; in the family circle she is all, because she is the mother. The family hearth is what she makes it; at home she is the mistress of good and ill. Sovereignty mixed with oppression; woman can do all against man, but nothing for herself. It is imprudent of the law to make her so weak when she is so strong. Let us recognise this weakness, and protect it; let us recognise this strength, and counsel it. There lies the duty of man; there is also his interest. I repeat, the problem is laid down and must be solved; half of the human race is placed outside the pale of equality; they must be placed inside. This will be one of the grand glories of our grand century. Let the right of woman counterbalance the right of man—that is to say, let the laws correspond to the manners of the nation.—Accept, &c."

#### WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN ITALY.

In the attempt to enlighten his countrywomen in regard to their legal status, Signor Vespucci is met in the outset by what he justly terms "the very insolent objection" (though coming from a professed friend of women) they will not have the *patience* to read legal dissertation. His correspondent declares that the very idea that it may be possible to discourse to women of laws and codes shows *great courage* in his friend.

Everywhere in the old world as in the new, we find the same sneering doubt as to women's intellectual capacity, the same assumption of their frivolity and lack of interest in things of vital importance—and this in spite of the high attainments of many women in these days in intellectual culture and their devotion in many instances to science, art, industrial avocations or practical philanthropy. Truly when we remember that in institutions of learning where women have with men equal

opportunities for acquiring knowledges, the majority of the prizes are gained by our sex, masculine arrogance and egotism is something to be wondered at, at least!

Undismayed by this doubt of his masculine friend, and encouraged by many grateful and appreciative letters from his lady readers, Signor Vespucci, in the following anecdote, makes known to the Italian ladies the *denied right* at which he hinted in the last article which we translate from the *Giornale* :—

I was seven years old when one day my mother led me into the office of a respectable notary of my native city.

The old functionary was occupied with some contract, and we were obliged to wait till he had finished his work. This was soon done; but he wanted witnesses, and there being none in the office he was obliged to seek them in the vicinity.

While they sought the superior beings who had the quality exacted by the law for the attainment to the high office of witnesses, my good mother turned ingenuously to the notary saying :—

“Cannot I serve for witness?”

“No, my lady,” replied the old notary with visible displeasure. “The law is so; and, while it takes the first ruffianly male who presents himself, it rejects distinguished ladies like yourself as incapable.”

And, after a little, appeared the two witnesses who, to tell the truth, did not promise an extraordinary capacity. One was the bellringer of a neighbouring parish—the other a cobbler, who worked in the piazza of the church. The two old men stood there open mouthed and with a more than usual stupid and foolish air, to hear the reading of the instrument, and afterwards mechanically affixed thereto their certainly unskillfully executed signatures.

I was but a child, but I was struck on that occasion, so much the more as in my juvenile mind I seemed to have seen an insult perpetrated by the notary towards my mother, whom I knew in every respect so much superior by intelligence and culture to those preferred to her.

“Tell me mamma, were you not offended when they did not wish you for a witness?”

To this question which I with the expression of the most lively indignation put to her when we departed from the office, she replied smiling.

“No my child, woman must experience in the course of her life, injustices much greater than that. When you grow older you will understand me much better.”

I said no more, but I have never forgotten this scene.

And now I wish you to read the article of our law relative to the capacity of witnesses. Note your capacity is put upon the level of those condemned to criminal punishment.

These are the articles in their integrity :

Article 788.—The witnesses in wills *must be male*, of 21 years of age, and not to have *lost through crime* the enjoyment or the exercise of civil right.

Article 789.—Wills made upon the sea during a voyage, shall be received by the captain so. In all cases these wills must be received in the presence of two male witnesses.

The same is said of the wills of sailors in time of war.

Article 789.—One exception alone is made in your favour; and it is when there may be danger of encountering risk.

In this case one willingly forgets that you pertain to the weak sex.

Article 789 paternally decrees that *in places where exist a pestiferous or other malady reputed contagious, women may serve as witnesses.*

Oh, supreme complaisance.

Enough for this time!

—Ballot Box.

