

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

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BY POST TWOPENCE HALFPENNY.

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### TWO WOMEN.

#### CAROLINE ELIZABETH SARAH NORTON

(LADY STIRLING-MAXWELL).

Born, 1809. Died, June 15, 1877.

ONE lived for grace—one lived for good; so runs,  
In brief, the record of two women's claims,  
Whose lives, unlike, closed with close-following suns,  
Bequeathing memories diverse as their fames.

One, the famed daughter of a famous line,  
With grace and charm, with wit and beauty dowered,  
Yet on whose power to please, and will to shine,  
Some adverse star malignant influence showered.

Her bridal wreath was blent with weeds of strife:  
An ill-world's ill report, by party aimed,  
Fleshed its foul shafts in her unguarded life,  
Until fair-weather friendship shrank afraid.

And hate and envy gave their tongues free play  
On the proud soul that would not be o'er-borne,  
But strove to show brave face to bleakest day,  
And hid her wounds, and gave back scorn for scorn;

And sang her song, and smiled her smile, and stanch'd  
Her tears to strain her children to her breast,  
But death's pale blight her hope's bright blossom blanch'd,  
And left her all but lone in dark unrest.

Till time and fair life bore down ill-report,  
And grief in patience, if not peace, was lost;  
And she lived on, and sang, and held her court,  
And dwelt in memories of the loved and lost.

Still beautiful, still graceful, with her voice  
Of low, sweet music, and her gift of song;  
Tenacious of the friendships of her choice,  
Fast because wisely made as cherished long.

Truest of all, the friend who, at the last,  
Gave her marred life the shelter of his name,  
And a short sunshine o'er her evening cast,  
Denied her in the morning of her fame.

Noble of soul as beautiful, endowed  
With all that should have crowned a life with joy,—  
Well for her she has past beyond the cloud,  
Tended by faithful love, to join her boy.

Not on the heights of England's high estate,  
Where its spoilt children keep their giddy round,

#### MISS MARY CARPENTER.

Born, April 3, 1807. Died, June 14, 1877.

That other learned to weigh man and man's fate,  
Studied life's lessons and life's labour found.

But in a frugal, pure, and peaceful home,  
A place of sober learning, patient toil,  
And faith and trust in God and good to come,  
Though the ill is, the good is yet to be.

Her parents' help, her sisters', brothers' guide,  
She grew as high of heart, as mild of mood;  
With power o'er youth's rebelliousness and pride,  
As one that from her own youth up was good.

And early fixed her mind, and chose her part,  
To work in the high faith which few can feel,  
There is a spring of good in every heart,  
So you have love its fountain to unseal.

This faith it was that marked a course for her,  
And braced her for its trouble and its toil,  
Cheered her 'gainst proofs how much the best may err,  
And kept her pure as snow from taint or soil.

Out of the scaffold's shadow and the dark  
Of lives from youth up weaned of light and air,  
She sought to rescue sinners in her Ark  
Of Love that rode the Deluge of Despair.

'Twas she first drew our city waifs and strays  
Within the tending of the Christian fold,  
With looks of love, for the averted gaze  
Of a world prompt to scourge and shrill to scold.

From seeds she sowed—in season mattered not,  
Or out—for good all seasons are the same—  
Sprang new appliances, of love begot,  
Lost lives to save, and errant souls reclaim.

Nor at home only; when her hair was white  
She crossed the sea, on India to bestow  
The love that England prized at length aright,  
Following leads she was the first to show.

Not from far Pisgah only did she view  
The Promised Land, but lived its soil to tread,  
And dies bequeathing work for us to do,  
While praise and blessing crown her reverend head!—*Punch.*

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THE recent debate on the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill came to an extraordinary and unexpected conclusion. All parties were fully prepared for a division, which would have taken place in due course had the opponents of the Bill been able to maintain up to the close that calmness of demeanour and willingness to listen to reasonable argument which befitted the deliberations of a legislative assembly. But when it appeared that the half-hour which intervened between the close of Mr. BUTT'S speech against the Bill, and the period when by the rules of the House there must either be a division or an adjournment, would be occupied by a supporter of women's suffrage, the opponents, in defiance of the ordinary usage, which gives to the introducers of a measure the right of reply on the whole debate, burst into a tumultuous uproar, which effectually drowned the voice of Mr. COURTNEY, who had risen to reply to the arguments of the hon. member for Limerick. The opponents were determined to have the last word, and they had it. They howled, they yelled, they bellowed in one continuous storm of uproar for fully half an hour. Once, during a momentary lull, Mr. COURTNEY was heard to say that he did not intend to talk out the Bill, but that he did intend to be heard, on which the bellowing broke forth with renewed force and fury, and the rest of the oration was delivered, or attempted to be delivered, in dumb show. It was perhaps a natural sense of indignation which prompted Mr. COURTNEY, and those who were in consultation with him, suddenly to resolve that since those who had come to vote down the Bill were determined to balk the utterance of those who sought to set forth reasons for its adoption, they should in their turn be balked of the division for which they were clamouring so wildly. Be this as it may, the resolution was suddenly formed and executed. Mr. COURTNEY breasted the storm unflinchingly, and maintained his position till the hands of the clock told the fatal hour of a quarter to six, when by the rules of the House the debate stood adjourned, the uproar subsided, and the friends and enemies of the Bill were left to meditate on the lame and impotent conclusion

to which the unreasoning clamour had conducted them.

We do not disguise our disappointment and regret at the turn thus given to the proceedings. Although the Bill might possibly have been rejected by a larger majority than that by which it was lost last year, there was no reason to suppose that the support given to it would have shown any diminution. On the contrary, those who had been engaged in active work for the Bill during the past twelve months, and had opportunities of estimating the progress the question has made and is making in the country, had a very confident expectation that this progress would make itself manifest in the division, and that more votes would have been given for the Bill than it received last year. They had promises of support from new and unexpected quarters, and they had no reason to apprehend that any of their known supporters would desert them. They were not dismayed by the boasts of the enemy that the division was going to show that the Bill was losing numerical support, because they remembered that these confident boasts had been made on former occasions, and had always been falsified by the event. They would have accepted the larger numbers of the enemy, if such had been forthcoming, as a testimony to the strength and growth of the question, for it is only when the demand for a proposed reform assumes formidable proportions that the opponents feel it necessary to strain every nerve to defeat it. Mr. JACOB BRIGHT was fully justified in adducing, as evidence of the growth of opinion on this question out of doors, the action taken by men in the House in regard to it. "Generally," he said, "members interested in a Bill were content with giving a 'whip' for or against it, but in the present instance the House had been canvassed against this Bill with the same passionate activity as was exhibited in a small borough on the eve of an election." We believe that the growing strength of the cause would have been shown by an increased number of votes for the Bill, but the opponents, not content with the results indicated by their canvassing books, not content with their "mechanical majority" to vote it down, sought to

stamp out discussion by clamour, and appropriately clenched the argument that the basis of government is physical force and not intelligence, by pitting their united inarticulate yells against the single voice of the member who was endeavouring to move them by reason and argument. The scene must have been an edifying one to MIDHAT PASHA, who occupied a seat in the gallery for distinguished strangers, and who, as the author of the new Turkish constitution, might be supposed to have come to study in their native home the working and amenities of Parliamentary government.

AFTER Mr. JACOB BRIGHT had formally moved the second reading of the Bill, the debate was opened by Mr. HANBURY. The hon. member began by a solemn exposition of the reasons which had caused him to change his opinions in regard to the question, and he adduced the example of the right honourable gentleman the member for Birmingham, as imposing on those who were about to change sides on the question the duty of explaining to the House their reasons for the altered course. But, somehow, his efforts to copy his great original were hardly more successful than those of the frog in the fable, especially as Mr. HANBURY did not succeed, as Mr. FORSYTH pointed out, in producing a single consideration which was not familiar to all who had given attention to the subject at the time when he was a supporter of the measure. Mr. CARTWRIGHT seconded the rejection of the Bill, and Mr. FORSYTH followed with an effective speech chiefly directed to reply to Mr. HANBURY.

The O'DONOGHUE announced the curious discovery that the Bill was an "attempt to subvert the natural order of the world," and "that the attempt should be made by philosophers and wise men gave it to his mind a most comical aspect." It afforded the droll spectacle of "a man who was supposed to possess what were called brains acting in a way as if he were really a simpleton." After this, we presume that it will be in vain for Lord BEACONSFIELD, the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, and other distinguished men on both sides of the House who have supported this measure, to maintain any pretensions to political wisdom. Although they may possess "what are called brains," yet the O'DONOGHUE says they act as simpletons. But the honourable member is good enough not to laugh at this "droll spectacle." "It is only persons with very callous hearts indeed who saw anything amusing in the antics and vagaries of those who had lost their wits, or who, unfortunately, never had any." These are wise words—let our readers make their own application of

them. Mr. HOPWOOD alluded to the combined movement which had been made by certain sections of the House to crush this measure, and in the course of an able speech, took occasion to defend honourable and high-minded ladies from aspersions that had been unworthily cast upon them. Sir W. BARTELOT denied that women were in a subordinate position, and rejoiced that the right hon. gentleman the member for Birmingham had on this question exhibited "Egyptian repose." He denied the fact that one-seventh of the landowners of England were women. Mr. M'LAREN showed the great care with which the petitions were prepared, and described one which he had presented from ladies of Edinburgh, signed by about a hundred ladies, who occupied houses varying from £50 to £200 a year, in a single district of the city. To Mr. BALFOUR, who came next, must be assigned the merit of the discovery of a new objection to the Bill. He had been actively engaged in working for the admission of women to medical degrees, and he had found that among the ladies of his acquaintance there was tenfold more intensity of opposition to this proposal than to the suffrage. He therefore concluded that if women possessed the suffrage they would have prevented women from obtaining medical degrees. It is, of course, only the application of this argument that is new. It is a common and old difficulty with objectors that if women had the suffrage they would use their votes in some hypothetical manner, of which the objector disapproved, and therefore they must not have the franchise. Sir J. M'KENNA supported the Bill, and when he sat down several members rose, but all gladly gave way to Mr. HENLEY, whose re-appearance in debate after his illness was greeted with universal welcome. In a few weighty sentences the right hon. gentleman pointed out that none of the terrible results which the opponents of the present Bill anticipated had occurred in consequence of the admission of women to the lower franchise, although not only did political feeling enter into all municipal contests as much as into Parliamentary elections, but into the former were also mixed up local and personal considerations of the strongest kind. No proof whatever had been given of the assertion that if women had the Parliamentary franchise they would be taken out of their proper sphere of action. Mr. BERESFORD HOPE favoured the House with a repetition of the style of objection and of the illustrative stories he had brought forward in former years, and he was followed by Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, who, in accordance with recent usage, had reserved his speech till towards the close of

the debate. Mr. JACOB BRIGHT pointed out how impossible it was for a member to take an active part in opposing this Bill and at the same time to remain in harmony with his constituents. He had shown last year how utterly opposed to their constituents were the members for Taunton and Huddersfield, and now he could say the same of the member for Tamworth. He had received a letter from Tamworth saying that 14 out of the 16 members of the Town Council had signed a petition in favour of the Bill. Mr. JACOB BRIGHT went on to show the strong reason there is for believing that women were entitled to vote under the Act of 1867; that in various parts of the country women had been placed on the register, and had voted with the same eagerness as men; that they had laid claim in very large numbers to be placed on the register, and had defended their claims in the registration courts. They had then taken a case to the Court of Common Pleas, in the belief that women had a right to vote if the law were fairly construed. And although the the Court of Common Pleas decided against them, if it had been possible an appeal would have been carried to a higher court, when a different judgment might not improbably have been given. At present 14 per cent of the landholders of the country were women. They were now in the face of a County Franchise Bill, and would it not be most inconsistent and mischievous to enfranchise the poor and needy cultivators of the soil if they happened to be men, while excluding landowners and farmers if they happened to be women?

Mr. BUTT followed with an impassioned harangue against the Bill, composed entirely of assumptions and sentiments, such as that the Bill "violated the ordinance and intentions of God," from whom he appeared to consider that he held a brief to maintain the dispensations of Providence; that it would train women into something very different from the "ornament of the home, who shares all her husband's toils and troubles," always excepting his political troubles, if he has any. That through it her "original womanly purity" would be lost, and "he begged the House to negative a Bill which would destroy the best qualities of woman and the chivalry of man."

In spite of this terrible prediction, we have firm faith that, like the intentions of Providence, the best qualities of women and the chivalry of men rest on deeper foundations than the action of any legislative assembly, and we shall have no fears for the stability of the universe, or the maintenance of the essential conditions of human life and social order after the House of Commons shall have assented

to the principle of admitting women duly qualified according to law to a vote in the election of its members.

It has happened in all former debates on this Bill that the opponents have contrived to have the last word, and to keep possession of the House until the hour came for the division. They appear to have retained Mr. BUTT for this post on the present occasion, but whether it was that he rose too early, or found his eloquence exhausted too soon, certain it is that there remained half an hour to spare before the division must be taken. It immediately became evident that this half hour would be occupied by a supporter of the Bill, and this the opponents were determined not to allow. The rising of Mr. COURTNEY was greeted with a storm of cries of "Divide," which formed a striking commentary on the assertion with which Mr. HANBURY opened the debate, that the discussion in that House on the question was always conducted with calmness, and on the objection to the admission to political power of "hysterical politicians." Hysterical is a mild word to characterise the demonstration of feeling that drowned Mr. COURTNEY'S utterances. It reminded us of a menagerie at feeding time when the animals are roused by a glimpse of the anticipated prey. Like ravening wolves they howled for a division that they might tear the life out of the Bill. But Mr. COURTNEY held firm to his purpose of pressing the case for the Bill on the attention of the House; and then, finding that reason and arguments were thrown away, he determined to foil their tactics, and held bravely on, facing the storm until the hour struck for a cessation of the debate.

The opponents fairly outwitted themselves in their eager anxiety to crush the Bill, and the moral effects of that scene will leave a lasting impression on those who witnessed it. We must wait till next year for the opportunity of testing how far the question has advanced in support in the House of Commons, and we must employ the interval in redoubled efforts to organise and bring to bear on the deliberations of Parliament that general sentiment of approval of the justice of the principle of the Bill of which we find unmistakable evidence on every occasion when it is explained and submitted to the verdict of the public in any meeting called for discussion of the subject.

It was more than once asserted by the opponents of women's suffrage in the House of Commons that women do not care for the right of voting, and this supposed indifference was urged as an objection to the Bill. Some

facts which were elicited in the inquiry by the Select Committee on Hours of Polling afford another proof that this objection, like so many others, is founded on a figment of the imagination of the objectors, and not on facts. There would be some reason in the objection if it could be shown that women did not care to use the franchises which they possess; but the exact contrary is the case. In the Hours of Polling Committee of June 19th, Mr. ELLIS, parish clerk and returning officer of Hackney, said, in reply to Mr. PULESTON, that he thought women who had the right to vote generally exercised that right, but he could not give the proportion. Mr. GREENHILL, vestry clerk of Marylebone, said that of all the voters at the School Board election, 31 per cent of the men recorded their votes, and 29 per cent of the women. From inquiries made by Sir CHARLES DILKE, it appears that the women in municipal elections vote in the same proportion as men. As there can be no reason to suppose that a Parliamentary election would have less interest for the women voters than a municipal one, these facts form a sufficient answer to the objection that women do not want the franchise.

