

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

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WITH the new year we have the pleasure of introducing the *Women's Suffrage Journal* in a permanently enlarged form. We have made arrangements by which the increase of space is afforded to our readers without addition to the price, and we trust that a largely increased circulation will reward our endeavours to render the paper more attractive to the general reader. We ask the co-operation of our friends in the shape of contributions of articles, reviews, correspondence, paragraphs, and newspaper cuttings, suitable for publication in its columns; and we trust that the large class of thoughtful women among whom it circulates will take the opportunity it affords of bringing their opinions and sentiments under the notice of the public, which regards the *Journal* as the exponent of the principles and the progress of the movement for the removal of the political disabilities of women.

The close of the year affords an occasion for a review of losses and gains to the cause. The former are principally personal. We have to deplore the loss by death of many earnest friends in the year that has just gone by: Mr. JOHN STUART MILL, Mrs. SOMERVILLE, Mr. CHISHOLM ANSTEY, Archdeacon SANDFORD; and of Parliamentary supporters, the Right Hon. H. T. LOWRY CORRY, Col. FRENCH, Sir JOSEPH COWEN, Mr. DAVID ROBERTSON, and Mr. W. H. P. GORE LANGTON. The last two voted in all the six divisions in the House of Commons in favour of women's suffrage.

We have gained in Parliamentary support during the year. The division in April last was the largest that has been given in favour of the measure, and the elections that have since taken place have been so generally favourable to the cause, that our Parliamentary strength is greater at this time than at any previous period in the history of the movement. This is all the more encouraging as the past season has been by no means a genial one for the class of Parliamentary annuals. There are proposals which have been before the public a much longer period, and are supported by organisations greatly exceeding ours

in wealth. These Associations consist for the most part of persons who have what we have not, votes wherewith to support their principles, and yet, whether from being less intrinsically or obviously just, or more strongly opposed to popular sentiment, or exciting the fears of large classes of persons with vested interests which might be injuriously affected by them, their proposals have received in the course of last Session defeat so crushing that it seemed as if the House of Commons might have been bent on stamping out the life of them. But such things are hard to kill, and the promoters of these measures, though they may be staggered for the time, are doubtless preparing to renew their efforts with as much patient determination and courage as we trust that women would display, should the House of Commons unfortunately take a savage fit the next time their claim to representation is under consideration. The Permissive Bill was rejected by 321 votes against 81. Mr. MIALL's resolution respecting church disestablishment was lost by 61 votes to 356. The leaders of these forlorn hopes might have envied Mr. JACOB BRIGHT his comparatively large following of 155 votes, and his less numerous and less intense opposition.

The elections that have taken place since the division in April last afford an indication of the current of popular opinion which cannot be without significance. In that period five members who voted for the Bill, and seventeen who voted against it, have been removed by various causes from the House of Commons. Of the vacancies caused by the loss of friends two have been filled by new friends, the opinions of one of the successors are unknown, and two of the seats are still vacant. Of the opponents, two have been succeeded by others who are understood to be also unfavourable, eight by members whose opinions are doubtful or unknown, and seven have been replaced by avowed friends. This is equivalent to fourteen votes on a division, even supposing, what is not very probable, that the views of all who have not yet expressed themselves decidedly should ultimately prove to be adverse.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at 'the flood doth lead to fortune.' The tide comes in the affairs of women too, and there are on all hands signs of its rising. A new measure of Parliamentary reform is looming in the immediate future, and if women take advantage of the opportunity they may secure for their own claim a more favourable chance of consideration and settlement than it would have if it stood alone as a proposal for amending the basis of representation. We are firmly persuaded that Parliament is, or will be, prepared to concede the demand as soon as it shall be convinced that women, or any considerable body of women, are in earnest in making it. It is a difficult task to convince men that women are in earnest about anything, but it is not an impossible task, and it needs to be set about with a will. If all women who care about the franchise would endeavour to impress their views on the minds of the members who represent the constituency in which they reside, the battle would be half won. We exhort women everywhere to obtain signatures to the petitions, and to send these, when filled, to their own members, with letters urging them to support the Bill. Women desirous of giving support in this way will find full particulars and directions in our advertising columns, and we trust to receive an earnest and wide-spread response to our appeal to our sisters to come and help the good cause.

LORD ARTHUR RUSSELL, M.P. for Tavistock, has addressed a remarkable letter to the Chairman of a meeting of inhabitants of that borough, in reply to a memorial requesting him to support Mr. JACOB BRIGHT'S Bill. He says, "I am convinced that the admission of widows and 'spinsters would only strengthen the Tory party in the 'House of Commons.'" This objection is doubtless the real cause of the opposition of many professed Liberals to the Bill, but it is not often avowed with such simple-minded candour. We would ask LORD ARTHUR RUSSELL whether, since he thinks it right to deprive women householders of the suffrage on the mere suspicion that they might use their votes to strengthen the Tory party, if he would disfranchise all men householders who have been actually guilty of this political misdemeanour? Does he think that none but Liberals ought to be enfranchised, or does he maintain that men have a right to be Conservatives if they think proper, but that women have not? LORD A. RUSSELL says that the admission of women to the franchise "would make all progress and improvement "in our legislation more difficult and slow than they are

"already." He cannot surely mean that legislation tending to improve the condition of women would be made more difficult and slow than it is already, because such legislation in fact makes no progress at all—witness the failure of the attempt last session to amend a state of the law described by Lord Chief Justice COLERIDGE, as "more worthy of a barbarian than of a civilised state." It is probable that the maintenance of this barbarian system tends to perpetuate that habit of mind which renders improvement so slow and difficult, and that the admission of an agency which would help to make our law more civilised in one direction would tend ultimately, if not immediately, to render the course of improvement generally more easy and rapid.

The second reason given by the noble lord is a truly wonderful specimen of masculine logic. He says, "By 'the admission of women we should, I feel certain, *introduce* into our political life that emotional element which *has always* proved fatal to the successful working of 'Parliamentary government.'" Now we are at a loss to understand how an element which is only to be introduced when women shall be admitted to political life can have already proved fatal to the successful working of Parliamentary government. Until we read LORD ARTHUR RUSSELL'S letter, we were not aware that anything had proved fatal to that system. We were under the impression that Parliamentary government was still in existence, and working with tolerable success, with such success indeed that efforts are being made to extend the system to classes of the community hitherto excluded from its advantages. LORD A. RUSSELL, however, as a Member of Parliament, ought to be better informed on this matter than ourselves, and we can only respectfully suggest to him that whatever may be the element "which has always proved fatal to the successful working of Parliamentary government," it cannot be women's suffrage, which has not yet been introduced; and that it is possible that this new element might have a revivifying influence, and, therefore, be worthy of experiment.

#### WHO ARE THE "DREGS?"

AN incident of the debates on Mr. DISRAELI'S Reform Bill has been revived into prominent recollection lately. Mr. JOHN BRIGHT has been accused of characterising poor working men as the "dregs of the population," and he has thought it worth while to repel the imputation with scorn. We are not concerned with the controversy as it affects the class to which the epithet was originally applied, but

the passage which has been perverted into the occasion of the dispute affords material for a suggestive inquiry. It occurs in a speech during the debate on the second reading of the Bill in the House of Commons—

I have always (said Mr. Bright) been in favour of household suffrage, for reasons which I have often stated in this House and to other assemblies. *I believe that the solid and ancient basis of the suffrage is that all persons who are rated to some tax—the relief of the poor being the most general now—should be admitted to the franchise.* I am quite willing to admit there is one objection to that wide measure which exists, at least to some extent, in almost every franchise you can establish. At this moment, in all or nearly all our boroughs, as many of us know, sometimes to our sorrow, there is a small class which it would be much better for themselves if they were not enfranchised, because they have no independence whatever, and it would be much better for the constituency also that they should be excluded, and there is no class so much interested in having that small class excluded as the intelligent and honest working man. I call this class the residuum, which there is in almost every constituency, of almost hopeless poverty and dependence.

The words in italics convey the general principle on which Mr. BRIGHT believes the electoral law should be founded, "all persons who are rated to some tax," he does not say all *men*, nor all *male* persons, but all *persons* who are in this condition should be admitted to the franchise. To this rule he allowed one exception. He desired to exclude the "residuum" which there is in almost every constituency "of hopeless poverty and dependence." Now we should like to ask Mr. BRIGHT did he mean, or does he mean to include in this residue of persons in hopeless poverty and dependence, who were to be denied the protection of the suffrage—the women householders and ratepayers in boroughs and counties? Mr. BRIGHT gave an answer once, when he voted with Mr. MILL for their admission to the franchise, an answer in accordance with the principles laid down in his speech; and we trust that his influence may be exerted in the same direction when members of the Cabinet are engaged in the discussion of the next proposal for the extension of the principle of household suffrage.

#### LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY.

(Conclusion.)