E. R. C.

GENTLE WORK FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

We have received the rules and prospectus of an institution which boasts of offering occupation for *gentlewomen* as district sick nurses on the following magnificent conditions :—They are to work eight hours daily, apparently for seven days in the week; eight hours are to be allowed for sleep, and two hours for leisure daily. They are permitted to receive visitors at such hours only as may be specified by a district superintendent. They are not to be permitted to accept presents from patients or friends of patients. They are to see that the rooms, furniture, and utensils of their patients are clean, or to *clean them themselves*. The nature of their duty is thus described in the report :—“Upon entering a close, ill-ventilated room, too often in an indescribable state of filth and vermin,” the nurse first rearranges the furniture, and, that done, she “washes and arranges the patient, makes the bed, applies any dressings required, then dusts the room, ventilates it, empties and washes all utensils, dirty glasses, etc., when necessary, disinfects utensils *and drains*, sweeps the fireplace, fetches water, and fills the kettle.” Making beds and emptying dirty slops and utensils appear as a regular portion of the daily duties required from a service which is offered to the “higher class of women,” and they are to be discharged for several patients daily in succession at different houses. Besides this, lady nurses are to perform offices for sick men which it would be deemed highly indelicate for lady doctors to prescribe. In addition to this, they have to expose their lives to the risk of contact with cases of infectious disease, and to make a complete sacrifice of personal liberty and of all the ordinary comforts of life. In order to qualify themselves for this sacrifice, they are to pass through a period of probation extending over the space of sixteen months, and to pay a premium of sixty pounds. If they are too poor to do this, they are allowed to postpone payment till they receive a salary, and to have the amount deducted in instalments from what they earn. After the training is completed, they receive a salary of £35 for the first year, increasing by annual increments of £3 for six years, till the maximum salary of £50 is attained. The nurses are boarded, provided with a uniform dress, and allowed half-a-crown a week for washing. To set against this, they may be considered to be required practically to contribute something like £50 annually to the institution out of the value of their labour; for the report informs us that any fully-qualified nurse can now obtain from one to two guineas a week and her keep, besides occasional and sometimes handsome presents by going out as a private nurse to the sick, and that the demand for such nurses is known to be far greater than the supply. The nurses who enter the “institution” are required to bind themselves to serve three years, but are subject to dismissal at three months’ notice. One would think that in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird; but such is the miserable condition of the indigent gentlewomen of our country that no fewer than 120 applicants have been found to justify the astounding assertion which we find in the report, “Your committee considered that this rate of remuneration would induce women of a superior class to enter the service,” and their boast that they have five trained nurses “of the class best described as gentlewomen” in their home. “The Metropolitan and National Nursing Association,” etc., from whose first annual report we have quoted, appears under the auspices of a host of aristocratic names, and affords another example of the prevalent system of vicarious charity by the rich and great through the personal exertions of devoted women whose lives are to be appropriated for public uses without fee or reward.—*Liverpool Argus*.

THE HOME SECRETARY ON THE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS.

At a recent meeting in Birmingham Mr. Cross said :—They would pardon him if he came to more domestic matters. A great deal had been said against the laws which at present existed in the country with regard to crimes of brutality and violence, especially those which, unfortunately, were so common in this country—namely, of husbands beating their wives. If the husband had a right, as he had, to all the comfort and solace of his wife in sickness or health, in youth or age, it must be remembered that the husband had duties as well as rights—that if a woman was in distress the husband who called himself a man would run to her assistance; and it was a disgrace to the country that a husband should be found who, instead of protecting his wife, was the man to inflict violence upon her. That was a matter which they could deal with themselves. They required no legislation, no municipality. Here it was their own matter. But the wife wanted more than that; the wife was entitled, as of right, and it was the duty of the husband to find for her, as of right, the most comfortable home he could possibly afford to live in. (Hear, hear, and applause.) She had other rights than that, and the husband had other duties. The wife had a right to do that which a good wife felt more than anything else in the world, which she so often missed—and the want of which killed her as surely, although slowly, as it happened—she had a right to the comfort and society of her husband. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Spurgeon, in a recent speech, made the following remark on the domestic duties of men :—“As for the husbands, I don’t think they always take their fair turn with their wives, for I see some Christian men out on Sunday whose wives never get out for a month together.”

BRUTES IN AND OUT OF BOOTS.—Police Constable 22 C said that, while on duty on Monday night in Crown Street, he saw the prisoner knock a woman down, kick her, and jump on her body. It was elicited by the magistrate that the prisoner had no boots on; and the magistrate said, “had the prisoner worn boots at the time, he would have sent him to prison for three months, instead of, as he did, for two months.” *Punch* comments as follows on the above judgment :—“So, now the rough knows the tariff. To jumping on a woman with boots on, three months. To jumping on a woman without boots, two months. No doubt, by a parity of reasoning, the amusement might be indulged in in slippers for a month; and in bare feet for a week!”