They would seem, indeed, to show that the fears of the objectors ought rather to take the opposite direction. Instead of apprehending that the newly-enfranchised women electors would not use their votes, their opponents would have more reason to fear that women's votes might be used against the choice as their representatives of men whose votes and speeches had manifested such a low estimate of either the capacities of women or the advantages of representative government, as to have judged that the one was unfitted for the other.

THE prolonged work of the season in support of the Bill concluded with a large meeting in St. James's Hall, under the presidency of Lord HOUGHTON, who took occasion to observe that they did not wish that women should emancipate themselves from the wholesome tradition that their sphere was above all things domestic life, but he thought there was no discrepancy between this ideal and intelligent women taking their share in the political circumstances of the day. Mrs. ASHFORD referred to Mr. TREVELYAN'S Bill, and asked why the franchise should be given to labourers and denied to women. Lord TALBOT DE MALAHIDE thought a large majority of women were as fully capable to exercise the franchise as men, and that they would exercise it in the interests of morality and good order. Mr. PULESTON, M.P., said he thought no reason-

able objection could be urged against their claim. The meeting was also addressed by Miss BECKER, Mrs. OLIVER SCATCERD, Miss STURGE, and Mrs. JULIA WARD HOWE.

On June 5th the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER received an influential deputation of ladies at his official residence in Downing-street. Lady ANNA GORE-LANGTON, on behalf of the deputation, stated that their object was to ask his support for the Bill to enfranchise women possessing the necessary qualification as ratepayers. The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, in reply, said that he thought women had the same right as men have to exercise any right which is to be treated as a right belonging to the English people. He did not, however, think the present a particularly desirable time for re-opening the great electoral question. If he found himself unable to vote for the Bill to-morrow, it would be on that ground, and not from any of the hesitaton of mind which is indicated by many of those opposed to the Bill. He dissented altogether from the views of those who oppose the Bill because women are not qualified to vote.

On June 11th a large party of ladies and gentlemen assembled at Langton House by invitation of Lady ANNA GORE-LANGTON, who had issued cards for an "At Home" to discuss the speeches delivered in the House of Commons on the Women's Suffrage Bill. In addition to the ladies who have been chiefly engaged in the advocacy of the question during the present session, Mrs. WILLIAM GREY took part in the proceedings, being moved to do so, as she stated, by the assertion in the House of Commons that women who were engaged in promoting the work of education were opposed or indifferent to the suffrage, and more especially that the ladies interested in Girton College were against it. She desired to give her testimony to refute this assertion, and to say that the reverse was the truth. As a rule those women were strong friends of the suffrage.

The annual meeting of the Central Committee took place on June 21st. Mr. M'LAREN, M.P., occupied the chair, and the meeting was addressed by Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY, M.P., who stated his belief that the object they had at heart had been rather advanced than retarded by the recent debate, from a general recognition of the fact that there had been an obvious attempt to stifle discussion; Mr. WILLIAM JOHNSTON, M.P., who said that he had this question at heart—husband and wife in his family were one, and his wife was as anxious as himself to see this measure carried; Miss TOD, Miss ARABELLA

SHORE, Mrs. MARK PATTISON, Mrs. CHARLES M'LAREN, Mr. ASHURST, and Mr. WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, who said he was an advocate for women's rights to the fullest extent of the term. Women had the same interests, the same rights, and the same destiny as men, and their influence would be an ennobling one when brought to bear upon the work of legislation.

THERE was a great influx of petitions as the day approached for the debate. Upwards of 100,000 signatures came in during the three or four days previous to the discussion on the Bill, and the last report gives the numbers as 813 petitions, with 266,789 signatures. Among the petitions presented since our last issue, we may notice one from the Mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of Falmouth, one from masters of Harrow School with 27 signatures, one from teachers and others of the Queen's Institute and Queen's College for Women at Dublin 30, one from ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland 83, one from resident members of the University of Cambridge 50, and two from members of Girton College.

DURING the last session Scotland has not been idle in presenting petitions to Parliament in favour of the Bill. From women householders in Edinburgh upwards of 1,000 signatures have been obtained in the several wards, and of these 300 came from Newington, the wealthiest district, where many ladies of position, having begun to think over the matter, now take a warm interest therein. Petitions from women, heads of households, are very important, and by the status of the women who sign them, the progress of thought on this subject can easily be estimated. From women householders in Scotland generally we have this session received signatures numbering 1,752, of these 600 come from the town of Aberdeen, where the enfranchisement of women meets with great support. This helps to show that, although the Bill is *talked out* in Parliament this year, it is slowly and steadily in another sense being *thought out* by all classes of women, while those who for a time felt it necessary to keep aloof from the new movement are gradually and surely coming into it, so that the opponents in Parliament can have now no excuse for saying "women don't want the franchise." This change in general opinion in Scotland has been greatly promoted by means of 19 different drawing-room meetings, held in Edinburgh and the Provinces, where the question has been amply discussed, and which those ladies for whom public meetings have little interest have been easily persuaded to

attend. Some interesting class petitions have also been sent up from Edinburgh bearing on the question of woman's suffrage; of such, is one signed by 35 ministers of various denominations, one by the Young Men's Christian Association belonging to the Primitive Methodists, one by 14 advocates, and one by 52 medical men; one of the most valuable of all being one signed by 205 rectors, head masters, school mistresses, and teachers in Edinburgh. A good many Scotch Town Councils have also petitioned Parliament this year, among which are those of Edinburgh, Forfar, Montrose, Aberdeen, Wick, Kirkcaldy, Dumbarton, Girvan, Selkirk, Jedburgh, and Wigton. E. B.

THE recent investigation into the suspicious death of a lady at Penge throws a lurid light on one of the abuses fostered by the existing law as to the property of women. Without touching on the darker aspects of the tragedy which come under the jurisdiction of the criminal courts, we desire to call attention to the fact that the whole chain of circumstances out of which the charge of wilful murder arose, appears to hang on the pivot of the rule of law which makes a man the absolute owner of the fortune of any woman whom he can entrap into matrimony, without the protection of special legal arrangements. From the evidence given at the inquest on the death of Mrs. LOUIS STAUNTON, it appeared from the evidence of her mother that the deceased lady was a person of weak intellect. She had a fortune of between £2,000 and £3,000. Mr. STAUNTON married her without a settlement, and appears to have spent the money. After they had been married about sixteen months, Mr. STAUNTON went to live at Cudham with ALICE RHODES, and placed his wife and child at his brother's house, paying £1 a week for their maintenance. Thus it appears that a lady owning property to the amount of upwards of £2,000 was deprived of the greater portion of her income and made to live with her child on less than half of it, while her husband spent the remainder on himself. Had she not come to a suspicious and untimely end this abuse might have lasted for an indefinite period, for the wife appears to have been a person of weak intellect, and unable to take the necessary steps to have her property secured in the first instance, or, when she had been ill-treated by her husband, to attempt measures in her own defence. She was, in fact, one of those exceptionally helpless human beings who ought rather to receive especial protection from the law than especial exposure to the designs of evil-minded men. Her mother appears to have done all in her power

to protect her daughter, first, by objecting to the marriage; next, by endeavouring to have her declared a person of unsound mind, and to guard her property; and, when this was unavailing, and the fatal marriage made, she vainly endeavoured to reach her daughter's prison-house with comfort and rescue. It may be objected that the law gave the unfortunate lady the power of having a settlement executed before marriage, and therefore she was rightly served for neglecting that precaution. But no marriage settlement is valid without the consent of the intended husband, and an adventurer whose object was to obtain possession of his bride's money, would of course refuse to agree to an arrangement which would defeat his aims, while he would know how to work on the credulity and confidence of the unfortunate victim of his avarice and fraud.

The law which opens the door to this abuse, and of which women justly complain, is that which vests in the husband, absolutely, property possessed by a woman at the time of marriage, unless he should agree to leave her a certain amount of control over that property by a deed executed before marriage. We assert that it is unjust that a husband, in default of making such an agreement, should have the power to spend or make away with the property of his wife, without her consent. An unjust law between two persons who are otherwise well disposed may be expected to create causes of discontent, and to produce effects calculated to mar the harmony of their relations; but when one of the parties, and he the one whom the law vests with absolute power, abuses that power, the law produces incalculable misery and wrong. Women of good sense, or women whose friends are able to guard them, may be able to avoid the snares that are set for them, but it is none the less a monstrous wrong that any women should be exposed to dangers from which the law carefully guards men; and it is no justification for the perpetuation of these dangers to say that it is only weak and foolish women who need incur them. The law should protect the weak and foolish as well as the strong and wise; but the law regulating the property of women violates this great principle of impartiality, and provides safeguards for the strong-minded, while it leaves the weak at the mercy of the oppressor.

ON June 21st, Lord COLERIDGE moved in the House of Lords the second reading of the Bill which he had introduced to amend the law relating to the property of married women. After a short debate, in which the

motion was opposed by the LORD CHANCELLOR, Lord SELBORNE, and Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY, Lord COLERIDGE said he would not put their Lordships to the trouble of dividing, and the Bill was accordingly withdrawn.

WE learn on the authority of the Vienna correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* that the Montenegrin army is dependent on the agency of women for its rations and supplies. He writes: "The Montenegrin forces number altogether about twenty thousand well armed and disciplined soldiers; they receive no pay nor rations from the Government, but each soldier trusts for his rations and supplies to his wife or female relations, who carry on the commissariat and transport department with an alacrity and efficiency that speaks well for their military organisation and patriotism." Such facts furnish an answer to the foolish assertion that women ought not to vote because they do not bear arms. Under ordinary circumstances the defence of the country is provided for by taxation, to which women contribute their full share. In great emergencies, when the body of the people, instead of paying soldiers, have to take the field themselves, the women have their part to do as well as the men, and history testifies that they have never been found wanting when their country has called upon them for sacrifices or services in her defence.

#### DEPUTATION TO THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

ON June 5th a deputation, composed chiefly of ladies interested in the question of women's suffrage, waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in Downing-street, to state their views with regard to the Bill which was to be discussed next day in the House of Commons. The deputation was introduced by Mr. Forsyth, Q.C., M.P., and was accompanied by Mr. Cowan, M.P., Mr. G. E. Browne, M.P., Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bart., M.P., and Mr. Pateshall, M.P. Many other members of Parliament would have been present but for the unavoidably short notice that could be given of the hour appointed. The ladies composing the deputation included Lady Anna Gore-Langton, Mrs. Ashford, the Misses Ashworth, Mrs. Maurice Brooks, Lady Bowring, Miss Becker, Miss Tod, Mrs. Thcs. Taylor, Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd, Miss Caroline A. Biggs, Miss Helen Blackburn, and Mrs. Scholefield, representatives from the metropolis, the West of England, Manchester, Belfast, Birmingham, Dublin, Exeter, Oxfordshire, Leeds, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Mr. FORSYTH, addressing the right hon. gentleman, said they knew that he and several other members of the Government were favourable to the Bill now before Parliament, but at the same time they knew it was not a Government question. They felt, however, that it would be extremely desirable and of great help to them that those Ministers, or some of them, at least, who were favourable to the measure, should express themselves in the House of Commons to that effect to-day, because it so happened

that since the present Government had been in power no Minister had spoken upon the subject.

Lady ANNA GORE-LANGTON, addressing the right hon. gentleman, said: On behalf of our countrywomen who value the rights and privileges of free government accorded to subjects of her Majesty the Queen in these realms, we earnestly and respectfully ask that you will give your support in the House of Commons to the Bill to admit to the Parliamentary franchise women possessing the necessary qualification as ratepayers. We offer you our earnest thanks for the votes you have given for the Bill in former years, and we beg that you will continue to aid us in the removal of a disqualification which is unjust in its operation on those excluded, and injurious to the best interests of the country.

Miss LILLAS ASHWORTH stated that one in seven of the landowners in England and Wales were women, and in Bath one-fourth of the householders were women. These women took part in the local elections quite as freely in proportion to their numbers as the men did, and it was felt that their votes were given wisely. But when a Parliamentary election was held they were excluded from the privilege of voting, and the power denied to them was left in the hands of the lowest class of male voters. If a measure to enfranchise women ratepayers became law, it would not involve the further question of a redistribution of seats. The voters who would be thus added to the electorate would be very evenly distributed over the various constituencies, and would, therefore, not disturb in any way the balance of voting power.

Miss BECKER expressed the acknowledgments of the deputation to the right hon. gentleman for the great courtesy with which he had received them, and for the support he had extended towards them in former years. She said that as he had declared his belief that their claim was just, it appeared to her that no further argument was needed to commend it to his favourable consideration.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, in reply, said: Well, ladies, I am going to be very frank with you, because I know it is what you would wish. (Hear, hear.) From what Lady Anna Gore-Langton was good enough to say with regard to my former vote in favour of the Bill, I think it is quite natural you should assume that I am favourable to the passing of the measure upon this occasion; and what Mr. Forsyth has said would be a very natural request, viz., that either I myself, or some other member of the Government, should take an opportunity of saying a few words upon the subject. Now, I want to put before you the way in which I look at this question. I think that the ground taken by Miss Ashworth is one which is quite sound and proper, and if the question of the franchise is merely to be looked upon as one to be decided upon the ground that everyone who is not unfit to exercise it has a right to exercise it, then I must say that in a very large number of cases the case of the women is an unanswerable one. I think they have the same right which men have to exercise any right which is to be treated as a right belonging to the English people. But then we come to the question whether that is exactly the view to be taken of the Parliamentary franchise. Now undoubtedly that is a doctrine which the advocates of extreme views on the subject of Parliamentary representation have always put forward. They argue, for instance, in favour of an extension of the county franchise, on the ground that a man who lives in a country town has as good a right to exercise the franchise as a man who lives in a borough town. People who take that ground have no cause whatever for resisting women's suffrage; but if you look at the matter from the other point of view, which is that in which I have always looked at it, you will find that different considerations

arise. The view I have taken of the Parliamentary franchise is that it is an artificial arrangement in the constitution of the country for the purpose of producing the best possible, or at least the best attainable, constituency for the election of a governing body like our Parliament, and therefore I should be slow to admit the mere plea that either this man or woman has as good a right to vote as that man or woman. I must consider, first, whether the alteration would be beneficial, and, secondly, whether it is at any given moment sensible and proper to make a considerable electoral change. I quite admit, and I cordially go with you to this extent, that where you have the case of women who are householders paying taxes, it is on the face of it very unequal, and in argument and principle an indefensible ground to take to say that because they are of a different sex from the men they are to be excluded from voting, while they are liable to all the incidence of taxation, and so forth, which falls upon the latter. But I observe that this Bill goes beyond that; it is one for giving to women, in every case, the same right of voting under whatever qualification which would be given to men.