Mr. STEPHEN appears to base his argument on the general proposition that the law or the Legislature ought to take a survey of all sorts and conditions of men, to observe whether there is any actual inequality in their relations or conditions, and whenever it finds any existing inequality it should "recognise that fact," by legislation based on the inequality, and designed to perpetuate it. We do not know whether Mr. STEPHEN is or was an advocate of negro slavery, but the arguments he advances for the maintenance of the subjection of women would

have applied equally well to the maintenance of slavery in the United States. He might have harangued the Abolitionists in the style he uses about Mr. MILL'S claim for equal rights for women. "Ingenious people may argue "about anything, but all the talk in the world will never "shake the proposition that [white men] are stronger than "[negroes] in every shape. They have greater muscular "and nervous force, greater intellectual force, and greater "vigour of character. This general truth has led to a "division of labour between [white men] and [negroes] the "general outline of which is as familiar as the general outline of the differences between them. These are the "facts, and the question is whether the law and justice of "man ought to recognise this difference."

Mr. STEPHEN grossly misrepresents Mr. MILL'S doctrine by the gloss which he intrudes into it. He speaks of "Mr. MILL'S doctrine that the law of the strongest, *or the law of force*, has been abandoned in these days." The words in italics are an interpolation which alter the meaning of the doctrine. Mr. MILL'S words are—"We "now live in a state in which the law of the strongest "seems to be entirely abandoned as the regulating principle of the world's affairs"—a very different proposition from that which Mr. STEPHEN combats. We understand Mr. MILL to mean that the state of society in which the law of the supremacy of the will of the strongest individuals over the lives and the wills of the weaker members has given place to a state of society in which the force of law is supreme alike over the strong and the weak. The maintenance of personal rights no longer depends on personal strength, but on the force of the law. Mr. MILL maintains that the subjection of women is the relic of a condition of things in which law, or the collective force of society, was weak, and individuals were strong, and that it is unsuited to a state of society in which the law has irresistible force, and the individual is powerless before the law. In days of old a powerful noble or an audacious bandit not unfrequently openly and successfully defied the power of the law and the Government. In these days there is no safety for the law breaker, save in concealment or flight. The illustrations Mr. STEPHEN has given by way of confuting the doctrine he foists on Mr. MILL do in fact so admirably confirm that on which he really founds his claim for the enfranchisement of women that we give them here. He illustrates the state of society, which Mr. MILL calls "the law of the strongest," by the condition of Scotland in the fourteenth century, as portrayed in SCOTT'S novel "The

Fair Maid of Perth." "My name," says one of the characters, "is the Devil's Dick, of Hellgarth, well-known in Annandale for a gentle Johnstone. I follow the stout Laird of Wamphray, who rides with his kinsman the redoubted Lord of Johnstone, who is banded with the doughty of Earl Douglas, and the earl, and the lord, and the laird and I, the esquire, fly our hawks where we find our game, and ask no man whose ground we ride over." Mr. STEPHEN says that the first impression on comparing this spirited picture with the Scotland we all know is that the fourteenth century was entirely subject to the *law of force*, and that Scotland in the nineteenth century had ceased to be the theatre of force at all. We say that the impression, from Mr. MILL's point of view, would be that in the fourteenth century Scotland was subject to the *law of the strongest*, "the good old rule, the simple plan, that those should take who had the power, and those should keep who can," and that in the nineteenth century, the reign of the strongest had given place to the reign of law. Under the first rule women could not have assured to them equal rights with men, because they have not equal personal strength to maintain them. Under the second rule women can have equal rights secured to them with men, because the maintenance of right assured by law does not depend in any way on personal strength. Mr. STEPHEN says, "Look a little deeper, and this impression" (*i.e.*, the impression that Scotland in the fourteenth century was subject to the law of force, and that Scotland in the nineteenth century has ceased to be the theatre of force at all) "is as false, not to say childish, as the supposition that a clumsy row-boat, manned by a quarrelsome crew who can neither keep time with their oars nor resist the temptation to fight among themselves, displays force, and that an ocean steamer which will carry a townful of people to the end of the earth at the rate of three hundred miles a day so smoothly that, during the greater part of the time, they are unconscious of any motion or effort whatever, displays none." The fact that a supposition is childish ought to be a guarantee even to Mr. STEPHEN that a reasoner like Mr. MILL never could have made it. The simile is another apt illustration of the doctrine really maintained by Mr. MILL. While the motive power of the ship of the State was vested in individual rowers, and the direction of the voyage determined by the greatest number of the strongest arms, without reference to law or reason, it is evident that women, however deeply interested in the result of the venture, could have exercised no effective control over the guidance

of the craft. But in the case of the ocean steamer owned, say, by a company of shareholders of both sexes, whose voice in the direction of the voyage is determined, not by the degree of physical strength, but by the amount of the shares they hold, women shareholders could exercise power on exactly the same terms, and at neither greater nor less disadvantage, than men.

Mr. STEPHEN says, "The force which goes to govern the Scotland of these days is to the force employed for the same purpose in the fourteenth century what the force of a line-of-battle ship is to the force of an individual prize-fighter. The reason why it works so quietly is that no one doubts either its existence or its crushing superiority to any individual resistance which could be offered to it." We recognise this fact with gladness, for it is the basis of the possibility of the recognition of the equal rights of women and men before the law. Let the collective moral and physical force of the whole community of men and women be organised in support of laws which declare equal personal rights to all human beings, and the laws so supported will prove adequate to assure and protect in the exercise of these rights even the weakest man, woman, or child in the community, and to repress the usurpation of lawless power by the strongest baron who might awake out of a Rip Van Winkle's sleep in the belief that he still lived in the good old times.

There are many passages in Mr. STEPHEN'S book which convey the impression that he thinks the change that has taken place in society since the days of the "gentle Johnstone" a matter for regret. Apparently he does not think political power worth having unless a man can grab a large share of it, and use it in his own way. Speaking of the recent extension of the suffrage he says, "we have succeeded in cutting political power into very little bits, which with our usual hymns of triumph we are continually mincing, till it seems not unlikely that many people will come to think that a single man's share of it is not worth having at all." He says again, "Political power has changed its shape, but not its nature. The result of cutting it up into little bits is simply that the man who can sweep the greatest number of them into one heap will govern the rest. The strongest man in some form or other will always rule." We may admit this last proposition while giving an emphatic denial to the first. Granted that under any form of representative government the strongest man will always rule, there is an essential difference in the nature of the political power exercised by a representative and a despotic

ruler. The difference is occasioned by that same sweeping process which Mr. STEPHEN dismisses so unceremoniously. When political power is distributed in very little bits over a large number of persons, the bits cannot be swept into a heap by force, even by the strongest ruler. He must give or offer some advantage to the possessors of them, or must persuade them that he is the fittest man to rule, before they will cast their bits within the sweep of his brush. And if he disappoints their expectations they can disperse the heap as readily as it was swept together, and his power dissolves like summer snow. The wide distribution of political power renders its possession by the people more secure. It may be easy to rob one man of five pounds,—it would be impracticable to rob a thousand men of one penny each.

The "mincing" process by which political power has been sub-divided and spread over so wide an area, and so many classes and interests, both facilitates and necessitates the distribution of a share to women. It facilitates it, because under the conditions on which it is dispensed it is easy to give to women an equality of political rights, without giving them such an actual share in the government as would seriously interfere with the existing order of things, or have the effect of superseding the general conduct of the affairs of government by men. Even under universal suffrage it is probable that the greatest amount of actual political work would continue to be done by men, at least for a long time to come. Under household suffrage, where the men voters so greatly outnumber the women, there would not be the slightest probability of the disturbance of the present method of government. The extension can therefore be made without inconvenience and without risk.

The general distribution of political power necessitates the giving of a share to women, because every extension of the franchise to classes hitherto excluded lowers and weakens the status of the classes which remain out of the pale. Agricultural labourers in counties, and women householders everywhere, are now excluded from influence over the Government. They possess none of those "little bits" of political power which those who would govern the country need to sweep into a heap by means of persuasion, and offers of just measures and legislative protection. The larger the body of unrepresented persons in the country, the stronger is that body. If the unrepresented body consists of two distinct classes having interests not always in common, and sometimes apparently antagonistic, as in the classes of employers and employed, it is evident that

if one class is admitted to the safeguards of representation the one left out is in a worse position than before. It has obtained another master in place of a fellow-sufferer, and its interests will have less chance than ever of being considered, as they will have to withstand the rivalry of those belonging to the class just admitted to a share of these magical and all-potent "bits" of political power.

It is because each "bit" is so small that it is safe to assign a bit even to the uneducated and indifferent elector. No man or woman, however stupid or silly, could do much mischief with the infinitesimal share of power comprised in his or her particular "bit." It is perhaps for this reason that so many intelligent women and men are slow to appreciate the value of a vote. Because the mere possession and occasional exercise of a vote seems a small thing in itself, is actually an infinitesimal factor in the sum of most person's experience, they imagine that it is an equally unimportant matter to the interests of a class. One drop is an infinitesimal item in a shower, yet it would not be safe to say that the shower is unimportant because each drop composing it is a very small thing. It matters little or nothing personally to any individual woman whether she has a vote or not. It is of vital consequence to the interests of women as a class that they should have representative government.