A CURIOUS MISTAKE.—At the Dundee Police Court, recently, Michael Miskell, weaver, was charged with cursing and swearing at Mary Powell, of Dunsmore, in Pennycook Lane, on Saturday night. Michael pled not guilty. Mary said that accused accosted her at her own door on Saturday night. He said that it was a “fine night, Mary,” and she replied that it was, and then he began to curse and swear at her. The accused said he mistook the witness, and thought that he was raging at his own wife. (Laughter.) He was fined 15s., or ten days in prison.

A WIFE’S CONTROL OVER A WEDDING RING.—At the Sheffield County Court, not very long ago, the Judge (Mr. T. Ellison) gave judgment in a case which involved the question of a wife’s control over a wedding ring. A married woman died at her mother’s house, and shortly before her death gave her mother her wedding ring. The husband now claimed the value of it as a set off against a claim brought against him for his wife’s board and lodging.—In giving judgment His Honour said a wedding ring came under a class of articles which the wife had

separately and independently of her husband, and she had power to keep them but she had no power to give them away. On the other hand, the husband had power to give them away even during her life. In this case the wife had no power to give away her ring, and his judgment must be accordingly.

THE PROPERTY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

During the debate in the Session of 1868, on the second reading of Mr. Shaw-Lefevre’s Married Women’s Property Bill, the Right Hon. Robert Lowe, in supporting the measure said :—“In ordinary cases we allow persons to retain the property to which they are entitled until a case is made out for depriving them of it. Women alone are to lose it without any fault suggested or presumed. Is there no practical mischief arising from the present state of things? Observe this, that the mischief does not occur through the negligence of the parties, but through the action of the law, because, but for the law, a woman would be in a condition to make terms after marriage as before. But the law steps in, inflicts a disability, and dispossesses her of her property. . . . Then there is the very common case of the legacy left to the wife and taken and squandered by the husband. We are responsible for this if we allow these things to be done. Let us put aside all questions of social policy and marital rights, and ask ourselves whether anything can be shown to justify us in taking away property from one person and giving it, without any consideration, to another.” Mr. Lowe’s words, true in 1868, remain true in 1876, in spite of the passing of the Act of 1870, and the following practical commentary on his remarks has recently appeared in the daily papers :—

WOOLWICH.—A middle-aged woman asked the magistrate to grant her protection for her furniture. She said that she had been five weeks married to a man who had turned out badly.—Mr. Patteson: Has he deserted you?—Applicant: No, I wish he would; he is selling off my goods.—Mr. Patteson: He has a right to do that, for by marrying him you have endowed him with all you possess, and you can only have protection for the property which you acquire after he deserts you.—Applicant said she feared that he would not desert her, and left the court.

MARRIED WOMEN’S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

Secretary: Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, Congleton, Cheshire.  
Treasurer: Mrs. Jacob Bright, Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS RECEIVED IN NOVEMBER, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Hugh Mason	10	10	0
Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Thomasson	10	0	0
The Right Hon. Russell Gurney, M.P.	5	5	0
Mrs. Taylor	5	0	0
Mr. Samuel Courtauld	5	0	0
Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood	5	0	0
Mrs. Gell	2	2	0
Sir Chas. Wentworth Dilke, M.P.	2	0	0
Miss Sharman Crawford	2	0	0
Professor F. H. Newman	2	0	0
Mrs. E. H. Newman	1	0	0
Miss Whitworth	0	10	0
Mrs. Whitehead	0	10	0
Mrs. Wates	0	5	6
Mrs. Walton	0	5	0
Mrs. Prideaux	0	2	6

£51 9 6

URSULA M. BRIGHT, TREASURER.

N.B.—Forms of Petition in favour of Lord Coleridge’s Bill, with leaflets, and all information, to be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, Congleton, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS RECEIVED DURING NOVEMBER, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. H. M. Steinthal	1	1	0
Mr. J. A. Lyon	0	5	0
Mrs. Farnivale	0	2	6

BRIGHOUSE.

Mr. Thomas Ormerod	1	1	0
Mrs. Thomas Ormerod	1	1	0
Mr. S. H. Byrne	0	10	0
Messrs. Wilkinson and Airey	0	5	0
Mr. J. A. Robinson	0	5	0
Miss Broughton	0	2	6

WEST HARTLEPOOL.

Miss Nicol (two years)	0	10	0
Dr. Biggart	0	10	0
Mr. Baumann	0	10	0
Mr. Turnbull	0	5	0
Mr. T. Furness	0	5	0
Mrs. Moses	0	2	6
Mr. Cochran	0	2	6
Mr. Gibson	0	2	6

Mrs. Abel Heywood	2	2	0
Mr. H. Measham	1	1	0
Mrs. Pickup	1	0	0
Rev. Dr. McKerrow	0	10	6
Mr. David Dale	0	10	0
Mr. N. Maw	0	5	0
Mrs. Haddock	0	5	0
Mr. T. P. Lascardi	0	5	0
Mr. G. O. Blacker	0	5	0
Mrs. Addison	0	5	0
Mrs. Fisher	0	5	0
Mr. J. B. Martin	0	5	0
Rev. Brooke Lambert	0	5	0
Mr. Maude	0	2	6
Mr. Dawson (Fallsworth)	0	2	6

SOUTHPORT.