Mr. FORSYTH: Not to married women.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: No, not to married women; but that is a question which we need not discuss. What I mean is, that it raises a question beyond that of the householders. It would raise the question of the lodger franchise, and that is a serious one. You must bear in mind at the time the last Reform Bill was passed serious questions were raised and long discussions took place as to whether lodgers were or were not entitled to the franchise, and it was finally decided that upon the whole they were to have it. I don't wish to go into the question at all fully, but you will see that many considerations might be urged against at once admitting women lodgers to the same right as is given to men in all cases. Many curious questions might be raised with regard to the operation of such a change in the case of the lodger franchise and others. Therefore I think it is a matter which requires more consideration, and cannot be treated in the very simple and easy way in which Lady Anna Gore-Langton was disposed to treat it, saying it was "making no change in the electoral system." I have also to consider what the effect of admitting such a doctrine as that might be upon other changes that might be proposed in the electoral system. If I admit you have the right to claim this upon the ground that a woman has a right to vote with a man, I don't quite see how I am to answer any claims which might be put forward that the inhabitants of particular districts, or small towns, and so forth, which are not now "borough towns," have as good a right to vote as householders in Bath or Bristol, or elsewhere. It resolves itself with me into a question of time and expediency, and I am bound to say, speaking quite frankly, that I do not think the present a particularly desirable time for reopening the great electoral question. If I find myself unable to vote for the Bill to-morrow, it will be upon that ground, and not from any of the hesitation of mind which is indicated by many of those opposed to the Bill. I dissent altogether from the views of those who oppose the Bill because women are not qualified to vote; but, on the other hand, I have considerable doubts that so large and sweeping a change as is now proposed is one that ought to be adopted without great consideration. I have also a doubt, if you adopted it, that you would not introduce greater changes in the electoral system than I am prepared to assent to. These are the general views which I hold, and I think I have fairly and honestly put them before you. (Hear, hear.) I don't think I could have said less than I have.

After a few words from Lady ANNA GORE-LANGTON, the deputation then retired.

## PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *Wednesday, June 6th.*

## WOMEN'S DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT moved formally the second reading of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill.

Mr. HANBURY, in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, observed that he was aware that in taking this step he might be charged with inconsistency, inasmuch as he had on two occasions supported by his vote measures having similar objects to that embodied in the Bill before the House. The hon. member for Manchester, moreover, would have the right to ask him how it was that up to the very moment when he gave notice of his intention to move the rejection of this Bill he had remained a member of a committee which was formed with the object of extending the franchise to women. He would in the first place explain how it was that his name had appeared in the list of that committee. After he had given his vote in 1873 in favour of the Bill which was then introduced he was asked to join the committee. Since then he had never acted upon that committee, he had received no notice of its meetings, and he had entirely forgotten that he had been connected with it, and, indeed, had not the slightest recollection that it existed. When a good-natured member of that House had reminded him of the fact that his name still stood on the committee, he asked him to let him know the exact title and address of the association, in order that he might at once withdraw his name from it, but to his immense astonishment the hon. member, who was himself an active member of the committee, was unable to give him either the name or the address of the association. ("Hear," and a laugh.) It might further be asked how it was that, having supported the principle of this Bill on former occasions, he now took the decided step of moving the rejection of the present measure. His reply was that his views on the subject having been greatly modified, he felt it to be his duty not to shrink from giving his vote against the measure, and not to give that vote in silence. If he had been guilty of any inconsistency in the matter, he had erred in common with a great number of men, and notably in common with the right hon. member for Birmingham. When the measure was introduced in 1873 it was supported by the great leaders of his party, and he believed it to be the result of a great Conservative movement. He now, however, objected to political strongholds being built upon such shifting sands as these. (Hear.) He felt that this was not a party question. (Hear, hear.) When a question affected every family in the kingdom and touched the very basis upon which society rested, it was time to rise above party considerations. In supporting the principle of this measure he had undoubtedly been led away by a feeling of sentiment, but all feeling of that kind had been destroyed by the course which had been adopted by those ladies who, acting, doubtless, from very high motives, had taken part in an agitation on a subject to which he would not further allude, but which was one which he believed women ought never to touch upon in public. (Hear, hear.) When he had given it his support he had regarded this proposal as intended to be confined entirely to single women, and he now saw that it would confer the franchise upon a class of women which was already too large in our great towns—that of women who were shut out from fathers, husbands, and brothers, and whose influence would be anything but good. He had also formerly thought that the movement was much more extended among women than was really the case,

whereas he now found that it was making no progress whatever among them. (Hear, hear.) He denied that this measure would benefit the poorer classes of women, and referred to the emphatic declaration of the hon. member for Manchester that the movement was not to stop with this Bill, but was to be continued until married women enjoyed the franchise. For his own part, he could not see how the promoters of this Bill could logically ask that the franchise should be conferred on single women only, inasmuch as that would be offering a premium upon celibacy, and would place under political disabilities those women who were most entitled to speak on behalf of women, and who were the most worthy representatives of their class. Even admitting that women were the intellectual equals of men, he did not admit that their spheres were the same. Whatever Parliament might do in this matter, it could not prevent there being always two sexes, and it would be dangerous to morals and to society if they were to bring about a system under which the spheres of men and women were to be intermixed. He pointed to the fact that this agitation was being got up by a certain number of ladies who always appeared upon the scene, and, by marching and countermarching across the stage, led the public to suppose that they were more numerous than they really were. He did not believe that if this Bill were passed it would remove the real grievances of women. It was said that a woman, if she had a vote, would not be obliged to take any large part in political life, but it would be utterly ridiculous, he thought, to say that a woman was to be content with giving a vote. She must enter into all the political considerations which influenced a man who gave votes. The franchise had been extended to men, who, they admitted, ought to be educated. He believed they had gone far enough, perhaps too far, in that direction. Those men, by leaving their homes and moving among other men, had opportunities of picking up some knowledge on political affairs; but women, if they were not to leave their homes, but were still to remain, as he hoped they would remain, as ornaments in their homes, would have no chance of picking up that amount of knowledge which would justify their giving a vote upon great and complex questions. If they were not to leave their homes somebody must come to their homes. One of the great mischiefs in Continental countries was the power exercised over the community by means of priests coming to houses. (Hear.) There was a prejudice against such men in England. If this measure passed, should we not have a kind of political priesthood extending its influence to the homes of England? (Hear.) He would appeal from theory to practice. Hon. members who knew anything of America were aware that the one thing which marked the social life of America was the almost complete subordination of the wife to the husband. He believed there was no country in the world in which this question of woman's suffrage was more scouted than in America at the present day. No doubt we might pride ourselves on an age of reason, but we must remember that the foundation of our society was power, force, and strength. More and more power and force were coming into the front. On the Continent we saw on all sides armed force, and in this country we might have to replace our present system of recruiting for the army by something much more like conscription than that which at present existed. Property was not, he believed, represented as much as was supposed. A man of large property had great influence, but he (Mr. Hanbury) denied that his property gave him all his influence, and that sort of influence was largely exercised by women at the present day. Representation in the present day was based, not upon property or upon taxation, but upon family, and he contended that it was the family which of all things would suffer if they extended the vote in the direction proposed

by his hon. friend. It was argued that because women might vote at municipal and School Board elections they ought to have extended to them the political franchise. He had said there was every reason why women should have a vote at School Board elections. In questions like that they took great interest. But he denied that they took the same interest in municipal elections. That question was not much more complex, but it did not come home to them so nearly as the School Board question, and therefore they took less interest in it. When he considered that we had interests all over the world, and that the influence of foreign countries was an influence directed by men, he felt it would be most mischievous for this country to allow hysterical politicians, who, he believed, had too great influence already on our foreign policy, to have any further influence upon it. (Hear, hear.) He believed that such an influence as sentimental politicians endeavoured last autumn to exercise upon our foreign policy would be for this country a very dangerous influence indeed. (Hear, hear.) How was it that such a claim as this was put forward? It was based upon the idea that the two sexes had adverse interests. The mere fact that this question was discussed calmly in the House was sufficient to show that the interest which men took in women and in their rights was a very keen and a very strong interest. Women had husbands, fathers, and brothers to represent them in the House and in this country, and it seemed to him a monstrous assertion to rest this claim upon adverse interests of the two sexes. In a great number of ways rights were denied to women. They had been shut out of professions which he for one would be glad to see them enter. Many a walk in life had been denied to them, with immense disadvantage to themselves and to ourselves. (Hear.) But in any grievance they had suffered they had large numbers of fellow sufferers in our own sex. Those grievances, which were remnants partly of the feudal system, did not press upon women merely, but almost upon nine-tenths of society. Those grievances had been gradually removed. There was only one case in which he found a grievance of a specific kind which would be removed by the passing of this Bill, and that was the grievance of women who were farmers, and who it was said would lose their farms because they could not give a vote. It appeared that there were nearly 25,000 women who were farmers—"No"—farmers and graziers, and if that was the case the grievance did not affect many. But after all we came to the question, Were these women to have rights or privileges? No one would deny that at this moment they had immense privileges. He believed they were the life and soul of our social system. All the poetry and chivalry of life was on their side of the question. That poetry and chivalry surrounded them with strong barriers of protection. They could not have both privileges and rights. (Hear.) They must have either privileges or rights. He denied their right to have both. Privileges were given to women and rights were given to men. If you tried to upset that arrangement you would bring on a quarrel between the two sexes, in which the weaker must go to the wall. Therefore, in the interest of women, in the interest of the nation itself, which had to consider not only its own interests, but those of other nations whose interests were directed entirely by men, and in the interest of the family, he hoped the House would by an emphatic vote reject what he believed to be a pernicious Bill. (Cheers.) The hon. gentleman concluded by moving that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT said: I rise for the purpose of opposing the Bill. I was never a member of any association against the Bill, as it was perfectly unnecessary, and I am perfectly prepared to leave the issue on this matter to common sense, without

having recourse to anything like organisation. I think the matter will be disposed of on its merits, but, as I have said, I think this agitation a mischievous one, and that it is doing no good, nor advancing in any way the amelioration of the social condition of women. Can any member deny the fact that the women who have done most for the education of their own sex have steadily stood aloof from this movement? Girton College, an institution founded by the active energy of several reforming ladies, is calculated to do great service to the higher education of the women of England. (Hear, hear.) I hear the hon. member for Manchester say "Hear, hear;" but amongst the most active of the promoters of that college are ladies actively and directly opposed to this movement. I was very much pleased to hear the discussion on both sides of the House. This matter has been earnestly fought, and it has been most carefully advocated by many members of Parliament. I wish to state in a very few words what are my cardinal objections to this measure. I shall consider a few of its cardinal defects. It is necessary to examine this Bill carefully, and to see what it actually involves and what it may involve. I submit that this is a specious Bill and a disingenuous Bill, because it means more and must imply more than actually appears on the face of the Bill. Whatever its advocates may choose to allege, whatever they may choose to say now that they are fighting this Bill before the House, I say it is perfectly impossible to resist the enfranchisement of all women, whether single or married, once this Bill is passed. I do not hold that in questions of politics the principles of logic can be applied. Political questions are not mathematical problems, but if this Bill is carried as it stands, nothing will be able to resist that force of logic which will drive the Legislature to admit that the franchise must be conceded to married women. There is no possibility of arguing against the admission of married women once you admit the plea which is alleged in support of the claim of unmarried women, for so to argue would be almost to deny that of the sum total of society married women contribute as much to the moral worth of society as single women. I have given my best attention to the pleas that have been urged in support of this claim. There is, I think, an inconsistency in this claim. I have heard it urged publicly that this measure, which is to redress the imperfections of our social system, will only add 13 per cent to the electoral roll. Either your figures are fictitious, or this Bill will have much greater consequences than are anticipated from it. I say that this Bill alone is a proof that the pleas upon which it is recommended are shifting pleas, and are used according to expediency. These are not the only points connected with the Bill which I think deserve our attention. I think there are points in this Bill which ought to make even those in favour of its principle hesitate before they accept it. I observe in the papers to-day that there was an influential deputation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday. Now according to the reports, attention was drawn to a point to which the hon. member drew attention. When you know what the lodger franchise imports, and when you consider what the difference to the electoral roll would be if the lodger franchise were extended to women, there will be some cause for hesitation, for the Bill must include all those who come within the class of female lodgers. I say that there is one other objection, which in my mind lies at the very root of the whole question. I think this Bill is based upon a most objectionable kind of principle, namely, the principle that there is some antagonism between the sexes. (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, it is impossible, however speciously you may argue, however speciously some advocates may controvert it, I say it is impossible to explain away this

basis of antagonism which lies at the root of the whole controversy. This is a Bill which seeks by an artificial enactment to do away with the division of labour, which division of labour exists in virtue of a higher law than any man can make, the law of instinct and the law of nature. You may try to mingle and confuse the spheres of activity of the two sexes, the result will be a society peopled by beings really of a hybrid nature. Woman's part can never be usurped in the world without man denying himself; woman cannot turn to those spheres peculiar to man without losing that place and charm from which she derives her real and genuine influence.

Mr. FORSYTH said that he had come early to the House, as he was desirous to hear the reasons why the hon. member for Tamworth (Mr. Hanbury) had been so suddenly converted. His hon. friend was not an old man; he had certainly come to the years of discretion; he had been in Parliament before; he had had this question before him for many years, and he had told the House that he had voted for it on every occasion till now. (Mr. Hanbury: "In the last Parliament.") And he had been a member of a committee for promoting the object of the Bill. There was not a single argument which the hon. member adduced to-day which ought not, if true, to have convinced him seven or eight years ago. Every one of the objections urged by his hon. friend applied equally ten years ago as now. His hon. friend said there was no sign of progress and no increase in the number of petitions. (Mr. Hanbury: "No.") How were they to mark progress in public opinion with regard to particular questions? If they had regard to increase in the number of meetings and of speakers and of the attendants at meetings in town and country, then he (Mr. Forsyth) said no question that had been before Parliament for many years had made so much progress in public opinion as this question of women's suffrage. You could hardly mention a town in England or Wales or Scotland or Ireland where there had not been held crowded public meetings of persons unanimous in favour of this Bill. He should like to know how many meetings his hon. friend could mention as having been held against it. He did not believe he could find that there had been three in the United Kingdom. The hon. member for Tamworth had said that this was a Bill which must necessarily and logically give the franchise ultimately to married women; and, indeed, resting on the opinion of the hon. and learned member for Taunton, he went so far as to assert that that Bill itself would give the vote to a married woman. Now, as a lawyer himself, he maintained that it would not. A married woman did not pay rates, but they were paid by her husband. Then the hon. gentleman had founded an argument against the Bill on the probability of the Ballot Law being repealed; but he ventured to think that nobody in the House dreamed of repealing the Ballot Act except that hon. member himself. Next, it was urged that they should look to the Continent, where the Roman Catholic priests had so much influence, and they were told that political priests in this country would creep into people's houses, leading captive the minds of silly women. But did not women read newspapers as well as men, and did they also not obtain their information on political subjects from conversation and discussion? Then it was said there was looming over Europe the power of force, and that as woman could not contribute to that power she could not have the vote. But would it not be well to have a gentler influence brought to bear on politics, which would not be arrayed on the side of brute force? Last year the hon. member for Lincolnshire, with a touch of epigrammatic smartness, said that the Bill was supported by two classes of persons—feminine men and masculine women. ("Hear," and a laugh.) Well, the present Prime Minister had always voted and sometimes spoken in favour of that Bill.