We have limited our remarks on Mr. STEPHEN'S book to those portions having especial reference to the enfranchisement of women. But it is not only liberty for women which Mr. STEPHEN deprecates; he seems also averse to the application of the principle of liberty to men. In commenting on "the opinion that laws which recognise any sort of inequality between human beings are mere vestiges of the past, against which as such there lies the strongest of all presumptions" he takes exception to "the assumption that the progress of society is from bad to good; that the changes of the last few centuries in our own, and in other leading nations of Western Europe, have been changes for the better," and while not altogether denying it, he says he cannot assent to it. "Even if the inequality between men and women is a vestige of the past, and likely to be destroyed by the same process that has destroyed so many other things, that is no reason for helping it on. The proper reflection may be 'the more the pity.'" "The waters are out, and no human force can turn them back, but I do not see why, as we go with the stream, we need sing 'Hallelujah to the river god.'" "It is useless to lament, or even to blame, the inevitable." We gather from these and similar utterances scattered through the book, first that Mr. STEPHEN considers the movement for the enfranchisement of women to be a part of the general movement of society towards the abolition of class distinctions and legal inequalities, next, that he regards, not simply the enfranchisement of women, but the stream of modern progress of which it forms a part with dislike and distrust, and, lastly, that he believes the change to be inevitable and the result of forces which no human power can withstand.

## ELECTION INTELLIGENCE.

## EXETER.

The polling for Exeter took place on December 9th, and resulted in the return of Mr. Mills. The votes were:—Mills, 2,346; Watkin, 2,025; majority, 321. Both candidates were in favour of women's suffrage. Sir Edward Watkin voted in 1867 for Mr. Mill's amendment in the House of Commons, and during his canvass repeated his adherence to the principle. Mr. Mills, in addressing a large meeting of working men on Nov. 26th, having paid a compliment to the ladies present, remarked that as they were allowed to exercise the franchise in the school board and municipal elections, he did not see why they were not also qualified for the Parliamentary franchise. (Cheers.) So far as numerical support is concerned therefore, the cause loses no vote by the change in the representation of Exeter.

## HUNTINGDON.

The election for Huntingdon took place on December 1st, and Sir J. Karslake was returned by 499 to 341 over Mr. Arthur Arnold. Mr. Baring, the late member, voted against Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill. Sir J. Karslake has not, we understand, declared his intentions distinctly as to his future conduct. Mr. Arthur Arnold is a Liberal, and a supporter of women's suffrage. His return would have been a positive gain, while that of Sir J. Karslake at the worst leave matters as they were.

## STROUD.

The death of Mr. Winterbotham causes a vacancy in the representation of Stroud. We understand that Mr. Dorington, the Conservative candidate, is, and has long been, a supporter of women's suffrage. We have no information as to the views of the Liberal candidate, Sir Henry Havelock.

## BATH.

On November 24th, Major Bousfield, the new Conservative candidate for Bath, met the members of the general committee of the Conservative Association. He delivered a brief address, in which he touched upon the principal topics of the day, giving his adherence to the principle of religious education, his opinion in favour of the abolition of the income-tax and amendment of the Licensing Act, and likewise in favour of women's suffrage. A resolution in favour of his candidature was adopted by acclamation.

## BRADFORD.

At a public meeting held in Bradford on December 20th, Mr. James Hardaker, the working-man's candidate, addressed the electors. In explaining his views on various political topics he pronounced himself in favour of extending the franchise to women. A resolution endorsing his nomination as the working-man's candidate to contest the borough at the next general election was unanimously adopted.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The annual general meeting of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage was held in the Mayor's Parlour, at the Town Hall, Manchester, on December 3rd, 1873. There was a very large attendance, which was mainly com-

posed of ladies. Mr. Thomas Thomasson, of Bolton, presided. The CHAIRMAN began by calling upon the Secretary to read the following letter, which had been received from Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P. :—

Hungerford, December 1st.

Dear Miss Becker,—I am sorry not to be present at your annual meeting, though owing to the vigorous growth of the movement in which you are engaged my help is of less consequence now than it has been on previous occasions. I notice that influential meetings are being held in almost every part of the kingdom in favour of the parliamentary representation of women, and I know of no more certain sign of the growth of opinion in the direction of the objects you have in view. I hope we are to have, before long, a new Reform Bill, giving the vote to householders in counties. In such a Bill women householders ought not to be left out in the cold, and I venture to say that a Liberal Government will find it difficult to leave them out, if in the meantime they urge their claim with an earnestness at all in proportion to the importance of the object they seek to attain.—Trusting you may have a good meeting, truly yours,

JACOB BRIGHT.

MISS BECKER also read the report of the executive committee, which has been published in another form.

The Rev. S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, treasurer, read the statement of accounts, which showed that the receipts for the year, including a balance of £915 from last year, amounted to £2,495, and the expenditure to £1,636, leaving a balance towards next season's work of £861.

The CHAIRMAN congratulated the meeting on the very satisfactory character of the report which had been submitted to them. Considering the short time that it had been in existence the success of the society had been to his mind a most extraordinary phenomenon. Still he thought that the fact that the Married Women's Property Bill in last session of Parliament had been counted out six times, because there were not forty members out of 656 who thought it worth their while to attend the discussions on the Bill, showed that the interest of Parliament in questions affecting the interests of women was not what it ought to be. When they contrasted the fact he had stated with the interest which attended the discussions in Parliament on questions relating to the Miners' Bill, Trades Unions, or the disputes between publicans and the United Kingdom Alliance, or masters and servants, they were forced to the conclusion that the absence of interest in the Married Women's Property Bill within the House of Commons arose from the fact that women had no influence in the House of Commons. It was in consequence of this fact that women were treated with neglect, and laughed to scorn, and vilified by such insolent ribaldry as that of Mr. Henry James. (Hear, hear.) The remedy was to enfranchise them, and give them the same offensive and defensive weapons as were enjoyed by other ratepayers. In former ages the long spear and the sword were the weapons of defence. In our times the defensive weapon was the Parliamentary vote, and without this it was idle, it was childish, for any individual or class to expect full justice at the hands of the Imperial Parliament. There was one very specious argument which he had heard urged against investing women with political rights—viz., that they were unable to perform certain political duties, as for instance they could not serve as soldiers. But, when they examined this argument, they found it very weak. When a man came before the revising barrister to claim his vote, he might or might not be up to the military standard; he might be 4ft. 6in. instead of 5ft. 2in.; he might have a hump back, or a wooden leg—(laughter, and "hear, hear"); but still, if he had the property and ratepaying qualification, he obtained his vote. He was

enfranchised although unfit for a soldier, and women are to remain disfranchised for the same reason, according to these objectors. (Hear, hear.) Again it was said that if women were enfranchised, they would all vote Tory. But, when a man came before the revising barrister to claim that his name should be placed upon the register he was not asked how he should vote. It was stated that women were ignorant, and unfit to exercise the duties of electors. Why were women ignorant? They were excluded from the universities and from most of the endowed schools which had been instituted by the piety and benevolence of good men in former generations; they were excluded from the medical schools. This was their position as to one end of the educational scale. At the other end of the scale he found that the Manchester School Board gave 4d. worth of education to boys, and only 3d. worth to girls. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) And then they were told that women were so ignorant that they were unfit to vote for members of Parliament. He had one simple answer to make to that objection. Women knew where they were hurt, and that was a sufficient qualification for them to vote. (Hear, hear.) There was looming in the distance some proposal of equalising the borough and county franchise. Women had a very important interest in that Bill, and must watch it closely, and see what reasons were given in the preamble of that Bill for the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer which did not also apply to the enfranchisement of women. He had had experience in his time of many foolish panics into which John Bull had fallen from time to time; the Russian war was about to annihilate us, or that France was going to invade us, or that the Pope was coming to settle amongst us—(laughter); but the most foolish panic from which John Bull had ever suffered was lest some indescribable disaster was going to fall upon him by his own daughter being enfranchised. ("Hear, hear," and applause.)

Dr. PANKHURST moved that the report be adopted. Remark upon the fact that this was the sixth annual report which had been submitted to the society, he said that what the Chairman had said would be admitted by all, that a movement so important, and affecting so many various interests, never made such rapid progress in the history of our country as this movement had done. The report was a record of vigorous work done in all the known directions by which public opinion was either formed, directed, or applied. What were the tests which were generally applied in order to understand how the public mind was affected towards matters coming before Parliament? and what did these tests indicate with regard to the question of women's suffrage? In the first place, the vote upon Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill in the House of Commons last year was the largest vote recorded, and there was upon that occasion the smallest majority that had ever been obtained against the Bill. What plainer evidence could be presented as to the tendency of the mind of Parliament upon this question? When Mr. Disraeli wrote a famous letter to his friend upon a particular election, he did so upon the assumption that the elections which had taken place from time to time to fill up the vacancies caused by death were tending to show the current of public opinion in a certain direction. He did not know any more signal and striking illustration of the progress of a movement than was supplied by this view of the case in regard to women's suffrage. There had been 16 interim elections in respect of seats in which opponents of the measure had formerly sat in Parliament. If they had got a majority in the case of these elections, that would have been an evidence of marked progress. But the case stood thus. In seven of these instances men had been returned who were plainly and openly friends of the movement, and not one had been returned in respect of

these elections who had avowed himself an opponent. Was not that most conclusive testimony as to the state of public feeling in the country? If there had been any great question before the country about which such arguments and illustrations could be offered there was not a man who called himself a politician, and no member of a great party, who would not see that a great question was about to take legislative effect. Then there were 138 constituencies ranged in support of this measure, and with this success he thought they had every reason to be thankful. He granted that the question was liable to sentimental forms of attack or defence, but their noble and admirable leader, Mr. Jacob Bright, had never discussed the question on such grounds, but had always advocated the question on the broad grounds of public justice and public expediency, and what was best for the country and the humanity within it. He felt, therefore, that when on the basis of the highest grounds of argument and appeal so large a result had been attained, there was no one present, and no one whom the report of these proceedings would reach, who would not agree in the conviction that very soon they should see their object accomplished, and their Bill placed upon the statute book. (Applause.)