Mr. R. Nicholson, Mayor	2	0	0
Rev. J. L. Rentoul	0	10	6
Mr. J. Gillett	0	19	0
Mr. John Barrow	0	5	0
Mrs. McCrossan	0	5	0
Mrs. Rimmer	0	5	0
Mrs. McKerrow	0	2	6
Mr. Chatterton	0	2	6
Mrs. Sarjeant	0	2	6
B. B.	0	2	6

BURNLEY.

Mr. W. Lomas, J.P.	0	10	0
Mr. J. Whittaker	0	10	0
Mr. J. Berry	0	10	0
Mr. Peter Fletcher	0	10	0
Mr. Joseph Graham	0	10	0
Mr. H. Uttley, J.P.	0	10	0
Mr. R. J. Hurtley	0	10	0
Mr. G. Cowgill	0	10	0
Mr. H. Nutter	0	5	0
Mr. John Thompson	0	5	0
Dr. Dean	0	5	0
Dr. and Mrs. S. T. Hall	0	5	0
Miss Howarth	0	5	0
Miss Hurtley	0	5	0
Miss Cronkshaw	0	5	0
Mr. Thomas Shepley	0	5	0
Mr. W. Baldwin	0	5	0
Mr. Thomas Sager	0	5	0
Mr. John Taylor	0	5	0
Mr. Francis Hartley	0	5	0
Mrs. Folds	0	2	6
Mr. T. Willis	0	2	6
Mrs. Leather	0	2	6
Mrs. Hargreaves	0	2	6
Mr. Crawshaw	0	2	6

Carried forward ... £26 8 6

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS (continued).

	£	s.	d.
Brought forward	26	8	6
Mr. T. P. Smith	0	2	6
Mr. Jeremiah Kippax	0	2	6
Mr. James Heap	0	2	6
X Y Z	0	2	6

£26 18 6

ALFRED S. STEINTHAL, Treasurer.

Cheques and Post Office Orders should be made payable to the Treasurer, Rev. S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, the latter payable at the head office, Manchester, and may be sent either direct to him at The Limes, Nelson-street, Chorlton-on-Medlock; 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, 64, Berners Street, London, W., from September 21st to November 20th, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Household Suffrage	100	0	0
Impartial Representation	100	0	0
Mrs. Thomas Taylor	5	0	0
Mr and Mrs. Joseph Crook	2	2	0
Mrs. Davies	2	2	0
E. H. T., in memoriam	2	0	0
Mrs. Paulton	2	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. Webster	2	0	0
Mrs. Hullah	1	1	0
Mr. Edward Spender	1	1	0
Mrs. Fisher	0	10	6
Miss Elise Walker	0	10	6
Mrs. Pickford	0	10	0
Mrs. Carvell Williams	0	10	0
Miss Anderson	0	5	0
Mrs. Rycroft Best	0	5	0
Mr. T. Wilson	0	5	0
Mrs. Barry	0	2	6
Mrs. P. H. Holland	0	2	6
Mrs. H. W. Lawrence	0	2	6
Miss Webster	0	2	0
Miss Carey	0	1	0

£220 12 6

ALFRED W. BENNETT, TREASURER.

BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND SOCIETY.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS RECEIVED SINCE 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Lady Anna Gore Langton	10	0	0
Professor F. W. Newman	5	0	0
Mrs. G. H. Leonard	1	1	0
Mr. R. Cory, jun.	1	0	0
Mr. Mark Whitwill	1	0	0
Mr. Charles Hancock	0	10	0
Ditto, donation	0	10	0
Mr. James Buckley	0	10	0
Mrs. James, 2nd donation	0	10	0
Mr. S. Home	0	7	6
Mrs. Atkinson	0	5	0
Miss Fitzherbert	0	5	0
Rev. B. Hartnell	0	5	0
Mr. A. Pole	0	5	0
Mr. Rogers	0	5	0
Mrs. Stone	0	3	0
Mr. Cheesman	0	2	6

£21 19 0

ALAN GREENWELL, TREASURER,

Office, 53, Park-street, Bristol. 1, Westbourne Villas, Clifton.