Was Lord Beaconsfield "a feminine man?" The Chancellor of the Exchequer had spoken in Devonshire in favour of the Bill; and the First Lord of the Admiralty, again, had also supported it. He wondered who would call the First Lord of the Admiralty "a feminine man." (Laughter.) Then as to masculine women, who, that had read the biography of the late Mrs. Somerville—a supporter of that Bill—would say that she was a masculine woman? He could not conceive a character more full of feminine tenderness than that of Mrs. Somerville. (Hear, hear.) He might ask the same question in regard to Miss Florence Nightingale and other ladies; but he did not think it right to bring their names into the debate. (Hear, hear.) The sole ground on which many hon. members rested their opposition to the Bill was that to give the vote to women would to a certain extent make them unfeminine. That was a sentiment and nothing more. Hon. members had admitted to him that the argument was entirely in favour of the Bill, but still they said they did not like the measure and would vote against it. Well, he confessed that if he believed in his conscience that the effect of giving the franchise to women would be to make them more masculine, to render them less tender, less gentle, and less attractive than they were, whatever he might think of the logic of the matter, he should not be prepared to pay so great a price for the measure. The Bill merely gave an intelligent woman the right of saying she preferred that A instead of B should represent her in Parliament, and it would not admit her sex to sit in that House. In one sense he acknowledged that political agitation was not the sphere for women. He would rather not see women mounting the platform and speaking in public. But observe the cruel dilemma in which women were placed. If the few gifted with the power of eloquence and of argument did not come forward and advocate the rights of their sex, then it was said that women did not want the franchise—that not one of them had spoken in its favour. On the other hand, if they did come forward, they were told that they were out of their sphere and becoming political agitators. (Hear, hear.) If the boon they now asked for were granted them, they would cease their agitation.

Defuit saxis agitatus humor,  
Et minax, quod sic voluere, ponto  
Unda recumbit.

Those who opposed the Bill were responsible for taking woman out of her sphere of retiring modesty, and making her come forward in public to claim her rights. (Hear, hear.) Women now had votes at municipal elections, and the hon. member for Tamworth admitted that even in sitting at the School Board they were in their proper sphere; but the questions at issue in those cases were, for the most part, of the same character, only on a smaller scale, as those involved in Parliamentary elections and discussions. He would illustrate the injustice of the present system by taking the case of two towns. In Bristol, one-quarter of the houses occupied by ratepayers and taxpayers were occupied by women, many of them living in the best part of the city, and yet not one of those women had a voice in choosing a member for Bristol. Then, at Bath, the great proportion of the occupiers of the houses in its splendid streets and terraces were not enfranchised, because they were women, many of them spinsters, and all of them heavily rated and taxed. Again, in England, one-seventh part of the whole of the land held by owners of more than one acre was held by women, not one of whom was entitled to a vote. He denied that that Bill, as asserted last year by the right hon. member for Birmingham, was based on an assumed hostility between the sexes; but what its advocates said was that there were certain questions which women had a peculiar right to have an opinion upon, and on which they ought to be heard, because

they had, as to some of them, perhaps a more pressing interest than men themselves had. After answering the allegations of the same right hon. gentleman as to the special privileges now enjoyed by women, and particularly as to the exemption of women servants from taxation, the benefit of which he said went to the employers, the hon. and learned member referred to a debate of an instructive character which occurred the other day in the Italian Parliament. Hitherto, in Italy, no woman was legally competent to witness to a public deed. That would seem to us monstrous; and a Bill was lately brought into the Italian Parliament to repeal that law. But against its repeal, strange to say, this objection was raised:—"You must not distract woman from her family mission." (A laugh.) That was precisely the same argument as was now used against giving a vote to women. The Bill enabling women to witness to public deeds had, however, been passed by the Italian Parliament, and he trusted that before long the British Legislature would pass a law enabling women to vote for members of that House. But it was said that that would be a premium on celibacy, because if a woman married she would lose her vote. The inference drawn from that, he supposed, was that she would refuse to marry in order to keep her vote. He would like to see the woman who, having to choose between matrimony and a vote, preferred the latter. ("Hear, hear," and a laugh.) Then as to the "thin end of the wedge" argument, he would quote to the House a passage from the last work of our great novelist, George Eliot, "Daniel Deronda," which was as follows: "I think that way of arguing against a course because it may be ridden down to an absurdity would soon bring life to a standstill," said Deronda. "It is not the logic of human action, but of a roasting-jack that must go on to the last turn when it has once been wound up. We can do nothing safely without some judgment as to where we are to stop." Surely if unreasonable demands were afterwards made, the House could refuse them. With regard to the lodger franchise, he admitted that its application to women might let in some objectionable persons, though he thought their number would practically be found very insignificant. Speaking for himself individually, rather than lose the Bill he would consent to a proviso, if the House thought fit to introduce one, to the effect that the lodger franchise should not extend to women. He did not want to see a stigma put upon the many on account of the bad character of the few; but, considering the difficulty felt on that point by others more strongly than himself, he was willing to accept the proviso to which he had referred. He did not, indeed, expect that Bill to pass in the present Parliament, and having himself twice brought it forward and tested the opinion of the House on the subject, in his judgment it would have been better to have deferred the measure until they had a new Parliament, when the result, he believed, would be extremely different. However, his hon. friend the member for Manchester, having re-introduced the Bill, he gave it his hearty support, feeling sure that when it became law, as it eventually would do, men who now spoke against it would be heard saying they were surprised and ashamed at their former opposition to it, and would laugh at what were now their imaginary fears. (Hear, hear.)

The O'DONOGHUE said: I am aware that utterly groundless suspicions are entertained by many people in this country in regard to the Roman Catholic priests of the Continent, but on that point I shall not detain the House. Something that was said by the hon. member for Marylebone took me rather by surprise. He said that there was not a town in the United Kingdom in which a great meeting had not been held in favour of the Bill. I have the honour of representing the borough of Tralee, and I am not aware that any such meeting has been held there.

I am anxious to say a few words on this question, for during the many years that it has been before the House, I have never given an expression of opinion on it. At first I was favourably disposed to this movement, which has had the support of John Stuart Mill, the hon. member for Hackney, the hon. member for Manchester, and many others of undoubted sanity and vast intelligence, who have entered into the movement with a restless ardour which is to me as incomprehensible and altogether irreconcilable with the fact that they are all men of undoubted sanity and vast intelligence. But, sir, notwithstanding the utmost efforts to accord with the views of so many of my friends, I have never been able to regard this movement of women's rights in a serious light, or as anything else than an attempt to subvert the natural order of the world—(hear, hear)—by investing women with prerogatives, and imposing on them duties that belong exclusively to men, simply from the fact that they are men. That the attempt should be made by philosophers and other great and wise men is what gives the operation, at least to my mind, its comical aspect. It is only persons with very callous hearts indeed who could see anything amusing in the vagaries of those who have been so unfortunate as to have lost their wits, or who have never been so fortunate as to have had any; but there is something irresistibly droll in the notion of a man who is supposed to possess what are called brains acting as if he were a simpleton. (Laughter.) Sir, without meaning anything disrespectful, I must say that the movement, of which this is the offspring, has appeared to me always to be taken up by those who are suffering from want of occupation. If they had received the support of the people of England, I would have come to the conclusion that all questions affecting the happiness of the nation, which alone deserve to be called political questions, had been settled, and that, for the reason that it is always necessary to be doing something, we were about to enter upon a period of meddling legislation, and that questions would arise as to how we are to cook our food, to whip our children, and perform similar duties, which are held essential in most civilised communities. Some Bills have been resisted on the ground that they have been reactionary, others, because they were revolutionary; but this Bill of the hon. member for Manchester is the only Bill which I ever have known introduced which must be resisted upon the ground that the principle upon which it is really founded is simply ridiculous. (Hear, hear.) The project we are solemnly invited to consider is nothing short of a proposition to get rid by Act of Parliament of the division which Providence has made of the human race into man and woman, with special functions to be performed in the domain of each. (Hear, hear.) Notwithstanding all this, I should be sorry to have it supposed that I was insensible to the claims of those of whom my hon. friend the member for Manchester is the champion, or that I was disposed to treat them with incivility. I should be happy to unite with the hon. member for Manchester, and indeed with the whole House, in redressing their grievances; but I do not think there is any ground for saying that the Legislature of the country is totally unfair to women. There is one charge brought against those who are opposed to this movement in favour of the rights of women. It is frequently said that we are ascribing to women a certain moral and intellectual inferiority, and consequent unfitness for the proper discharge of political duties. I myself believe women to be our superiors, owing to their self-imposed submission to certain restraints which the lords of the creation think they may dispense with. Intellectually I think they are our equals. If they have not done so much for science and art as men, it is because of physical obstacles in the way; but it comes within my own experience that I have met women whose

power of soon acquiring knowledge, whose originality of thought and whose genius, in short, exceeded that of any man I ever met. I venture to say to the hon. member for Manchester that he will never succeed—notwithstanding the prophecy of the hon. member for Marylebone—he will never succeed in establishing political equality, or anything approaching to political equality between man and woman—(hear, hear)—and I would also venture to suggest to my hon. friend that he should direct his efforts, and confine his enthusiasm, and those of his friends, to winning complete social equality for the ladies. Sir, it is unfortunately true that women do not enjoy complete social equality. We may say now, without undue self-glorification, that our courtesy has already done great things for them. We have given them the prescriptive right to the best places at lectures, at reviews, and at supper, but the antiquated custom has conferred on men a privilege to which I defy anyone to say they have an exclusive right. If the hon. member for Manchester had agitated that women should possess this privilege, I for one would have been inclined to support him. Like many of those I see around me, we are not in a position to dispose of ourselves, and therefore we may be presumed to be disinterested; but I would ask the hon. member for Manchester if he sees any reason why man should reserve to himself the sole right of putting a question upon which the happiness and common future of both so largely depends; or, as it is popularly called, “popping the question.” (A laugh.) Why she should undergo the conventional restraint which compels her to wait to be asked, and forces her to endure a suspense which no doubt is often most painful, is the only disability under which, so far as I know, women labour. Whether this is to be removed by the introduction of a Bill I don't know, but I see no reason why they should not agitate for it, hold public meetings, form a great league, write pamphlets and issue circulars, and so prepare the youth of the United Kingdom for what would certainly be a novelty. To this question I am prepared to give my hon. friend my hearty support.

Mr. HOPWOOD said: Mr. Speaker, I have had the honour of being a supporter of this movement for a number of years, and I have been in this House some years, but I have never before raised my voice in the discussion. It has been not from any lack of zeal on my part; but if I may speak of myself, it has been that I have been content to see better men taking part in the discussion of the principles of the measure, and in the advocacy of its reception by this House. I have determined to say a word or two, because last night, yesterday, and to-day I learned that there was to be something like a combined movement against this, one of the most interesting questions of the day. With all respect to those who are now recanting their opinions on the other side of the House, I will assume that the ship is in danger, and that some are leaving it. Therefore it becomes a duty to thrust myself on the notice of the House. I cannot plead that I have anything new to bring to the discussion, but I can plead that I bring an earnest belief in the ultimate success of the measure. And I am not daunted by such speeches as we have heard from my hon. friend the member for Tralee (The O'Donoghue), because even in the midst of that speech, given with his accustomed readiness of diction, and with a great deal of his accustomed point and antithesis, there was something accompanying it both in the speech and in the reception of it by this House that made me draw comfort for the future. I shall try to deal with that speech in one or two particulars. I should not like to say anything disrespectful or contrary to Parliamentary usage in his absence, and I am not likely to do so if he were in his place. I am glad in some respects that the speech was delivered, although he will forgive me for saying that it verged closely upon a coarser exhibition than

I should have thought my hon. friend capable of, and it belonged to an old stage of this movement. Although it did so, I was glad to see that a very small number of members answered to it, and the number who danced to the hon. member's piping were those from whom we should expect very strong prejudice in arguing that question. I am fond of a good joke myself, but I confess I could not attune my face to laughter at such sundry trifles and old jokes about “popping the question.” This is a question which, however diverse may be the views held upon it, will not receive its quietus to-day, and it is not by suggestions that we may look to have Bills on cooking, the whipping of children, and what not, that it will be laughed away. The hon. member might be reminded, by the way, that a large number of women have been extremely opposed to whipping at all, and he might have quoted that as a reason why women are likely to exercise a useful influence upon the Legislature. The hon. member proceeded to ask the hon. member for Manchester various questions, and I should like to say to him, with all respect, that there was something slightly supercilious in his assuming to speak *de haut en bas* to a gentleman who is at least his equal in intellectual attainments, and I venture to think his superior in this, that he has shown earnestness and zeal in every cause he has taken up, accompanied by a persistent use of a wealth of illustration and argument which I doubt if my hon. friend the member for Tralee has shown. I remember the hon. member some three years ago making a speech of great power on the Home Rule question, in which he advocated his views with a fertility of illustration and biting sarcasm which made us all feel that we were in the presence of a master of language. To-day he invited us to believe that he was in possession of special information on the designs of Providence as to the division of the sexes! Where do he and others get their special information? They seem to come to us and say, “You have no right to argue this question. We have it direct from the Almighty, that these things are to be as they were in the time of Abraham and Sarah, and they are to continue so to the end.” The opinion of the House can only be influenced by appeals to its reason, and is not to be swayed by something altogether *ex cathedra* which reason or judgment cannot be expected to receive. The hon. member for Tamworth has stated his case to the House with very great forbearance from his point of view. I am not thanking him for forbearance, for those whom we represent to-day do not require any forbearance which is not founded upon intellectual reasoning. The hon. gentleman said that those who were advocating this measure and desiring it for themselves were to choose between privileges and rights. Now what right have you to talk about privileges? Are we to sit in the form of grand seigneurs who have given to women all that they possess? Whatever they possess is not derived from our benevolence, but is surely and certainly attained by their own intellectual excellence. It is not ours to give; it never has been ours to give, and to argue from the past, that because such things as the right of voting had not been accorded to women was a complete answer to the present appeal, is trying to throw dust in the eyes of Parliament. When we talk of rights and privileges, we must remember that women have their rights, and one right is to be treated with the same courtesy that one *gentle* man accords to another. I don't suppose women want any more, and if you assume when speaking of privileges that women value it as a privilege that you set them up as dolls to be dressed and put in glass cases to be looked at, and for special reasons to be treated with special favour on special occasions, I do not think there is a woman of spirit who would not reject such a privilege. And