The Rev. T. GASQUOINE seconded the resolution.

Mr. CHARLEY, M.P., in supporting the resolution, said he should treat the question before them from a Conservative standpoint. Miss Becker had read the names of many Conservative statesmen who had voted in favour of the Bill which had been introduced into Parliament. He thought he should say that those Conservative members had not voted for the Bill for party considerations, but simply on principle. (Applause.) They might not possibly agree with his premises, but they would no doubt agree with his conclusions, viz., that the Legislature ought to grant female suffrage. That was the principle of the Reform Act of 1867—that those who bore the burden of the State ought to enjoy its benefits. He meant by burden—the pecuniary burden. Reference had been made to an objection which had been frequently made against female suffrage, on the ground that women did not go forth to war and act the part of soldiers. The argument might be briefly stated thus—that military service was one of the burdens of the State, and that women did not undertake military duty. But he denied that the State threw upon the citizen the burden of military service. If a citizen enlisted in the army he did so of his own free will, for thank God, there was no conscription in this land of liberty. That objection therefore fell to the ground. A similar objection was raised with respect to serving on juries, but women did not serve on juries. They were expressly exempted by the legislature, and so was a large portion of the male population. That argument also failed. He thought that in treating this question of female suffrage at the present time it was a mistake to introduce the topic of manhood suffrage. (Applause.) As a Conservative member of Parliament, he considered he was thoroughly justified, and also logically justified, in recording his vote in favour of the enfranchisement of property owners irrespective of sex. (Applause.)

The motion was then adopted.

Dr. JOHN WATTS moved a vote of thanks to the members who had supported the Bill.

Miss BECKER seconded the motion, and the resolution was adopted.

On the motion of Mr. JOSEPH CROOK (Bolton), seconded by Miss ALICE WILSON, the executive committee was appointed, and afterwards, Dr. Watts having taken the chair, on the motion of the Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL, seconded by the Rev. B. GLOVER, a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Thomasson, for presiding, and to the Mayor for the use of the parlour.—*Abridged from the Manchester Examiner and Times.*

## PLYMOUTH.

## GREAT DEMONSTRATION IN SUPPORT OF MR. BRIGHT'S BILL.

A public meeting in favour of the extension of the franchise to women, was held at the Mechanics' Institute, Plymouth, on November 25th, 1873, when the hall was crowded in every part by a most enthusiastic audience. Mr. Isaac Latimer occupied the chair. Resolutions were moved and supported by Mr. J. Nicholson, Mr. W. R. D. Gilbert, Miss Beedy, Miss Biggs, the Rev. C. Croft, Mr. Bishop, Mr. H. H. Whiffles, and carried unanimously.—The *Western Daily Mercury* contained an extended report of the proceedings.

## TAVISTOCK.

A largely attended meeting of both sexes of the inhabitants of Tavistock, was held in the Town Hall, on November 26th, to hear addresses on the question of "Women's Suffrage" from Miss Beedy, M.A., and Miss Caroline Biggs, two representatives of the Bristol and West of England branch of the National Society for the enfranchisement of women. The chair was occupied by R. Sleman, Esq., and resolutions were moved and supported by the Rev. W. J. Tait, Mr. T. W. Greenfield, Miss Beedy, Miss C. A. Biggs, Rev. G. W. Joyce, and Mr. Straker, and carried unanimously.—A very full report of the meeting was given in the *Tavistock Gazette*.

## BARNSTAPLE.

## GREAT MEETING IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

On November 28th a meeting in aid of the movement for securing the Parliamentary franchise for women possessing the property qualification was held in the Guildhall, Barnstaple, which was densely crowded by a most respectable audience. The meeting was held in connection with the Bristol and West of England Women's Suffrage Society. The Mayor (Mr. T. May) took the chair, and there were on the platform a number of ladies and gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood. Before the proceedings commenced there was some little disorder caused by the insufficiency of the accommodation for the vast number who struggled to obtain admittance. As it was, hundreds had to go away disappointed. The usual resolutions were supported by the Rev. H. J. Bull, the Rev. Mr. Stevens, Miss Beedy, Mr. Blackwell, and Miss Biggs, and carried unanimously. The *North Devon Herald* contained a very full report of the speeches, and a leading article in which ample justice was done to the ability of the ladies who advocated the cause.

## MARLBOROUGH.

The Town Hall was crowded to excess on December 4th, on the occasion of a meeting to consider this question, promoted by the Bristol and West of England Society. The deputy-mayor (Mr. T. Harrison) occupied the chair, and was supported on the platform by Miss Beedy, Miss Caroline Biggs, the Rev. J. S. Thomas (Bursar of Marlborough College) Mr. F. Storr, and Mr. C. Sankey. Amongst the audience occupying the reserved seats were Mrs. Farrar, Mrs. Storr and party, Mrs. Thomas and party, Mr. R. E. Price, Rev. J. and Mrs. Parr, Rev. F. H. and Miss Bond, Mr. W. E. Mullins, Misses Preston, Miss Bullock and Mrs. J. B. Maurice, Rev. S. C. Voules, Mr. C. W. Bourne, Mr. W. Mansell, Mr. A. H. Beesly, Rev. C. E. and Mrs. Thorpe, Mr. Richardson, Mr. F. E. Thompson, Rev. H. A. James, Rev. A. G. and Mrs. Bleek, Rev. S. Featherstone, Mr. C. Dixon, Mr. Coddington, Mr. A. M. and Misses May, Mrs. and Miss Day, Miss Hammond, Mrs. Harrison, Mr. C. B. May, Mr. and Mrs. White, Mr. and Mrs. Fewster (Axford),

Mr. Keable (Manton), Mr. and Mrs. Goody, Mr. Merrick, Mr. Morrison, Mrs. Jones, Mr. Pinniger (Ogbourne), Mr. and Mrs. Foster, Mrs. Bane, Mr. Baverstock, Mr. Adey, Mr. Duck, Mr. Chivers, Mr. Norris, Mr. Froome, Mr. Alexander, and a large number of other ladies and gentlemen, including many members of the college.—After some remarks by the chairman, the first resolution was moved by Mr. S. Torr, B.A., of Marlborough College, seconded by Miss Beedy, and declared carried. Mr. J. D. Rogers then proposed as an amendment the insertion of the word "not" in the motion.—The Rev. S. J. Thomas moved the adoption of a petition, which was seconded by Miss Caroline Biggs.—The Chairman then put the motion to the meeting, and there being about an equal number of hands either way, declared it duly carried. There were loud protests at this, and loud shouts of "No, no." The Chairman consequently asked for a second test, which he said was not successful to the motion, there being a small majority against it.—The amendment to the first motion was then seconded by Mr. A. K. Butterworth, and the chairman proceeded to put the first motion again.—The Rev. A. G. Bleek, though opposed to the amendment, said in fairness it should be put first. The chairman then put the amendment, when such a large majority from all parts of the house held up their hands that he declared it carried without asking for those in the negative. The Chairman announced that any member wishing to sign the petition might do so at the office of the *Marlborough Times*.—Mr. Sankey moved and Miss Beedy seconded a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was acknowledged by him, and the proceedings, which had lasted three hours, then terminated. The *Marlborough Times* gave a very full report of the meeting, from which we have extracted the foregoing particulars.

NOTE.—We understand that the speakers who opposed the resolution were the sixth form boys from Marlborough College, whose comrades mustered in sufficient numbers to support them in their opposition. We are informed that their proceedings were not considered to be in accordance with the etiquette of the College, and that they were not approved of by the masters. Also that the youths themselves now regret the part they took, and desire to make amends. We should therefore not have called attention to their doings had it been possible to avoid it without conveying the impression that public opinion among the adult inhabitants of Marlborough is less advanced on our question than in other places.

## TIVERTON.

A meeting, under the auspices of the Bristol and West of England Society, was held at the Athenæum on Friday evening, 28th November, in support of the question of women's suffrage. The hall was crowded. The chair was occupied by R. F. Loosemore, Esq., and there were on the platform Miss Beedy, Miss Caroline Biggs, and Miss Scott, of Clifton. After some remarks by the chairman, the usual resolutions were moved and supported by Miss Beedy, Miss Scott, and Miss Caroline Biggs. During the addresses there was some confusion.—The Chairman asked if any person had any remarks to make before he put the resolution.—Mr. Dyer said: I think the place of the women is at home, and not in Parliament.—The Chairman asked Mr. Dyer to propose a resolution if he wished to do so, and he said, "I propose that the ladies remain at home." (Loud applause.)—A Mr. Perham then stood on a seat in the body of the hall and proposed as an amendment to the resolution given from the chair: "That it is unwise and inexpedient at the present time to call upon Government to enfranchise women until the great minister has had time for the completion of the assimilation of the borough and county franchise." (Hear, hear.)—Mr. T. Dyer said he

would second the amendment.—The Chairman then put the amendment and resolution, and the latter was carried by a large majority.—Miss Beedy proposed, and Miss Scott seconded, a cordial vote of thanks to the chairman for his kindness in presiding, which was carried with acclamation, and Mr. Loosemore having acknowledged the compliment, the proceedings terminated.—Abridged from the *Tiverton Gazette*, which gave an extended report of the proceedings.

## ACTON.

A public meeting was held in the Lecture Hall, Acton, under the presidency of Mr. Hunter. Resolutions in favour of the Bill were supported by Miss Helena Downing, Mr. J. H. Levy, and Mr. Geo. Sims. A speech in opposition was made by Mr. Deans, and answered by Mr. Dexter, but the resolution was carried by a considerable majority. The resolution adopting the petition was unanimously passed on the motion of Miss Fenwick Miller, seconded by Mr. Shearer.

## SCOTLAND.

## HAWICK.

A public meeting was held in Exchange Small Hall, Hawick, on October 21st, Mr. John Wilson, of Ladylaw, in the chair, when an address was delivered by Miss Stuart, of Balgonie. Resolutions were moved by the Rev. Mr. Muir, Councillor Ewen, Mr. James Douglas, and Mr. David Watson, and agreed to unanimously.

## EDINBURGH.

The series of district meetings in Edinburgh has been continued as follows:—On December 1st a meeting was held in the Lancastrian School, Lavie Street. Bailie Marshall presided, and Miss Ella Burton delivered an address, in which she replied to the arguments brought forward by the opponents of the rights of women. A resolution adopting a petition was moved by Miss Taylour, seconded by Miss McLaren, and carried unanimously. On the motion of Councillor Wellstood, a cordial vote of thanks was awarded to Miss Burton for her address, and a similar compliment to Bailie Marshall for presiding brought the proceedings to a close.

On December 3rd a meeting was held in Ponton Street Hall. Councillor Millar occupied the chair, and, after a few remarks, introduced Mrs. Masson to the meeting. That lady gave a short address, in which she advocated the right of women, who were rated for taxes, having a voice in the choosing of representatives for the Town Council and Parliament. At the conclusion Mrs. Stephen Wellstood, seconded by Miss Ella Burton, proposed a resolution to the effect that ratepayers should not be excluded from electoral rights on the ground of sex, and that the meeting petition in favour of Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill. The motion was carried by acclamation.

On December 5th a public meeting, under the auspices of the Edinburgh National Society for Promoting Women's Suffrage, was held in London Road U. P. Church. Mr. Hugh Rose occupied the chair, and, notwithstanding the unfavourable weather, there was a large attendance. Mrs. Masson delivered a spirited address in favour of women's suffrage, after which a resolution was proposed by Mrs. McLaren, seconded by Miss Wightman, and unanimously agreed to, by which the meeting pledged itself to support Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill. Votes of thanks to the ladies who had taken part in the meeting, and to the chairman closed the proceedings.

A meeting was held, on December 8th, in Mr. McLaren's schoolroom, Hamilton Place, Councillor Crichton presiding. Mrs. Stephen Wellstood delivered a short address, in which she

advocated the right of women to possession of the suffrage, and afterwards a resolution was passed in favour of the movement.

A meeting was held, on December 11th, in the Council Chambers, Councillor Buchanan in the chair. A lecture was delivered by Mrs. Masson, and at its conclusion a motion in favour of Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill, proposed by Mrs. Stephen Wellstood, and seconded by Miss Walker, was unanimously carried.

## LETTERS FROM MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

The following letters have been addressed by members in reply to memorials, adopted at public meetings of their constituents, urging them to support Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill:—

From the Right Hon. Sir Stafford Northcote, M.P.

Pynes, Exeter, December 1st, 1873.

My dear Sir,—I have to thank you for your letter of the 29th November, enclosing a copy of the resolution passed at the recent meeting at Tiverton in favour of women's suffrage. I have long been of opinion that women possessing the necessary qualification as ratepayers ought to be admitted to the franchise; and I have voted and shall continue to vote for such admission.—I remain, faithfully yours,

STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE.

R. P. Loosemore, Esq., Tiverton.

From the Right Hon. W. N. Massey, M.P.

96, Portland Place, 1st December, 1873.

Dear Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, accompanying a memorial signed by you in pursuance of a resolution adopted at a public meeting at Tiverton, of which you were chairman. I shall, of course, consider the memorial with the respect to which any expression of opinion by any portion of my constituents is entitled. I am not unfavourable to the extension of the suffrage to women; and if I have not hitherto supported the movement in that direction, I have refrained from a doubt whether such a boon would be acceptable to our countrywomen. I do not think it desirable to force political privileges on a class unwilling to receive them; but when I am satisfied that the elective franchise is desired by women, I shall willingly assist them in obtaining it.—Yours faithfully,

W. N. MASSEY.

R. P. Loosemore, Esq., Tiverton.

From Lord Arthur Russell, M.P.

London, December 4, 1873.

Dear Sir,—I have received the memorial which you have signed as chairman on behalf of a public meeting held at Tavistock on the 26th ult., in favour of extending to women the right of voting at parliamentary elections, and requesting me to support Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill. I regret that I cannot agree with the views expressed in the memorial. On a former occasion I have explained that in my opinion the electoral franchise is not a right inherent in human nature, but a matter of expediency to be regulated solely with a view to the better government of the country. I am convinced that the admission of widows and spinsters to take part in the choice of members to serve in Parliament would only strengthen the Tory party in the House of Commons, and make all progress and improvement in our legislation more difficult and slow than they are already, and would therefore be injurious to the best interests of the nation as I understand them. By the admission of women, we should, I feel certain, introduce into our political

life that emotional element which has always proved fatal to the successful working of the parliamentary government. Holding these opinions, I cannot consistently give my support, as you desire, to Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill.—Believe me, dear sir, truly yours,

ARTHUR RUSSELL.

Richard Seeman, Esq.

#### DEPUTATION TO THE RT. HON. J. STANSFELD, M.P.

On the occasion of a visit to his constituency on December 11th, Mr. Stansfeld received a deputation of gentlemen of Halifax favourable to Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill for the removal of the electoral disabilities of women.

Mr. J. EDMONDSON, who spoke on behalf of the deputation, said that the feeling in favour of that Bill was steadily growing in Halifax, as well as in other parts of the country. The deputation asked for Mr. Stansfeld's support in the Cabinet for a clause carrying out the principles of Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill in the Bill which was about to be proposed for the extension of the borough franchise to the counties.

Mr. STANSFELD said: My answer is very simple and very easily made, and I think you have anticipated it, as you know already that my views so entirely accord with those which you have expressed, that your words may be taken to be an expression of my views. I have invariably supported the proposal to confer the right of voting upon women, and I can conceive of no principle upon which, if you confer the franchise, whether it be the parliamentary franchise or the municipal franchise, or whatever other franchise, upon householders, you should exclude those householders who happen to be women. The principal idea of household suffrage, if there be one, is that the household, of whomsoever it consists, shall be represented by the person who happens to be the head of that household, and I am at a loss to see the grounds, political or philosophical, or any other grounds you like, upon which women should be excluded who occupy that position. I am not sure that there is not a slight reaction on this question at present, because the question of women's rights to the suffrage on equal terms with men has had a somewhat unlooked-for success within late years. But, on the other hand, it is not a party question, and you will have observed that upon divisions men of both parties have voted both ways; and, therefore, without venturing to define a period within which your views may find acceptance in any measure concerning the parliamentary franchise, I think that I can venture to prophecy that the time will come, and certainly, so far as I am concerned, I am prepared to aid its advent, and I shall never vote except in that sense. (Cheers.)

The deputation then withdrew.