now we come to rights. The hon. member for Tamworth became gloomy in anticipation, and he talked upon safeguards of morality. Why should we not extend to women a political right which many of us thoughtlessly exercise, taking place as it does only once in three or four years? The suggestion that our countrywomen cannot bear the strain of exercising the franchise is one that refutes itself on the spot. The hon. member suggests that from it would flow unnamed mischiefs which he cannot hint at, and that there is something nameless which has been advocated by women. He cannot understand why it is done. Let him seek information from those who do understand why it is done. There are women who feel that duty is paramount above every other consideration of personal feeling; there are women who are moved by the sufferings of others, and who repudiate Acts of Parliament as gross and abominable as were ever passed by a free legislature. You have no right to sit in judgment upon them unless you are able to enter into the depth of agony and feeling which they have endured, and which impels them to protest in the face of mankind, and such mankind as the honourable House of Commons is composed of. Is it strange that women should take an interest in the fallen, and should protest against Acts of Parliament which are not to put down vice, but to make its indulgence more safe? I say that women are right in taking that position, and there are men in this House who are ready to pay them their meed of admiration for having placed the call of duty far above every consideration. Women have been insulted and taunted for the position they have taken on this question. I am glad to see that as time progresses and men get educated to the responsibilities they have in this House, questions which were once thought better left alone are now discussed, and I hope that before long we shall find the proper way of dealing with this subject. Then, again, we are told that if you permit the meeting of men and women together you do not know what may happen. A neighbouring country is well accustomed to such appeals as “danger to society,” and over and over again you have seen that a plot against the Government has been successful, by suggesting that some murderer is to become the “saviour of society.” It is not necessary to follow to their conclusions those undeveloped imaginative prognostications for the future, which we must treat with respect in so far as they are uttered by hon. friends of ours, but so far as their effect upon our judgment is concerned, with utter contempt and disdain. The hon. member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) has thrown himself into this contest, and he made a bold assertion. He assumed that the women who did real service to their sex had not indulged in the useless advocacy of political rights, and he mentioned the founders of Girton College. I can only say in answer to him that I know that of the distinguished women who have paid the greatest attention to Girton, and have desired to promote its intellectual power in every way as regards its staff of instructors or the general scope of the education, many are strongly in favour of this measure. If the hon. gentleman had inquired, he might have been saved giving a vote against this measure on any such ground; instead of which, many men assume that which they want to believe, and the hon. gentleman has been one of them. May I meet him with the counter assertion that from the time Mr. Mill brought forward this measure, the whole status and position, as regards education, as regards avenues to fortune and employment of women, have been vastly improved—and in great part by the strenuous advocacy of the very women who have been most persistent in this claim, refused and put off from time to time by this House of Parliament. I know that to be the case, and I say that even with regard to some women who may not have identified themselves with the suffrage question, that they were first stirred into activity by

their friends of the suffrage question to exert themselves as they have done; and as you cannot bring a light into a chamber without illuminating every corner of it, so this great question introduced among thinking women has fermented all their thoughts, and if it has not effected entire conversion it has drawn their attention to the grievances and disabilities under which their sex labours. I would allude to the agitation for the Bill as the strongest evidence of the immense gain likely to be derived, not merely from the continuance of it, but even from the passing of it, in the robustness of thought that it would give to many women, and the power with which it would turn their minds not only to the interests of their own sex, because their devotion leads them to labour for both sexes, and even if they had not that natural devotion, they could not labour for one sex without producing unmixed benefit to both. I have looked upon this question as an extraordinary educator. I am glad to say that time has not falsified the prediction of many friends, and that it has gone on educating a vast number of women in defiance of restrictions and obstacles up to the standard which previously they had not attained. It is sometimes said to women if these matters you complain of ought to be removed, why don't you remove them? That is why they come to this House to enable them to do so. If you give them all other things, and deny them this, your giving them the other things is merely an expression of good feeling towards them, which is to be accompanied by no reality; you will not, in fact, give them. They have argued for admission to medical schools. I know some hon. friends of mine think it hard that theirs should be the first profession subjected to the strain of this first endeavour of women to get other employment. Remember the beautiful reflection sometimes uttered when we are on another subject, that women are in their proper place in hospitals, where the most beautiful side of their character may be witnessed! We praise them for benefits conferred upon ourselves, but is that a reason why we should keep them in a subordinate position? You say that when we come to a question affecting the males of the community the women ought to keep out of it. Has the charge of indecency been applied to women who, under a sense of duty, have gone into the hospitals forgetful of the feelings of sex which might be disturbed, and which might interfere with her offering her service as the nurse of suffering humanity? And can the charge of indecency be applied when we are discussing political questions that may affect her sons and her brothers? It is called indecency because woman gives up her native shrinking, and feels bound to come forward and express how remiss we men have been in performing our duty. I come now to matters affecting this vote of the House. I am again sorry that a distinguished member of this House is not here (Sir H. James). I hesitate to criticise the conduct of one whom I revere so much, but we understand that there has been some sort of partnership or co-operation formed between the solid, immovable, material spirit of conservatism and the versatile ever-active spirit of political progress. This is an extraordinary partnership, started upon an extraordinary basis, with very little in common between the parties. The question is whether this thing is right or not. No one has ventured to question the intellectual capacity of women to exercise this vote. Some have got a notion of what some foolish women may do. I am sure if you eliminate all the foolish men from the right of the franchise who now possess it and substitute the capable women, there would be more than room enough for a large proportion of the sex you are trying to keep out. You admit that they are capable for the School Board. The hon. member for Tamworth (Mr. Hanbury) tells us that it is a clear gain to the community that women should be on School



Boards. Education is the power through which we all derive our pretended knowledge to judge of State affairs. What is any one of us stripped of his knowledge? We consider ourselves very superior, but we have admitted that women are not inferior to ourselves in that respect. Is there any reason why women should have the franchise? There are many things in which women remain at a disadvantage at law by laws which have been made by men. If woman is admitted to have great influence, why cannot she give her vote, feeling, and influence upon many questions of the day? Nobody pretends that there are not many questions upon which women might be heard with very great benefit. The right hon. member for Halifax (Mr. J. Stansfeld) singled out a woman who, to his honour be it said, did a large amount of service of a very valuable kind for one of the public departments. Such instances should be quoted to members to show that it is not to be denied that women are perfectly capable of exercising the franchise. Will any man who knows anything of the question pretend that the state of the law in regard to women's property is right as it stands? I say that it is not. Are your laws of marriage such as recommend themselves entirely to the women of the three kingdoms. I trow not; but at all events, before you mend them you should get the reflections of the most capable among them. There are professions to enter. Are women to enter them? are women to have avenues to fortune? and is the expression of their intellectual energy to be only dependent upon the almsgiving of men? They ask it as a right. It is urged as a reason against female suffrage that women are indirectly represented by their husbands and brothers. From this side of the House it is monstrous to hear such an argument. It is feared that we should submit to the mortification of finding female suffrage disadvantageous to the Liberal party. That which was no argument when it came from the other side of the House is now employed against the admission of a class. ("No.") "No," says an hon. member. Let us call it sex or category, or whatever you will, the injustice remains the same. It is said that if these women were admitted there is an end to Liberal Governments for long time to come. When that potent voice which is now speaking against us demanded the extension of the suffrage, the answer from that side of the House was "They are not fit for it." They dreaded that it would give strength to the Liberal ranks. We trampled upon and disdained that argument then. Are my friends to be pressed by powerful interest to abstain from recording their votes because the measure will give strength to the Conservative ranks. I should have done with the Liberal creed for ever if I thought it depended upon, not whether the measures which we are able to pass are measures of justice, but whether they are likely to return us to power and keep us there when we are there. I trust the leading men on this side of the House will take a nobler view of this question, and that it will not have to be recorded of the Liberal party that it was guided by any such considerations. It will cease to be the Liberal party when it ceases to welcome every fresh accession to the constitution created by attending to the just claims of those outside, and to remedy the evils affecting those already included within it. (Cheers.)

Sir WALTER BARTELOT said: The hon. member for Stockport has told us that women are in a subordinate position. I entirely deny that. There was another point on which he touched, and I certainly should have thought that after his remarks upon the speech of the hon. member for Tralee, no references to the Contagious Diseases Acts would have been made by him; because whatever his opinion may be, and whatever he may think of ladies who advocate

the repeal of those provisions, I will only say this much, and I believe I am speaking the opinion of almost all in this House, as well as of the educated portion of the ladies of the country, that they had better leave to men any agitation in regard to such cases. Let us look how the case stands. It has been before the country now for some time, and the question is, has it made progress, or has it gone back? I appeal to the House, as I would appeal to the country, when I say that, notwithstanding all that my hon. friend the member for Marylebone has said, and notwithstanding the meetings that he has talked of, this movement has not made progress in the country. It has not made progress in the House, and why the speech of the hon. member for Tamworth will show. He has thought about this matter; he has seen what the logical consequences must be of passing such a Bill as this. Does the hon. member for Manchester tell me that having passed such a Bill as this he is prepared to stop there? No; everyone knows that the movement will go on. It would be absurd to say that women who have property of their own should lose the right of voting by marriage, and the enfranchisement of married women will come by and by. Then will come the question of a seat in this House. I shall not go into that matter, but those who have thought over it have reconsidered the opinions they formerly held, and the division to-day will present a very different complexion from hitherto. Far be it from me to say that women are not useful in regard to education; far more so than men. (Hear, hear.) Yes, in their own position; but the great question is whether, if you have fifty men and three or four women mixed up together (as is the case at any rate on the School Board) women may not say what they please; and whether, when the gallantry of men is called into account, women have not a far greater advantage. In cases of that kind I would venture to say that the more you try to introduce such changes, the worse it will be, not only for them, but for this country. Now let me go further. The hon. member for Marylebone has said that one-seventh of the land of this country above one acre is held by women. I should like him to have gone more closely into that calculation, for I deny it entirely, and some statistics might be brought to show that it has no foundation in fact. Notwithstanding all that he has said about the increase of interest on this question throughout the country, I say for myself, as a humble individual, that I have asked women of every position in life, from the highest to the lowest; I may have been unfortunate in the selection of those I asked, but I have never found one individual woman who has a wish to possess this franchise, and that is the main point. Until you can show that the majority of our fellow-countrywomen want the franchise you may come here as often as you like with a Bill like that of the hon. member for Manchester, but you will never carry that Bill in this House. Notwithstanding all that, the hon. member for Marylebone has said, I believe, that not even in another Parliament will a Bill of this kind have a better chance than it has in the present Parliament. Here is the mistake which many members of Parliament make. They go down to their constituency and hear a most respectable, and no doubt, perhaps, a highly-educated few demand that woman suffrage shall be granted, and some are foolish enough to comply in the request that they should support the Bill. But your constituents as a body look to you who represent them not to be guided by any small section or clique. If it be true that the large majority of women in this country do not desire the franchise, I say that it will be a very distant day before the franchise is granted in this country. I see the hon. member for Hackney in his place. He is one of those who advocate most strongly the education of children in rural districts. I should like to ask him whether

he thinks a woman, the mother of a family, ought to bear the same burden as men, and should go out into the fields to earn money in support of these children, or whether he is not one of those who, knowing the value of women in her sphere and in her own house, would rather that she stayed at home to do that which is absolutely necessary for the well-being, contentment, and happiness of her husband, rather than earn money in the fields. My friend will not dispute that argument, and will see that for every purpose she is far better at home than in the fields. So it is at a general election. It is said that landlords take away their farms from those widows who have not got votes. (Hear, hear.) I overheard a friend of mine, who is most highly respected, and who knows the details of this matter as well as any man in the House, say that in an adjoining parish to him, there were five widows, and not one of them had been turned out of their farms on account of not having votes. I would venture to ask why, if these women and such as these are allowed to remain on their farms for the benefit of their children, you should enfranchise women. My friend the hon. member for Marylebone touched lightly upon the speech of the right hon. member for Birmingham last year. I recollect perfectly well looking at that clock last year, when there was ample time to have answered that speech, had he then been so inclined. But he said, as they were inclined to go to a division, he would not answer that speech. Why, it was a very difficult speech to answer. I am glad to say that in regard to a subject so vital to the interests of the country, we have that Egyptian repose which we are said by the right hon. gentleman the member for Greenwich to exemplify on this side of the House. I always thought that the right hon. gentleman was a very gallant man, but I believe he has only once voted on this question, and then he voted against the ladies. Thus we have two distinguished Liberals who are Egyptians, and favour repose in this matter, rather than Grecian progress. Well, that is a great point to be gained. The right hon. gentleman the member for Birmingham in his speech dealt conclusively with the interests of women, and with a generosity which I hope he will extend to the much-abused class called country gentlemen, when he speaks of them out of the House. We listened in rapt attention to his well-considered, well-delivered arguments—always so much to the point, and never was he more to the point than when he dwelt upon the duties of women to their country, and showed that it was impossible to neglect them without detriment to themselves—and when he called up those feelings that every man has experienced when he has been in difficulty and trouble, and has looked back to the words spoken by mother, wife, sister, or daughter, we could not but feel that it was not for them to be mixed up in the tumult of popular elections, and that the great majority of the women of this country look to us to protect them in those rights and privileges they now enjoy, and not to force upon them that which they do not desire.

Mr. M'LAREN said he should not have risen to address the House, but for the fact that the hon. member for Tralee (The O'Donoghue) had stated that few public meetings had been held in favour of the Bill, and also for a remark made by the hon. baronet who had just sat down (Sir Walter Barttelot), that he never knew any woman who desired the franchise. The hon. baronet said he had spoken to women in all ranks of life, from the highest to the lowest, and never met one who desired to have the franchise. His (Mr. M'Laren's) experience being distinctly contrary, he thought it his duty to inform the House that there were two views of that question. He had presented a number of petitions to the House on the subject, among them several from women householders in the city he had the honour to represent, numbering in all 900. He had

observed also that a petition had been presented from Aberdeen, signed by 600 women householders in favour of this measure. One of those petitions he had presented to-day. Having heard of the high position of the ladies who had signed it, he thought he would send it to the surveyor of the local rates to have it verified, in order that he might see the real position of the parties signing it. He thought it would interest some members of the House to know the facts. About 100 names were appended to that petition, which was now on the table of the House, but of these about twelve lived beyond the ratepaying circle of the burgh, or were married ladies. These were struck out, and the surveyor sent back the petition with the rental of each house affixed to the margin. All the houses were occupied by widows or unmarried ladies. The result of the surveyor's report, founded on the rateable value of each house, was that from houses of £20 to £30 in value there were eight signatures, from £30 to £60 a year 20, from £60 to £100 a year 23, from £100 to £150 a year 22, from £150 to £200 a year five, and above £200 a year one. Hon. members would bear in mind that he was not dealing with the high-rented houses in London. The figures must be compared by those who know them with the rental of houses in the large provincial towns, and when they found that ladies occupying houses of the kind indicated by his figures had signed a petition in favour of female suffrage, he thought it would remove the impression which existed in the minds of some members, that because they had not met with ladies who desire the franchise, no such ladies existed. The position of those ladies showed that they must have large incomes, or they could not occupy houses of that kind. Other petitions had been presented by himself and his colleagues, from Edinburgh, signed by 52 medical men, 14 barristers, 39 ministers of religion, and 139 persons engaged in education. Within the last few years numerous public meetings had been held on the subject in the city; and within the last year a different class of meetings had been brought about. Ladies of the class to which he had referred had called meetings of ladies in their drawing-rooms, and nineteen of those meetings had been held, from which petitions had been sent up. He thought those facts showed that a great interest existed in certain quarters in favour of the movement, and the facts by which he had verified one of the petitions indicated that the interest existed among ladies of the best class. He might mention a fact concerning the ladies who had been interested in getting up petitions. It was stated by a leading newspaper in Edinburgh that several names had been added to a petition by an indiscreet canvasser in the absence from home of the persons who purported to have signed. The secretary of the Ladies' Committee investigated the matter, and it turned out to be so, and though 3,000 names had been collected, including perhaps 150 or 160 spurious names, the Ladies' Committee resolved that the petition should be destroyed. They were indignant at the idea of spurious names being appended to their petition. It would be quite against their ideas, and in their view discreditable, that they should be the means of sending up petitions which were not in every respect genuine. He believed few instances had occurred in petitioning the House during the last twenty or thirty years in which any member could say that a petition of 3,000 signatures was destroyed because, by the indiscretion of one canvasser, 150 or 160 spurious names had been appended to it. He did not wish to argue the main question. His object in rising was merely to state these few facts, and leave them to make their own impression upon the minds of hon. members.