#### DEPUTATION TO MR. KIRKMAN HODGSON, M.P.

MR. HODGSON AND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—On December 18th a deputation from the Bristol and West of England Society for Women's Suffrage waited on Mr. K. D. Hodgson, M.P., at the College Green Hotel. The deputation consisted of the Revs. J. Caldicott, M.A., David Thomas, B.A., William James, Urjah Thomas, W. Hargrave, M.A.; Messrs. Herbert Thomas, J. P., Alan Greenwell, M.A., Joseph Bartlett, Harris, Mills Baker, Dr. Davis, LL.D.; Mrs. Charles Thomas, Mrs. Colman, Mrs. Black, Mrs. Grenfell, Mrs. Harris; Misses Estlin, Priestman, Scott, Malin, Walker, Venning, Price, Leonard, and Westland. The Rev. J. Caldicott addressed Mr. Hodgson, forcibly pressing the claims of women taxpayers to the Parlia-

mentary vote. The subject was pursued by the Rev. David Thomas in an earnest speech, and was ably enforced by many of the ladies and gentlemen present. Mr. Hodgson received the deputation with much courtesy, and gave an attentive hearing to the various speakers. He said the question appeared to him a very wide one, including the position of married women with property as well as spinsters and widows; that his belief was that only a small minority of women were desirous of having the franchise, but that if half the women burgesses of Bristol sent him a petition to present to Parliament in support of Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill he should feel bound to respect their views.

#### MR. WHITBREAD, M.P., ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a meeting in Bedford on December 17th, Mr. Whitbread, addressing his constituents with reference to the programme of the Liberal party, said:—There is one other question which could not be included in the Liberal programme of the immediate future, and that is the removal of "the electoral disabilities of women." (Hear, hear.) Several gentlemen present, I know, are ardent supporters of the fair sex and of this scheme. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I am very much opposed to that, and I should like to suggest one or two considerations to you. I take this opportunity of doing so, as I know that quite recently two very able ladies came down here, and under the presidency of my colleague, took the town by storm, so much so that for some time I could not obtain a hearing on the other side from anybody in Bedford. Gentlemen, I would suggest, however, one or two difficulties that seem to me to stand in the way. If once you admit women to vote for Members of Parliament, I invite you to consider whether you can find any logical ground to resist their claim to send a representative of their own sex if they choose. It is a serious question, that. (Laughter and cheers.) I raise it, gentlemen, with all seriousness. Just consider that there is a property qualification at the present time for an elector, but there is no qualification for a Member of Parliament. Suppose these ladies came to you and said, "We have tried one male candidate after another—we have sent Mr. Howard and Capt. Polhill to represent our views, but they cannot understand these views—(hear, hear, and laughter); then we tried someone else—Mr. O'Malley, or some other gentleman—but they do not understand us, and now we find ourselves compelled to send a lady to Parliament to represent our views and interests." (Hear, hear.) I invite you to consider for a moment upon what logical grounds, having given them the right of choosing representatives, you would bar that choice. (Prolonged cheers.) Legislation has been busy for years in removing everything that would bar the free choice of a person choosing his representative, and for my part I cannot see any possible ground. The demand they make now looks very mild, only 170,000 ladies added to the whole constituency of the kingdom. "See how well we behave in the school boards," they say; how nicely we vote for guardians." Yes, but that is a different thing for voting for Members of Parliament. That is the way they insert the thin end of the wedge. (Hear, hear.) The electoral franchise is now only proposed to be given to the unmarried ladies who are holders of property—(laughter)—but do you suppose for a moment that the married women are going to let the unmarried women be the only ones to have votes? (Prolonged laughter.) For years past there has been a strong party in Parliament, and I have acted with them, for enabling married women to hold property in their own right. (Cheers.) But when you find that in a few years there are many such women, do you think you will be able to draw the line between

#### A FEW "BOGIES."

Under this head a writer in *Abala bandhab*, a Bengali newspaper, devoted to the cause of the social emancipation of women in India, describes some of the objections and alarms raised by those who see unutterable danger in the prospect of Bengali ladies being permitted to walk the streets or drive out, even accompanied by their husbands. The "bogies" bear a curious family likeness to those which are conjured up in this country for the purpose of scaring the advocates of the political enfranchisement of women. As they appear to be instructive we quote the article:—

"In these days a great deal is said of the difficulties and dangers of making any change in the social condition of women, and many people so frighten themselves with large words that they dare not do anything to remove evils which they yet see plainly. In the attempt to give personal liberty to women there are of course great obstacles, but we think that many unreal difficulties are unduly magnified, while many which are real and most important have been ignored. Many slight obstacles have been wrapped up in such very large words, that most people cannot tell their real size.

A favourite style of description with some writers illustrates what we say; a style of by no means unfrequent adoption by those who think more of describing the difficulties than of conquering them. First the public is treated to a detailed account of the personal appearance of the women of Bengal, then the degradation of Bengali social manners towards women is depicted in such strong colours that one wonders in what illbred class of Bengali society the writers themselves have lived; then the long seclusion and social ignorance of women is dwelt upon, and finally it is asked how can such women be brought into such society? be allowed to go here and there &c., &c.? Such representations usually convey the impression that the writers consider that to allow personal freedom to women means to open on one day all the doors of all the Zenanas and to compel all the inmates to walk about in a body on the Maidan, or in the most crowded part of Calcutta. No wonder that those who believe in words, without evidence, are afraid; an army of Bengali women, such as they have been described by some of our contemporaries, would indeed be an alarming sight, but not one, we assert, which the friends of female liberty would wish to see.

This "bogie" of "thrusting upon society" all the "uneducated and unmannered" women of Bengal, is perhaps a not unnatural development of ignorant minds, in a country where so little individual liberty exists. Social restrictions and rigid uniformity of social observances are great enemies of individual freedom; so when those who are bound by the traditional customs of the country think of reform, they can only imagine all people making the same change at the same time. All their inherited traditions are opposed to the plan of putting in the thin edge of the wedge of reform by independent individuals in order to make gradual way for the whole social body; they belong to an army which prefers to march without pioneers.

These overgrown word "bogies" do a great deal of harm, for they bewilder and frighten many who are inclined to take steps to improve the condition of the ladies of their families. But suppose these well-wishers of reform did not allow themselves to be alarmed, but faced these threats of evil, they would find on examination that they usually melt into unimportance. Take the threat of the dangers of the simultaneous emancipation of all women. It is true that there would be great inconvenience and possible danger of annoyance to the ladies themselves, if such a thing happened as that they all suddenly emerged from the Zenanas. But is such a thing possible? It is a mere empty stringing of words, a threat of a danger

the married and the unmarried? Only fancy, we may not have two married ladies next time. (Much laughter.) My colleague will bring you down two unmarried young ladies, who from the highest possible motives are about to sacrifice their political life upon the hymeneal altar—(protracted laughter)—and here are those creatures, man's "political equals" before marriage, about, of their own accord, to be made man's slaves afterwards. (Renewed laughter.) I could find no argument to resist their appeal, nor do I think that you would have the heart to oppose it. (Laughter.) Besides the householder, we have got the £10 lodger. He is an elector now, and can you refuse the parliamentary franchise to a lady £10 lodger? (Laughter.) I don't think you could. If you let in the lady householder and the lady property holder, you must let in the lady lodger; and it must be obvious to you that if you give the franchise at all you must give it on terms of perfect equality with the men. That would do very well for this next Parliament, perhaps; but I invite you to consider for a moment whether in giving the suffrage to the householder and the £10-holder we have really reached finality, and whether a generation hence with the country thoroughly educated and more used to political questions it won't be found both wise and necessary to make a still further extension, out of women as well as men. There is no going back. (Hear, hear.) Give them now their demand for 170,000 and you will see how it will grow to two millions. Well, we have got so far, and some may say—"What is the harm?" Suppose you have an equal number of women voters, or at least a very large proportion of them, on the register. I am not going to decline to give votes to women on the ground that it would be hostile to the interests of the Liberal party or that it would be throwing too much power into the hands of the different churches, or any reason of that sort. I object to it on the ground that they are unfitted by nature—(no, no)—to perform many of the first duties which the State has a right to call upon a constituency to perform. I will pursue that for a moment to one of its possible consequences. Is it not conceivable that many questions might arise which might sharply divide the women electors from the men—(hear, hear, and laughter)—or that they should think fit, at the instigation of some few fanatics of our own class, to curtail our liberties? (Much laughter.) If they should try once again to bind Samson, Samson would not like it—(cheers and laughter)—and Samson would readily break those bonds, and we should learn too late in our complex civilization that when you have physical weakness on one side and physical strength and wealth on the other, intelligence being granted equal, it is on physical strength at last that every State depends for its stability. (Cheers.) I know they say it is so very hard that because they cannot be soldiers and sailors we should shut them out from politics. I say that is one of the reasons against them, because it is one of the first duties a State can call upon you to perform. (Hear, hear.) It is very pleasant to be on the side of the fair sex—(hear, hear)—and to come here and make eloquent appeals for them, but though I do not go the whole length with their claims, I believe it is a noble thing to aim at removing some of those inequalities before the law which at present prevail. (Hear, hear.) I will give every help I possibly can to those engaged in that task. I will welcome ladies into every profession and every calling in which I think they can usefully employ themselves; and if ever this question comes to be really put to the nation I believe that woman will speak out in her own language and emphatically condemn the proposition. You will say this is rather a negative programme of the Liberal party.

#### WOMEN AS FARMERS.

The second prize for the best managed farm, and given by the Derbyshire Agricultural Society, this year was won by a lady, Mrs. Mary Adcock, Barnes Heath, Appleby, near Derby.

which could not occur. For even if all men agreed that from a certain day all the restrictions imposed by custom on the personal liberty of women should be removed, does anyone imagine that all the feminine population of Calcutta would at once avail itself of its newly-acquired freedom, and that every Zenana lady would, like a prisoner set free, rejoice in strolling alone down (*e.g.*) the Chitpore Road, or the Secretary's Walk? We doubt if the whole city of Calcutta could produce one woman of such curiosity and courage. Long seclusion has destroyed the appreciation of liberty, and it is by no means the authority of male relatives only which secludes women. Those who have long lost the use of liberty do not know its value; and there is no more danger of all Bengali women at once making a radical change in habits and customs than there is hope of all Bengali men at once acknowledging the desirability of some change.

Now although we do not think it desirable or possible that in Bengal all women should at once enter into general society and enjoy personal freedom, yet we know that there are many who could use such freedom with propriety and benefit to themselves. We admit that so long as there are such very uncivilised beings at large, as the writers we have already alluded to describe; it is desirable that ladies should not go about unprotected, but we fancy a husband or a father might be a sufficient guard and protector. We are sure that there are not a few gentlemen in Bengal who would with pleasure see their wives and daughters avail themselves of complete liberty of action, if they were not a little under the sway of "big words." Common sense has often a hard fight with tall talk, and in no question is the battle more obstinate than in matters relating to the position of women.

It is not to be wondered at that a man has to wait for a long time, till his courage rises to the height necessary to take his wife or daughter for a drive, when such a matter of fact proceeding takes in words some such expression as "emancipation," or "rescue from the gloomy dungeons of the Zenana." To support such words a man must assume a valiant attitude, put on his armour of defensive words; he is about to do what some writers call taking a decisive step in the path of female emancipation, and it therefore behoves him to be courageous and cautious. Would not some of his difficulties seem less if he called them "taking a ticca?" Is it really a hard task to drive with one's wife? and does it require much courage to introduce to her a few chosen friends?

We cannot help thinking that if a man does not fidget himself about the opinion of others, but does for the ladies of his family just what his circumstances enable him to afford, we should see a national development of social custom, and Bengal would be saved the reproach (if it is one) of being able only to imitate when she makes changes. If individuals are not able to follow out their own plan of comfort and convenience, without a deluge of criticism, how is the nation, which is made up of those individuals, to become independent and consequently national. A man can do no good so long as he allows himself to be tyrannised over by the long and ugly words of his neighbours. When he has set himself free from their influence, by following the commands of his own conscience, he will find that he meets then the real difficulties of the question of female improvement. Perhaps he asks some friends to his house and introduces them to his wife or daughter. She looks uninteresting, is shy, silent, awkward, and he is disappointed at the failure of his good attempt to give her amusement and experience. He need not be discouraged by this however, for it is only the result of inexperience and ignorance, and is quite common among the inexperienced and ignorant of other countries where women enjoy complete social freedom. But

though he need not be discouraged, this will direct him clearly to his real task—education. He may encourage the use of the most complete freedom of action, but he will find, if he does not educate them, that his wife and daughters are still slaves to ignorant ideas, still swayed by superstition, by reverence for worthless things, and unworthy persons; in short they are mentally fettered. Compared with the task of removing this evil, the task of giving liberty of action dwindles to an insignificant detail;—it is a useful means of pleasure and amusement, and a powerful aid to education, but it is a trifle compared with the all-important education itself. It is education alone which can give mental freedom, that freedom which "resists the bondage of habit, which does not mechanically repeat itself and copy the past, which does not live on its old virtues, which does not enslave itself to precise rules, but which forgets what is behind, listens for new and higher monitions of conscience, and rejoices to pour itself forth in fresh and higher exertions." (W. E. Channing.) If a man sets before himself and those who are dear to him such a standard of mental freedom as is described in the grand series of definitions from which we have quoted the above passage, he will soon learn the worthlessness of "big words," he will know that education is too difficult and absorbing a work to allow time for the utterance of platitudes about the difficulties of emancipation, for he will have put his hand to a work which dwarfs all others to insignificance and annihilates wordiness. He will also soon see that if he can contrive to give to women an education which shall enable them to realize even partially that high ideal of mental freedom, there will be no need to make great efforts for personal liberty, it will follow as naturally as the shadow follows the sun. With such mental freedom, restriction of freedom of action will be almost impossible."

### Obituary.

Mr. W. H. P. GORE LANGTON, M.P.—We have to deplore the loss of one of the earliest, the most earnest and influential supporters of women's suffrage in the House of Commons. Mr. W. H. P. Gore Langton, M.P. for West Somerset, died at his residence, Newton Park, Bristol, on December 12th. He was born in 1824, and elected for West Somerset in 1851, which constituency he represented until 1859, and from 1863 uninterruptedly until his death. He voted for Mr. Mill's amendment in 1867, and has since supported Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill in every division in the House of Commons. In April last he presented to Mr. Disraeli the memorial from women of Great Britain respecting the franchise, and through him the right honourable gentleman returned his reply to the ladies. Mr. Gore Langton married in 1846, the Lady Anna Eliza Mary, only daughter of the late and sister of the present Duke of Buckingham, heiress presumptive to the Earldom of Temple. He has left by her, with other issue, a son and successor, Mr. William Stephen Gore Langton, a magistrate for Somersetshire, who was born in the year 1847, and is married to a daughter of Sir Graham Montgomery, M.P., of Stobo Castle, Peeblesshire. Though not taking an active share in public matters, Mr. Gore Langton was greatly esteemed in the city of Bath, and in the neighbourhood of Newton St. Loe and Hatch Beauchamp, where he possessed extensive estates, and his death in the prime of life has therefore caused widespread regret.

SIR JOSEPH COWEN, M.P.—Another of our Parliamentary veterans has departed in the person of Sir Joseph Cowen, who died on December 20, at the age of 73. He was first elected for Newcastle in 1865, and voted with Mr. Mill, on Women's Suffrage, in 1867. He has since then regularly voted for Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill, and we regret the loss in him of a steady and consistent friend to the cause.

### DEPLORABLE FLAW IN THE GREAT MASCULINE MIND.

BY FRANCES POWER COBBE.

During the recent school board elections it has been my fortune to be present at several meetings, whereof the object was to forward the claims of a lady-candidate. I have also attended other assemblies connected with the movement for the higher education of women, and in both I have observed a phenomenon worthy I think of remark. As George Eliot says: "The masculine intellect—what there is of it—is always of a superior calibre;" but yet it seems to labour under one peculiar and unconquerable peculiarity, or, as I may call it, congenital defect. It appears that no power of abstraction exists whereby a man can think of a woman except in her relation to himself. A zoologist, in studying the horse or the camel, would hardly, in these days, point to the hoofs or hump of either animal, as expressly created for the convenience of its rider, and would expatiate on the use to the latter of its apparatus for carrying water for many days in the desert without thinking it necessary to add that the final cause of the contrivance was, of course, that its master might cut it open and drink the contents whenever he happened to be thirsty. Nevertheless, where women are in question, the masculine orator never fails to point out as the first, if not the only thing really worthy of consideration, the special adaptation of the creature to domestication in the service of man, and to discuss any proposition regarding her exclusively as it bears on his own interests. On one of the occasions to which I have referred, a venerable gentleman, with a white beard, introducing an exceedingly clever lady as a candidate for a place on a School-board, expatiated for at least twenty minutes on the necessity of greater attention to the education of girls, for this sole and sufficient reason: "Ill-trained girls," he had observed, "never did sew on their husband's buttons nor attend to the boiling of their eggs for breakfast." There was some progress traceable in this old gentleman's mind, for hitherto the education of girls has been mainly opposed expressly on the ground that it would distract them from these solemn cares to know anything of history or geography, and because habits of mental order were certain to make a woman a domestic slattern. It is a certain step to find a man think that a woman may partake of the elementary education afforded under the School-board, and be even the better housewife in consequence. Still the great Button and Egg theory of the *raison d'être* of woman scarcely seems to cover the whole ground of the subject of the intellectual and moral training of a being who is generally supposed to be a responsible and immortal creature.

Again on other occasions I had the privilege of hearing several speakers of the nobler sex maintain eloquently the propriety and duty of electing ladies to the School-board, and through their means securing attention to the education of the tens of thousands of girls whose training was now neglected. It was shocking to think how little was done for girls; and why was it so shocking? Because (and at this point the orator generally testified profound emotion) because out of all those thousands, a large number would, in the natural order of things, become Wives and Mothers! As for the miserable females who would never be either a Man's wife or a Poy's mother, it was obviously not thought worth while to talk about feeding their intellects or training their hearts.