Mr. BALFOUR said: Whether the hon. member for Tralee was right or not in taking the somewhat jocose line he did

I shall not determine. I shall only address myself to the reason of the House. But, before coming to the subject in hand, I must make a remark upon the line of argument taken by the hon. member for Marylebone when he commented upon the speech of the hon. member for Tamworth. He accused my hon. friend of inconsistency because no new arguments had been brought forward, and seemed to think it absurd that a man, after being made acquainted with an argument, should alter his opinion as to the value of that argument. My hon. friend was no doubt acquainted with these opinions when he was in favour of the Bill; and the change is not owing to his having discovered new arguments, but simply because he has altered his estimate of the value of these arguments in determining this question. I think that the Bill introduces a great change in our constitutional system. There is no country in the world that has adopted woman suffrage. In those parts of America where it has been adopted it has not been an unqualified success. Nobody can believe that there will be any danger to the State from a rising of women, but we have to consider whether the machinery of representation will be improved by this alteration or not. We have to consider whether the somewhat cumbrous and difficult machine called popular government will work more smoothly and with better results if we make this alteration, than if we don't make it. Now I appeal to the House whether adding women to the electoral roll in any large numbers would render a general election a less disgraceful and dangerous scene than it is at present. What would be the result when passions run high, and when almost everything but party considerations are left out of account? What would be the condition of ordinary women? How many would go to the poll except those whose political ardour is such as to make them brave the dangers which are sufficiently deterrent to men? And I think many women will see that politics are not a very desirable field of exertion for them. One of the greatest evils we have to contend with is the bitter feeling that rises between friends and neighbours who take opposite sides on political questions. Everybody who has had to do with districts where political passions run high will know how often old friendships are dissolved in consequence. These bitter feelings would, if this Bill passed, be introduced into the home. Contests would not be so much between neighbour and neighbour, and between friend and friend, as between husband and wife. I think I am justified in treating with contempt all ideas of remedying this evil by limitations of the woman suffrage. I need not suppose the exclusion of married women, and I say that if you include them, you introduce into the homes of England new and most dangerous elements of discord and strife. There is one argument which ought always to be weighed when we are considering whether any new class should be admitted to the suffrage of the country,—the statement that there are questions deeply affecting the unenfranchised class which the enfranchised class refuse to settle. If such a statement is true it supplies, no doubt, an argument for the admission of the unenfranchised class. This argument may be used with special effect against myself, because I have always supported Bills in favour of women, and on one occasion I brought forward a Bill for the benefit of women. I have always advocated the abolition of any restrictions on their medical education, and the other day I brought forward a measure for giving to women educational advantages which are now confined to men. I feel therefore that some may say, "You brought forward this measure; you think therefore women are deprived of some advantages by the action of men, and you are bound to give women that voice in the country which may result in the redress of these particular grievances." I think I have two answers to that—the subjects of the grievances are not of such

magnitude and weight that it is worth while or even justifiable to alter the constitution of the country in order that such measures may pass. The salvation of the country or the happiness of women does not depend upon their medical degrees for instance. There is a second argument that weighs with me more than that. In bringing forward such measures we who hold these views meet with considerable opposition, and our opponents are as fertile in jokes as in arguments. But the opposition which is encountered in this House by those who favour women suffrage is as nothing to the opposition given by ordinary women on the subject. Talk to any woman of your own acquaintance chosen at hap-hazard, and you will get a far more violent attack upon this measure than you have ever heard in this House. On that ground alone I should be disposed to consider with suspicion any effort to give this privilege to women. Then what are the particular questions in which women have shown interest? There was never a more violent or unscrupulous agitation than that to which the hon. member for Tamworth referred. Well, it was entirely originated by women, who advocated on humanitarian principles a course against the judgment, common sense, and the best interests of mankind. When we consider that such questions as these would be likely to be brought before a woman suffrage Parliament, I think the House will agree that there is not sufficient reason for making this great change in the law of the country.

Sir J. MCKENNA said: I wish to explain here that I shall give my vote in favour of this Bill. It has been said that if the Bill passes it necessarily means the enfranchisement of married women. Nothing has been more clearly denied by those who introduced the Bill and those who have supported it than that there is any such intention. But if there be anything in the Bill which is in the least degree doubtful in its terms, it could be easily remedied in Committee. I for one would not support the Bill if I believed it would introduce the possible occurrence of a divided vote between husband and wife at Parliamentary elections. I simply understand that the vote which would be conceded by this Bill would be quite analogous to the franchise now enjoyed for municipal elections, and which has not been followed by a demand to assume municipal offices. The hon. member for East Sussex has made some remarks in reply to an observation from this side of the House, denying that female tenant farmers were turned out of their farms and replaced by male tenants. He says he knows one case in which a gentleman has informed him that he had no less than five widows as tenants. I ask him whether he thinks that these five widows should be placed in such a position (as I presume he meant to imply that they were important and valuable tenants) and why should the territory of which they were the occupants, they having a large number of persons under them, only have Parliamentary representation at the will of the owner? If you do not descend to manhood suffrage, I do not see why you should not give a property suffrage, and give it to women as well as to men, except in the case where the woman has entered with her eyes open into a contract which transfers her rights to her husband. I cannot conceive that this Bill necessarily leads one step further. No one has proposed to elect a woman to the office of alderman, although she possesses a municipal vote, and why should it be a dangerous principle to apply to the Parliamentary franchise? I may certainly testify to the fact that the majority of the women of my acquaintance are against this Bill. And why? Because they feel themselves tolerably well represented by men in whom they have confidence. But with respect to the struggling class of women who are thrown upon the world, and who are struggling in some kind of business, why should not they have a franchise conferred upon them

which would make them an important element in our political community. But if we enfranchised those women who are now entitled to the municipal franchise, and if after a year or two it was proved to be an infelicitous change, I would turn round and vote for the repeal of the Bill. I should be quite prepared to change my opinion if I saw good ground; but since the subject was introduced by Mr. Mill, I have seen no occasion to alter the favourable views I then entertained.

Mr. HENLEY, in stating his reasons for supporting the principle of the Bill, said that many years ago the Legislature entrusted the women of England with the municipal franchise. As far as he recollected, this was done almost *mero motu* by the Legislature without any great amount of pressure from without. All the terrible results which the opponents of the present Bill anticipated had not occurred in consequence of the admission of women to the lower franchise. Not only did political feeling enter into all municipal contests as much as it did in Parliamentary elections, but with the former there were also mixed up local and personal considerations of the strongest kind. (Hear, hear.) No proof whatever had been given in support of the assertion that if women had the Parliamentary franchise they would be taken out of their proper sphere of action. A similar result must surely have been produced by giving them the municipal franchise, but no attempt had been made to prove that anything of the kind had occurred. As the Legislature had chosen to bring women into the turmoil of public life at municipal elections, which were annual, he saw no reason why they should not also be allowed to vote at elections for members of Parliament. For these reasons he should support the principle of the Bill. (Hear, hear.) He did not profess to fully understand the details, but they could be amended, if necessary, in Committee.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE began by expressing his satisfaction to see Mr. Henley once more in his place in the House of Commons; but he was sorry to say he could not agree with him that the measure before the House was either safe or judicious. Mr. Henley had spoken of the municipal franchise as a test of how the Parliamentary franchise would be used by women; but the giving of the municipal franchise was accidental, not deliberate, and its results have not been such as to justify taking other steps in the same direction. At the time at which that clause was introduced into the Bill, which assimilated the qualification for the municipal to that for the Parliamentary franchise, members were not so vigilant at late hours of the night as they are now. Neither the capital "A" nor the "asterisk" had been invented to mark what were Government orders of the day, and what was the most important business to come on; and therefore the friends of this measure were able to steal an advantage when the House knew very little about it. But even had it been proved to work well, that would have little bearing on the question. He did not think it had done good; Mr. Henley does not think it has done harm; but in fact it had been tried for so short a time that we cannot be said to know much about it yet. Municipal action is no guide for Parliamentary action. If by any convulsion the present members were turned out of this House, and these benches filled with the members of the municipal bodies of England, he did not think that it would be a good change for the country. The business of such bodies, respectable as they might be, was not legislative, but administrative; the Legislature laid various duties upon them, which they fulfilled according to their ability; but any bye-laws they might pass were very different indeed from the binding legislation which Parliament had power to create. But it was just about such matters of moral and social policy as naturally came into their province that women's minds were most agitated. Therefore,

even if it was proved that the character and action of these bodies were improved by the admission of women to the lower franchise, it would prove nothing as to admitting them to the higher franchise. He did not set much value on the support of the Bill by the member for Stockport, who seemed surprised at the increased bitterness of the opposition. Did he never hear of a movement advancing to a second stage, at which its purposes were more clear than they were at first? As for the member for Youghal, he showed that he little understood what he was doing. He said that the Bill was intended primarily for the relief and protection of women of the struggling classes. He would like to know how humble and industrious women of the struggling classes were to be benefited by giving the franchise to the prosperous spinster, with her villa and her brougham. This movement had been false from the beginning; it had worn two faces, one turned to the Conservatives and the other to the Radicals. It was the old fable of Una and Duessa over again. On the one side, appeals were made as to the folly of excluding ladies of property and intelligence from the vote, and the stability and tranquillity to which such votes would contribute was pointed out. On the other, it was plainly part of a movement by which mere numbers were everything, and which deliberately proposed to trample down all differences in society, all which could qualify or modify the mere process of ruling by counting heads. Why did the member for Marylebone give up the charge of the Bill? Of course, reasons had been assigned, but he was sure it was this, that he could no longer stand the competing elements within the movement. The member for Marylebone was a squire of dames, but he was also a sound constitutional lawyer, and he found his position untenable. But they had some evidence as to what the women suffrage would end in. He was aware that now they did not claim universal suffrage, but he was sure that the member for Manchester would not refuse to go down any incline, however steep, that might be urged upon him. We all know the name of Mr. Hare, who has produced several beautiful theoretic schemes of government, which somehow or other have never commended themselves in practice. Almost the only place where a part of his scheme has been attempted to be carried out is in Denmark, and there some time ago the Speaker of the Chamber would not allow the Chancellor of the Exchequer to open his own budget! Well, upon one occasion, a deputation from the Adult Suffrage League waited upon Mr. Hare. The names of the deputation are not among those which have hitherto been much known in public life, but he had no doubt, for all that, that they were entitled to carry weight. One was a Mr. Shrimpton—(laughter)—and the other bore the remarkable name of Smith, Mr. Smith. (Loud laughter.) Now Mr. Hare is a supporter of women's suffrage, and he stated to Mr. Shrimpton and Mr. Smith—(much laughter)—that he was glad to see that they did not call themselves the Manhood Suffrage League, but the Adult Suffrage League, because he thought that every woman was entitled to a vote as much as every man. Mr. Hare stated this on behalf of the Women's Suffrage League, and committed that body to his doctrine. ("No, no," from Mr. Forsyth, Mr. Jacob Bright, and several other members.) Very well, you can settle accounts with Mr. Hare yourselves. If he had not a sincere respect for Mr. Hare, he would have used more uncomplimentary language about it. How is the House of Commons to stand this Janus-like appeal to property and intelligence on the one hand, to the dead weight of mere numbers on the other? No doubt when Mr. Hare expressed the opinion he did as to adult suffrage, he qualified it with some conditions as to education, but some of his own friends expressed a doubt as to whether they could be carried out. The member for Marylebone said that the admis-

sion of women to vote would not be followed by their admission to a seat in the House; but the precedent of the School Boards disproves that. If the House passes this Bill, it will land itself in fresh difficulties. The other side grows more and more bold every year; and if the member for Manchester really professes to believe they will be satisfied with his Bill, he is either innocent beyond his age and appearance, or crafty beyond belief, but with a craftiness that can be seen through.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT: There is one part of the somewhat jocular speech of the hon. member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) which interested me. He told us that if the House were to pass this Bill, and the franchise were once given, it would be utterly impossible it could be taken back. That seems to me to be an admission that, if women do not now strongly desire the franchise, when they have got it they will very soon be educated to appreciate its advantages. The right hon. member for Oxfordshire made one of his sagacious speeches in defence of this Bill. The right hon. gentleman is in perfect consistency with his own past conduct. He was one of the first men in this House—I do not say the first—but he was the very first man on the other side of the House who advocated household suffrage years ago. He has experienced no disappointment with regard to the results of household suffrage, and therefore he desires to have a real household suffrage which will admit all householders to the franchise. The hon. baronet the member for West Sussex (Sir W. Barttelot) spoke of this as an expiring question; he gave us the idea that he thought the movement would come to an end; but earnest as he usually is, there was in his speech a degree of earnestness unusual even for him; and I could not help thinking as he spoke, that if this movement were coming to so sudden a termination, such earnestness was absolutely unnecessary. Another curious reflection suggested by the debate is this. It seems difficult for any member to take an active part against this Bill, and to be at the same time in harmony with his constituency. I am told that the hon. baronet represents a perfect paradise of a constituency, in which there has not been a contest for generations. It is very likely that in such a place a question of this kind, being comparatively new, has not been much talked of. Last year I had to deal with my hon. friend the member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham), and I remember showing how completely his constituency was opposed to him; and I might do the same with regard to the hon. and learned member for Taunton (Sir H. James) and the hon. member for Tamworth (Mr. Hanbury). I received yesterday a letter from Tamworth, from a gentleman I don't know, telling me that the town council of Tamworth had, within the last week, sent up a petition to the hon. member, signed by fourteen out of the sixteen members of the town council; and the writer stated there was considerable evidence in the borough of Tamworth that, although the hon. member represented the constituency in almost every other particular, yet in this particular matter he did not represent them. We have all heard before probably every argument that has been urged to-day against this Bill; the same arguments, or, if not the same, very similar arguments, have been urged again and again in opposition to every measure of enfranchisement; but, when public opinion became ripe for those measures, when there was more and more pressure out of doors, those arguments disappeared like vapour, and they who employed them had forgotten that they ever made use of them. I undertake to say the day will come when we shall hear no more of such arguments here, and when justice will be done to those whose cause I to-day advocate. I wish to refer to a few of the arguments used to-day. We have been told that women do not care for this matter. I do not mean to assert that this question is now ripe for legislation—