And, lastly, I have recently heard an exceedingly fluent gentleman address the students of a girls' college and their parents, and (with the thump which testifies to an orator's consciousness that he has hit the very bull's-eye of his target,)

emphatically declare that "*He* supported the higher education of women, because unless *girls* were well educated *boys* would not be so." I think after these instances, my readers (whose memories will doubtless afford many corroborating illustrations), will agree that I am right in repeating my mournful observation that among the "Obscure Diseases" of the masculine brain must be reckoned a certain abnormal inability to cogitate the subject Woman in its entirety, and as an entity *per se*. A famous German philosopher used to lead his pupils to the heights of metaphysical abstraction by desiring them first to "Think the Wall" and then to "Think the Man who thinks the Wall." It is by some mistake in this method, I apprehend, that when men are asked to think about a Woman they omit the first step, and only think the Man who thinks the Woman. This mental frailty, strange to say, is not shared by our sex. Though there would be reason enough (Heaven knows) for women to wish men to be trained to be good husbands and fathers, I have never yet heard, in the most secret conclave of petticoats, the principle laid down that it was right to teach a boy to read and write *because* it would enable him better to support his wife; or that it was important to train him healthfully and virtuously, as perhaps he might one day be a father. Nor have I ever known a school for boys glorified by women because it was probable that it might exercise a beneficial influence on the sisters of the scholars. Such curious reflections do not enter our feeble brains; nay, perhaps some of us would be ashamed to give oats to our horses and bones to our dogs exclusively for our own service, and to leave them unconcernedly to starve if they did not happen to be useful to us. Be this as it may, it seems to me that till something is done to remedy this deplorable flaw in the great masculine mind, and Dr. Forbes Winslow, or some other learned man deep in the pathology of the cerebrum, points out a remedy, we must be content to defer our hopes of the suffrage, or of any other important improvement in the condition of women.

I can only recommend, provisionally, that whenever a man betrays this symptom of imperfect cerebration in the presence of ladies he should always be courteously but firmly stopped with a warning finger pointing to the forehead "My dear sir! *Pray* do not betray that distressing defect! If you must think that women were only made for you, still do not expose yourself by openly expressing your stupendous egotism, especially on a public platform."

### "UNMASCULINE ELOQUENCE."

Under the above heading the *Times* gives the following extract from a lecture recently delivered by Mrs. Fawcett, wife of Professor Fawcett, on "Women as Educators:—" "If a woman happens to be in any way before the public, at a school board election or what not, her dress, voice, manners, and appearance are described as if they were matters of the most profound interest. What would be thought if the same treatment were accorded to a gentleman, and a newspaper paragraph running thus described his appearance on the platform? 'Mr. Jones next proceeded to expound his views on public matters to the electors. He was quietly but richly dressed in a coat of dark-blue cloth, with trousers of a lighter colour. He is about the middle height. It may interest our readers to learn that his hair is raven black and that he wears a beard and moustache. His voice is clear and musical, and, although he spoke with considerable self-possession and fluency, there is nothing unmasculine in his appearance.'"

**PETITION! PETITION! PETITION!**  
 Friends of Women's Suffrage are earnestly exhorted to begin the new year with the work of collecting signatures for the petitions to be presented on the opening of Parliament in February. Written petitions ready for signature will be supplied on application to Miss BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

**MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.**

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS RECEIVED DURING DECEMBER, 1873.

	£	s.	d.
Miss Edith Brooke	5	0	0
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E. L.	1	0	0
Mrs. Roberts	0	10	0
Mrs. Darcy	0	10	0
Miss Whitelegge	0	5	0
Miss N. Hawker	0	5	0
"A Friend"	0	5	0
Rev. Brooke Lambert	0	3	6
"A Friend" per Miss Clark Ratray	0	3	6
Mrs. Brine	0	2	6
B. Mellor	0	2	6
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Mr. Frederick James	0	10	6
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Mrs. Alfred Shipley	0	10	0
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Mr. J. G. Parkinson	0	4	0
Rev. J. J. Brown	0	2	6
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Rev. E. S. Bayliffe, B.A.	0	1	0
Mrs Bayliffe	0	1	0
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Miss ANNIE WESTLAND, Secretary.  
 Office: 53, Park Street, Bristol.

While much gratified by the largely increased support received during the last three months, the Committee strongly appeal to their friends for further aid to enable them to carry on efficiently the extensive work they have commenced.

Cheques and Post-office orders may be made payable to the Treasurer, Miss Estlin, 16, Belgrave Road, Clifton, and to the Secretary; or through Messrs. Stuckey's Banking Company, Clifton.

**CONFERENCE AT BIRMINGHAM.—A CONFERENCE** will be held at BIRMINGHAM, on January 22nd, to consider the probability of the Government introducing a new Reform Bill, with an apparent intention of excluding women from its advantages, and to protest against such exclusion. Representatives of the various societies throughout the country will be present, and the attendance of friends is invited. In the evening a GREAT MEETING will be held in the Town Hall, Birmingham. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, Esq., Mayor of Birmingham, in the chair.

**BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.**—The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of members and friends of the Society, will be held in the Victoria Rooms, on February 3rd, 1874.

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE.**

Contributions to the funds of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, 9, Berners Street, London, W., from November 28th, to December 24th, 1873.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Ladell	5	0	0
Mrs. Mylne	1	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Arnold	2	2	0
Mrs. George Sims	2	2	0
Miss Hall	2	2	0
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Mr. and Mrs. Curtis	0	2	0
Mrs. Müller	0	1	0
	£18	18	0

MARY DOWLING, Secretary.

**LADY MEDICAL STUDENTS AT EDINBURGH.**

The managers of the Edinburgh Infirmary have resolved, by a majority of 8 to 6, to refuse admittance to lady medical students at the same time as the male students to the operating theatre in the infirmary. We wonder whether the objections of the students to the presence of women in the operating theatre extend to the nurses, and if not, why not?

The female orchestra, which was so well received at Vienna during the Exhibition, composed of 45 performers, under the direction of Mdme. Armann Weinlich, is now giving concerts at the Casino, Rue Cadet.

**WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.** Edited by LYDIA E. BECKER.—Volume IV., January to December, 1873.—In coloured cover, price, post free, 1s. 10d.  
 London: Trübner and Co., 57 and 59, Ludgate Hill.  
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**SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE,** presented at the Annual General Meeting, on December 3rd, 1873. In coloured cover, price 6d.

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**PETITIONS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.**

We earnestly exhort our friends to help the cause by promoting petitions in their several localities. The following is the form recommended:—

*To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.*

*The humble Petition of the undersigned*

**SHEWETH,**  
 That the exclusion of women, otherwise legally qualified, from voting in the election of Members of Parliament, is injurious to those excluded, contrary to the principle of just representation, and to that of the laws now in force regulating the election of municipal, parochial, and all other representative governments.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Honourable House will pass the Bill entitled "A Bill to remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women."  
 And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Write out the above form without mistakes, as no word may be scratched out or interlined, and sign it on the same piece of paper, obtaining as many signatures as you can to follow. After the written heading is signed extra sheets of paper may be attached to hold more names. The petition may be signed by men and women of full age, whether householders or otherwise. Make up the petition as a book-post packet, write on the cover the words "Parliamentary Petition," and post it, addressed to the member who is to present it at the House of Commons. No stamp is required, as petitions so forwarded go post free. Write, and send along with the petition, a note (post paid) asking the member to present it, and to support its prayer.

Written headings will be supplied on application to Miss BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

**WHY WOMEN DESIRE THE FRANCHISE.**—By Miss FRANCES POWER COBBE. Price 1d.

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**THE RIGHT OF WOMEN TO EXERCISE THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISE.** By Mrs. HENRY DAVIS POCHIN. Reprinted for the National Society for Women's Suffrage, from a pamphlet published in 1855. Price threepence. To be had of the Secretary, 9, Berners-street, London, W.; or 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

**UGHT WOMEN TO LEARN THE ALPHABET?** By T. W. HIGGINSON. Reprinted from "Atlantic Essays." Price threepence. To be had of the Secretary, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

**WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.**—Edited by LYDIA E. BECKER.—This Journal is published monthly, and contains full information of the progress of the movement for removing the Electoral Disabilities of Women; accounts of public meetings, and lectures; correspondence; and original articles on the subject. It also records and discusses other questions affecting the welfare of women—such as education, employment, industrial or professional, and legislation affecting their property and personal rights. The Journal furnishes a medium of communication among the members, and a record of the work done by the different branches of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, and by other persons and societies interested in improving the condition of women. Friends of the cause are urged to endeavour to aid it by promoting the circulation of the Journal.

Price for one copy, monthly (post free for one year), 1s. 6d.  
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**WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.**—Just published, a new set of LEAFLETS, suitable for distribution at Meetings, consisting of short extracts from the speeches of the following members of Parliament:—JACOB BRIGHT, Esq., M.P., Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, Bart., M.P., E. B. EASTWICK, Esq., M.P., Professor FAWCETT, M.P., the Right Hon. GEORGE WARD HUNT, M.P., Sir GEORGE JENKINSON, Bart., M.P., Sir WILFRID LAWSON, Bart., M.P., the Right Hon. Lord JOHN MANNERS, M.P., WALTER MORRISON, Esq., M.P., P. H. MUNTZ, Esq., M.P., Dr. LYON PLAYFAIR, M.P., T. B. POTTER, Esq., M.P., Colonel SYKES, M.P., PETER RYLANDS, Esq., M.P., in favour of Women's Suffrage. Price Three Shillings per Thousand, to be had at the offices of the Society, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

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