that there is that kind of pressure in the country which would induce the House at once to pass a measure like this. I take no unreasonable view with regard to it. But let us look at the indications of opinion in favour of this measure. In the first place, almost every woman, who by accident has been placed on the register—and in various parts of the country women have been placed upon it—has voted as eagerly as men. Some have voted for members on that side of the House and some for members on this side. Further, they have asserted, in very large numbers, their claim to be put upon the register, making those claims in the belief that they had a right to vote, and defending them before the courts as men have defended theirs. Judgment was given against them in those courts, and what did they do next? They took their case to the Court of Common Pleas, not capriciously, but because they believed that women had the right to vote if the law were fairly construed. In the Reform Act of 1867 the term "male person" did not occur; the term used was "man;" and as we understand that, it is a comprehensive term including the species. But an Act was passed in 1850 which stated that words in an Act of Parliament importing the masculine gender included females, unless the contrary were distinctly stated. Taking these two Acts of Parliament together, it was no wonder women should think they had a right to vote. But further, the word man in the Act of 1867 was used not only in giving privileges, but in imposing burdens. The House will remember that in 1867, when the vote was given, the local taxation of houses was altered, and the alteration produced great irritation throughout the country. The Act was construed as extending those burdens to women, and it was not surprising they should have thought that its privileges extended to them also. It is well-known that the Court of Common Pleas decided against them; but, if there had been an appeal, it is very likely the decision of the court below would have been upset in this particular case. I am endeavouring to show that there is a great desire on the part of a large proportion of women in this country for the franchise. With regard to the municipal vote, I do not accede at all to the history which was given of it by the hon. member for Cambridge University; I believe his statement to be extremely inaccurate. However, the vote was given, and women availed themselves of it in large numbers; and in many places they voted in equal proportions to men. Something has been said about petitions and public meetings. There is not a member of this House who has any cause in hand who would not consider it a great thing if he got petitions with something like half-a-million of signatures every year in favour of that cause; yet that is the case as regards the present question, and the hon. member for Edinburgh has shown with what care those petitions are produced. There is another kind of evidence of the growth of this question out of doors, and I will refer to it, because it is peculiarly interesting: it is the action taken by many in this House in regard to it. As a rule a member who is interested in a question is satisfied with the effect produced by debate, and he reminds his friends by a "whip" that a division is to be taken. But further efforts have been thought necessary on this occasion. I am told that this House has been canvassed as much as any small borough has been canvassed at the time of an election, and with the same passionate activity, in opposition to the Bill. I dare say my hon. and learned friend the member for Taunton could give the House some information on this matter. It seems curious that this fear of representation should have its chief seat on the front Opposition bench, where we are accustomed to look for the initiation of a generous and liberal policy. But I have some hopes even of my hon. and learned friend, as he is open to conviction on the largest scale, and I should not be surprised to see him in a little while sup-

porting this Bill. A very short time ago, judging from his speeches in the country, he was greatly hostile to the County Franchise Bill—(hear, hear)—but I am told—I heard it on undoubted authority—that the hon. and learned gentleman is converted upon this question, and is willing to admit one and a half millions of persons within the pale of the constitution, irrespective of their ignorance or poverty. I have endeavoured to show that there is a large demand, and I do not see how that can be denied. How is it there is this demand on the part of women for some degree of political influence? Does anybody suppose that that which is so intensely prized by men can be looked at by women with absolute indifference? There are few things in life that men prize more than political influence. Only let a Bill for the redistribution of seats come before this House, and see how town will set itself against county and county against town, and the Liberal party will contend against the Conservative party with the utmost jealousy on the part of each, lest a little political power should escape it. Again, one half the oratory of our time, and some of the finest oratory probably that Englishmen ever heard, has been expended in teaching people the great advantage of representation. (Hear, hear.) Women have been learners just as men have been learners; this lesson has been taught them; and far from being surprised at it, I should have been greatly surprised if they had not learned it. Look at what has occurred in the change of the character of this House since the passing of the Act of 1867. How differently now we approach any question which working men may bring before us. We approach it in a totally different spirit, because we have the great advantage of being responsible to those for whom we legislate; and therefore we come to this House with a degree of knowledge which we should not otherwise possess. Look at the change that was made in the labour laws. Look at the sudden disappearance of a mass of prejudice that was not creditable to this House, and consider that no harm whatever has followed, but on the contrary much good. Let the truth be spoken—women want to feel that any questions in which they are interested will be considered in this House in the same serious manner and in the same earnest spirit that are now exhibited whenever questions affecting working men are introduced. Women want to be in this position—not that any question they care about shall be settled exactly as they believe it ought to be—but that members of the House of Commons shall look at it from the women's point of view as well as from their own, being assured that if this were the case justice would undoubtedly be done. A few nights ago my hon. friend the member for Liskeard introduced in this House an educational question affecting women in connection with the Universities Bill. The question of educational advantages is a very serious one for women, for they have to depend so much upon their teaching power; and it was a serious question for the nation, because we, as a nation, are so much in the hands of women with regard to the education of our children. I do not know whether I shall be told I was mistaken, but I thought the House was rather disposed to make merry on that question than to treat it seriously; and on referring to the morning papers of the day after, I found that that was the view taken by the writers for the press. Another question affecting women was brought before the House by the hon. member for Glasgow. He introduced a Bill dealing with the property of married women in Scotland. It was looked upon as something rather wild and extreme, although it was simply an honest Bill, which did nothing more than say that a woman should have what was her own; that was all it said. In the short conversation to which it gave rise, both the Scotch representative of the Government and other members on both sides of the House insisted that

the English Act of 1870 should be the pattern for this Act; and they spoke of the English Act of 1870 as if it were the paragon of perfection. If we had been responsible to a certain number of women in our constituencies, I believe the hon. members who discussed that question would have understood it better. That Act of 1870 conferred great advantages; yet even lawyers would admit that it is full of pitfalls, difficulties, and obscurities. Under that Act, if a man bequeathes his married daughter the sum of £200 the money becomes hers; but if he bequeathes her something more, say 200 guineas, that goes to her husband. If, however, she inherit by intestacy, however large the sum, that sum is hers. Only consider the confusion produced by an Act which allows property to be left under such conditions. The chief aim of that Act was to give working women their earnings, and it provided that their earnings should be theirs if they were invested in one way, but another's if they were invested in another way. Therefore the difficulties placed in the way of working women in dealing with their money were very great. I am not going to deal with the grievances which women complain of; I am not going to enter into a long catalogue of what they conceive to be the differences between the legislation for women and that for men. It may be said, and I suspect it would be said both by opponents and supporters of this Bill, that differences of legislation in regard to men and women are inevitable, and that for all time, probably, we shall have to make one law for one and one for the other. I am not now concerned to contest the point; but if it be so, and if we have always to pass laws which do not affect ourselves, that seems to me one of the strongest arguments which can be used in favour of this Bill, because those for whom we make laws should have some control over us, especially in the case of laws which will not affect us. It has been said in the course of this debate that legislation in regard to women has lately been more just, and that whatever anomalies are complained of will gradually disappear. That may be, and I hope it will be; but, if it should take place to the fullest extent, I deny that it would suppress the demand for this Bill. The demand for this Bill rests mainly upon the simple ground of justice, and I affirm that no amount of argument, however able, and enforced though it be by the eloquence and rhetoric which are at the command of our opponents, can shake the firm conviction in a woman's mind that to pass what is called a Household Suffrage Bill, and to leave her house out as though it had no existence, is a wrong and an injustice. The marriage argument has been referred to by the hon. member for Tamworth, and it is always referred to very vivaciously by the hon. member for the University of Cambridge. This Bill does not touch upon marriage at all. It simply says, let a woman have a vote if she have the qualification. In what I say I am not catering for a few votes; that is not my object; it is to promote as far as I can a candid discussion of this question. I admit that if I found a woman in possession of the qualification to vote I should not ask her whether she were married or not. I do not believe the foundations of society are going to be disturbed because here and there a married woman in the possession of property may have a vote. On the other hand, I am assured this Bill would not enfranchise married women. We are assailed on one side because many say it would; and, on the other, infinite ridicule is poured upon us by those who say you are going to pass a Bill to enfranchise women, and yet you will exclude married women. But what has Parliament done again and again? It has passed Bills, without dissent, which followed these very lines. The Municipal Franchise Bill and the School Board Bill give votes to women and yet exclude those who are

married; and if our opponents were consistent they would have opposed those Bills on this ground, especially the School Board Bill, because it may surely be urged that if anyone has a right to control a School Board in the education of children, it is the married woman whose children attend the board school. I take a practical view of this question; I believe it is a practical question. I would not ask for the enfranchisement of women householders if I did not believe they were capable of taking a part, and an intelligent part, in public affairs, and if I did not know that they had the necessary experience. Let me mention the capacities in which we find women householders at present. We find them acting as overseers of the poor; and is there an hon. member can doubt the usefulness of women in that capacity? We find them appointed as Poor-law Guardians by those who know the value of their services. We have them on School Boards, holding their own against some of the ablest and most eminent men of this country. We find them qualified as physicians, to the great advantage, as we know, of their own sex. Look at the amount of patient labour that is necessary to obtain that qualification. To say to a woman who has obtained it that she shall not have a vote if she is a householder seems to me an unreasonable thing. The hon. baronet the member for West Sussex expressed some doubt as to the statement of the hon. member for Marylebone about the ownership of land by women. I believe the hon. baronet has since satisfied himself by reference to public documents that that statement can be confirmed. I find that of the owners of land of one acre and upwards in this country fourteen per cent are women. We are now face to face with a County Franchise Bill. I have never been in favour of enfranchising the well-to-do and leaving out the humble people of this country; but, on the other hand, I am not in favour of enfranchising the humble and more dependent and leaving out the well-to-do. It seems to me that if this fourteen per cent of women who are landowners are never to have votes, while those who till the soil may have them, we shall be taking such a course. Let me ask a question of those who are engaged in the agitation for the county franchise. Ten per cent of the farmers of England are women: Will you enfranchise the labourers, and will you leave the farmers without any political influence whatever? I think that question ought to be answered, for it is an important one. We find women in other positions. They are patronesses of livings, and five per cent of the lay patronage of the Church of England is in the hands of women. We find women with the right to appoint clergymen who shall be the spiritual instructors of large parishes, and yet we prevent them taking part in the election of members of this House. I have noticed the report of the interview which a deputation had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday. I had understood that both that right hon. gentleman and the late Prime Minister were in favour of this Bill, with some modifications, always considering the question of time. When the leader on the other side of the House and the most popular man on this side of the House are in favour of the Bill, I do not think any adverse division—and I am told we are to have one—will have much effect. The great influence of those who support us in the House, and the large and growing support the measure is receiving in the country will not be diminished by such a division. I must admit, in conclusion, that there is a fundamental difference of opinion between those who support and those who oppose this Bill. Those who oppose it have the view that women should always be held more or less in tutelage, and that others should be in the main responsible for them. It appears to me that this view is opposed to the great facts of our existence, so far as we know them by experience, so far as Christianity teaches them. Women have the same

origin as ourselves. They have and must have—I don't speak of the favoured few, but of the great majority as we find them in every land—the same chequered and difficult path through life. They have the same final destiny; if, as men have believed, there be a tribunal hereafter before which all must appear, women will stand there on the same terms as men, unsheltered and unaided they will be responsible for every act of their lives. A being of whom this can be said will, in the nature of things, gradually obtain a larger equality, and therefore exercise a wider influence. I believe such a result is necessary for the real progress of the race, and therefore whatever legislation may tend in any degree to bring about this result shall have at all times my humble support. (Cheers.)

Mr. BUTT said: I hope I will not provoke dissent if I say that there never was a change in the political and social constitution which would produce a larger effect upon character than the change you are asked to make in the character of the female sex. (Cheers.) It is this that accounts for the changes of opinion. This matter has been dealt with too lightly, for I believe the conviction has been forced upon the minds of many that it is no longer to be treated as a political plaything of some amiable and energetic ladies. I believe we all feel that it is a question that vitally affects the whole social condition. Now it is no light matter to say that this change would strike a blow at the relations that have hitherto existed in every country between the sexes. There is no instance in the history of the world in which women have been permitted to take a direct part in the political affairs of the country. You are introducing this principle, and you are establishing the principle that women have a right to be placed upon a level with men, and you must take that principle with all its consequences. You must take it with the consequences to which it will inevitably lead. You must take it with the far more serious consequences that will affect all the relations of society, if once you establish that new principle. (Hear, hear.) These people seek a Bill for the enfranchisement of women; it is a Bill for the enfranchisement of spinsters and widows. I have heard the hon. member for Tamworth express surprise why it did not enfranchise married women. Well, the married women whom it would enfranchise are for many reasons the women whom we would not wish to enfranchise, who are living apart from their husbands. It might be contended that wherever men are mentioned in the franchise acts, it is to be applied to women, but, if so, it would enfranchise husbands and wives as joint occupiers. It would enfranchise married women living apart from their husbands, and I think it would enfranchise wives having property of their own. If you are to enfranchise spinsters and widows, why don't you enfranchise married women? It seems to me that these are the women whom you ought to enfranchise. Married women are the men who above all others—(laughter)—married women are the very persons whom you want to protect against their husbands, and against unjust legislation, which gives the husband what you consider an undue control over the property of the wife. These are the women, if any, whom you ought to enfranchise; but they would get far better justice from the male sex than they would from the disappointed members of their own sex. What would be the effect of this Bill upon the character of the sex? It would enfranchise only unmarried ladies, and I use the expression ladies advisedly, because it is evident that the Bill would extend to very few poor women. You tell them to take part in politics. Well, a meeting of the electors is called to determine who is to be the chosen candidates of the Liberal and Tory party. The woman to whom you have given the franchise, if she is a strong-minded woman, feels that she has as much right to be there as anybody else. She may make a

violent speech, she may even indulge in very strong language to a man. Is he to observe the chivalry with which we always treat women, or is he to treat her as an equal? Is the sacred guardianship with which woman is now fenced round, and which makes many submit to an insult rather than reply to her, to be set at naught? The hon. member for Stockport says that woman asks for no more courtesy than man shows to man. I say God forbid that women should receive no more courtesy than is often shown by one man to another. It is exactly because this will break down the spirit of chivalry with which we regard her and enable her to meet man on equal terms. It is exactly for that reason that I honestly hope and pray that women's disabilities will never be removed. I am sorry that broad allusion has been made to some questions that have been discussed by the advocates of women's rights. I ask any man in this House to bring to his mind the woman he reverences and loves and tell me if he would not sooner see her lying cold in her grave than uttering the expressions that have been used at the meetings that have been held for that purpose? It has been said that because the principle has been carried that women may vote for municipal elections, we must go on and extend that principle. There should be no embargo to allowing women to serve on juries if they are equal to men in every respect, or are entitled to equal political privileges. Why should Lady Burdett-Coutts be excluded from the House of Lords? Why should any strong-minded woman not take her seat in this House, once you break down the principle that woman was made to be the companion and helpmate of man, and not to be his master. By the arrangements of God man was intended for the busy walks of life; woman was intended for home and those higher relationships which make life grand and holy. Surely we may judge from history, from woman's frame, from her strength and physical power, that she was not intended to be a soldier, such as the Amazons of the King of Dahomey; she was never intended to be either a military or a political Amazon. No legislation that you can pass can make a woman a man in fitness for the rough work of life. She was intended for something totally different—to share the difficulties and triumphs of her husband. I object to the Bill in the name of society, because I believe it directly tends to shake the relations on which society depends; for you cannot establish these principles without expecting that they will bear their legitimate fruit. I object to the Bill in the name of woman herself, because I believe the privilege sought would not be accepted by 99 out of 100. Therefore, in the name of women, I ask you to leave them in the sanctuary which they so much adorn.

Mr. COURTNEY, who was not continuously audible on account of loud cries for a division, which were kept up throughout the whole of his speech, said that he could not but feel the force of the observations of the hon. and learned member for Limerick, and the responsibility which he himself incurred in rising to meet his arguments. He would not, however, shrink from the task. The hon. member was understood to ask whether there were not any drawbacks to the position which he admitted was now assigned to woman in this country. Even if her emancipation were accompanied by the risk of degradation, which had been anticipated, he would face it in consideration of the advantages to be gained. He contended that, under any circumstances, there was no fear that less courtesy would be shown from strong men to weak women than now, and that all the teaching of history was against the apprehensions of the hon. and learned member for Limerick. He contrasted the position of woman in Turkey with her position in this country, and urged that her emancipation in the West by

the advance of Christianity had been a gradual process, so that even in this country her position now was far better than it had been. The arguments urged against her emancipation were formerly urged against her education, and the "blue stocking" was formerly exposed to the odium which was now reserved for the lady candidate for the suffrage. We were no longer afraid of educating women; and we found the more we educated them the higher became the standard of their character. He based his support of the Bill precisely on the ground on which the hon. and learned member for Limerick had opposed it, and contended that, so far from injuring the character and position of women, it would improve them, and at the same time necessarily improve the character and position of men. The hon. member continued to address the House against increasing clamours for a division, which culminated when the clock pointed to a quarter to six, and

The SPEAKER rose and said that by the rules of the House the debate stood adjourned.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to six o'clock.

The following letter appeared in the *Times* of June 8th:—

To the Editor of the *Times*.

Sir,—It has been said by one, at least, of your contemporaries, and I find it is believed by some members of the House of Commons, that I rose yesterday afternoon with the purpose of talking out the Women's Franchise Bill.

Will you allow me to say that there is no foundation for this supposition? My desire was simply to reply to Mr. Butt's arguments, and twenty minutes would have exhausted what I had to say; after which a division could have been taken. It was not until it became apparent that the opponents of the Bill would not listen to the arguments in reply that the purpose was formed of preventing a vote. Up to that time no one, as far as I know, wished to avoid a division.

Your obedient servant,

LEONARD COURTNEY.

June 7th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, Thursday, June 21.

FEMALE TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

Dr. CAMERON asked whether there was any foundation for a report that it was the intention of the Post Office gradually to discontinue the employment of female telegraph clerks.

Lord J. MANNERS attached great value to the employment of female labour in the Telegraph Department, and therefore had no intention whatever of discontinuing it. (Hear, hear.) Owing to the inexpediency of employing female labour in the central department late at night, it had been found that the stress of work on the night staff had been excessive, and it had therefore been found necessary to reduce to some extent the proportion of female labour and to augment that of male labour. When the proper proportions were obtained, the introduction of female labour into the service would immediately be resumed.

LETTER FROM A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

The following letter has been received by a lady in Leominster from Mr. Blake, M.P.:—

House of Commons, 4th June, 1877.

Dear Miss Southall,—Your committee may always rely upon my vote so long as I have a seat in Parliament. Your claim to the franchise is founded on justice, and must ultimately be granted. With kind regards to self and sister, believe me, yours truly,

THOS. BLAKE.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS.

LONDON.

MEETING IN ST. JAMES'S HALL.

On June 1st, a numerously-attended meeting was held in St. James's Hall, Piccadilly. Lord HOUGHTON presided, and among those present were Lady Anna Gore-Langton, Lord Talbot de Malahide, the Hon. Emmeline Canning, Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., Mrs. Stansfeld, Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Jacob Bright, Mrs. F. Pennington, Mrs. Joseph Buckton, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, M.P., Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, Mr. Puleston, M.P., Miss Becker, Miss Tod, Miss Sturge, Mr. and Mrs. Mark Firth, Mrs. Samuel Lucas, Madame Venturi, Mr. Ashurst, Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd (Leeds), Mr. and Mrs. Scholefield, the Rev. Newman Hall, Professor Quattrocchi, Mrs. Sims, and Misses Biggs, etc., etc.

The CHAIRMAN, in introducing the subject of the meeting, said they were met not to discuss the general question of the mental capacity or equality of women, but for a distinct political purpose—to claim for women the same political rights as men. It was nearly a century ago that the "rights of women" had become a well-known familiar phrase, mainly through the writings of Mary Wolstencroft, which had more recently been followed by the writings of John Stuart Mill. At the French Revolution political equality was given to women, and the scaffold was good to all alike. In England, it was difficult for women to emancipate themselves from the wholesome tradition that their sphere was above all things domestic life, and they did not wish that they should emancipate themselves from it. (Hear, hear.) But they thought that there was no discrepancy between the simplest and the purest ideals and intelligent women taking their share in the political circumstances of the day. The basis of the right of representation was property, and it was a strange anomaly that women, though possessed of the property qualification, were debarred from exercising the right of voting for a member of Parliament. That was a wrong for which some justification should be given. But what was the justification? It was true there were other classes of persons debarred from that right—such as idiots, lunatics, and peers of the realm, for which there might be a good reason, but there was no justification for withholding a vote from women, and it was a right which before long they would obtain. It was a question which was connected with the principle of the higher education of women, and one which no philosopher could treat lightly. As they valued political discussion as an instrument for their own culture, they should not deny an interest in it to women.

Mrs. ASHFORD, of Birmingham, moved the first resolution:—

"That by the exclusion of women from the right to vote in the election of members of Parliament, a considerable portion of the property, intelligence, and industry of the country is deprived of representation in the House of Commons, and that in the opinion of this meeting the Parliamentary suffrage should be given to women on the same conditions as it is granted to men."

She hoped Mr. Trevelyan would soon succeed in winning the franchise for agricultural labourers, for she had a very strong opinion that the moment of his success would be the hour of woman's victory. The great anomaly which would then exist would be too great to exist any longer. Could the landowning classes who would give the vote to the agricultural labourers refuse it to woman in the face of the fact that one in every eleven farmers in England and Wales was a woman? Could the vote be given to the worker and refused to the employer? At present women were debarred from voting in company

with the minor, the criminal, the lunatic, and the pauper. The minor in time would qualify, the criminal might reform, the lunatic might have lucid intervals, and the pauper could improve his circumstances, so that while all the other classes besides women might attain the franchise, women under the present law were for ever disqualified from exercising political power.

Lord TALBOT DE MALAHIDE seconded the resolution. He thought a large majority of women were as fully entitled to exercise the franchise as men, and that they would exercise it in the interests of morality and good order. Ladies were not deficient in moral courage, and where they had the opportunity of making themselves useful to the community they were happy to do so. Women had distinguished themselves in business, in arts, and in literature. If they had employed lady diplomatists they would have settled the Eastern Question. (Laughter.)

Miss BECKER, who was heartily cheered, said the chairman had put in the forefront the words, "the rights of women," a term which had been much abused. Many persons said, "I am not in favour of women's rights," but yet they did not object to their being educated, nor to their entering the medical profession. They were now only asking for the right to vote for members of Parliament on the same conditions as men. There were in England 37,806 women owners of land holding more than one acre. In Somersetshire, Cumberland, and Cambridge, they were to men in the proportion of one to five. There were two and a-half million unmarried women in England, and if they earned on an average £50 a year, there was some £125,000,000 worth of property taxed and unrepresented. Another thing more important still was that the intelligence and moral sense of women was unrepresented, and that the country was injured thereby. The proper cultivation of the intellect of women was important, though some would confine its range to the kitchen range. (Laughter.) She thought they would cook all the better if they could see a little further than the stove. The establishment of industrial schools had been largely due to the exertions of Mary Carpenter—(cheers)—and Mrs. Senior had discovered mismanagement where the male inspectors had been unable to do so. Mr. Gladstone—(loud and continued cheers)—in his speech at Birmingham, had referred to the reports of Miss Irby respecting the Turkish provinces as more trustworthy than those of men. Whatever the fate of Mr. Jacob Bright's measure in the House of Commons, she was sure that any assembly of Englishmen would be convinced that they were pleading the cause of truth and justice. (Cheers.)

Mr. PULESTON, M.P., supported the motion, amid some interruption, and argued that the ladies had shown in the School Board elections their fitness for the Parliamentary franchise. He did not, however, give the ladies present hope as regards Mr. Jacob Bright's measure, for there was an organised canvass in the House of Commons against the Bill.

When the motion was put a person who had been making such a continuous disturbance as to prevent those near him from hearing the speeches rose in the meeting and said he wanted to move an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN, however, said if he rightly interpreted the feelings of the meeting, there was neither time nor opportunity to move an amendment. The promoters of the meeting earnestly appealed to the chairman to allow the amendment to be moved, but he adhered to his original decision, and put the resolution, which was carried.

The Chairman called upon Miss Sturge to move the next resolution. Several persons protested against this course of proceeding, and Miss Becker appealed to the chairman to hear the amendment. A gentleman made his way to the platform,

but Miss STURGE said she felt bound to be ruled by the chairman, who had called upon her to speak. In a very spirited and pungent manner she proceeded to criticise the speech of Mr. Bright, and to answer some of the objections against women voting. She could not understand why it was supposed she would neglect her domestic duties if she had a vote. Sir Henry James, she thought, lost somewhat of his legal acumen when he said that women, if they got into Parliament, would be unable to vote properly upon questions before the House, as they would get their knowledge second-hand. He entirely forgot that all his knowledge of women was obtained second-hand. (Cheers.) Mr. Bright had sent her a copy of Milton, and, while she appreciated the gift, she could not agree with Milton's ideas about women. Milton might be wholesome reading, but he did not agree with her. Throughout his pages ran the idea that woman was weak, and that to be weak was to be miserable. She preferred her Bible to Milton, for she read there of the restoration of women. Womanhood was no longer a crime, and they would no longer class themselves with idiots and lunatics, and submit to be deprived of the right of voting. (Cheers.) She moved the adoption of a petition to the House of Commons in favour of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill.

Mrs. JULIA WARD HOWE, from America, spoke in favour of the resolution, which was adopted, and the meeting, which had been well sustained, separated after a vote of thanks had been passed to the chairman.

MARYPORT.

A very good meeting on the subject was held in the Baptist Schoolroom, on June 13th, when Miss Armstrong, the popular lecturer, attracted a large audience. Mr. R. Adair presided, and we noticed on the platform Messrs. Telford, W. Hine, and J. Ross. The following resolution was moved by Mr. Telford, seconded by Mr. Ross, and ably supported by Miss Armstrong, and carried unanimously: "That this meeting feels assured that a grievous wrong is inflicted upon women householders and ratepayers by the power of voting for members of Parliament being withheld from them, they being legally qualified in every respect but that of sex; and this meeting hereby calls upon the Legislature to take immediate steps for the removal of the unjust disabilities under which all such women householders and ratepayers suffer."—Mr. Hine moved a vote of thanks to Miss Armstrong, which was seconded by the Rev. J. Cochrane.—*Maryport Advertiser.*

## DRAWING-ROOM MEETING AT LANGTON HOUSE.

A numerous meeting of ladies and gentlemen, the former decidedly preponderating, was held at Langton House, George-street, Hanover Square, London, on June 12th, by invitation of Lady Anna Gore-Langton, to discuss the adverse speeches in the House of Commons in the recent debate on the Women's Suffrage Bill.—Lady ANNA GORE-LANGTON, in a few words, explained the object of the assembly.—Miss BECKER (who opened the discussion, all the speakers being ladies), after observing that the arguments used against the suffrage were such as tended to advance the cause, replied to Mr. Hanbury's speech in moving the rejection of the Bill. The hon. gentleman's objection that the Bill touched the very basis of society she met by saying that she would be sorry if society rested on so frail a basis as the exclusion of women who were landowners or occupiers from the Parliamentary vote. To his apprehension that if women interfered in politics they would be under the influence of a sort of political priesthood she opposed the fact that they have the same opportunities of reading newspapers

and studying public questions as men. In glancing at the moral and social effects to be expected, she referred to the result of the establishment of women's suffrage in Wyoming, in the United States, as showing that there family relations had not been in the least disturbed, and that women's suffrage had been exercised against the worst, and in favour of the better, class of candidates. Alluding to Mr. Hanbury's revival of the old objection that the claim set up implied that the sexes had adverse interests, she said they had in some respects not adverse but diverse interests, and that it was desirable that the special interests of women should be represented. In concluding, she contended that the possession of privileges by women was no reason whatever for refusing their rights.—Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD, of Leeds, who spoke next, addressed herself especially to the speech of Sir Walter Barttelot. In answer to his question as to the expectations formed as to the beneficial influence of women upon School Boards, she bore personal testimony to the great services rendered by lady members of the School Boards of Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Huddersfield; to his remark that the same ladies were usually found speaking at meetings on that subject, she replied by saying that a similar objection might be urged against almost any great public movement. Referring to the constantly repeated argument that the scenes at elections were too dreadful to be witnessed by women, she said that, having visited two polling booths in the lowest parts of Leeds at a general election, she witnessed no more shouting or disorder than were to be seen in going to either of the London operas. She concluded by declaring from personal knowledge that great interest was felt in the success of the movement among many of the working women of Leeds.—Mrs. W. M. GREY said: This is the first time since I came forward in the movement for the better education of women that I have ever opened my lips on woman suffrage. I have, indeed, carefully avoided doing so, and refused every invitation to speak, partly because it is unwise to attempt to drive two coaches at once, and as I was anxious to drive or at least be a passenger in the education coach, I thought it better to leave the suffrage coach without me, but yet more because the education movement was fighting its way against much prejudice, and to weight it with the still stronger prejudices clustered round women's suffrage would have done it great injury, while what I could have done for the suffrage would have done but little good. My sister (Miss Shirreff) felt with me, and we determined to go on quietly working, with the conviction that every woman who did her chosen work well was helping women's suffrage. But when it was stated in the House of Commons that none of the women who had been promoters of women's education were friends to women's suffrage, and those who had helped in Girton College were especially mentioned, then my sister and I resolved it would be cowardly not to speak. And when asked to speak here I determined to break through my rule. I believe the truth is the reverse of what was stated. As a rule all the women who have been active in any cause for the benefit of their sex are strong friends of the suffrage, and the few exceptions go to prove the rule. I am here, therefore, to declare that whatever value may be given to the judgment of my sister and myself—judgment founded on the experience of a long life, and exercised on every question in which women are concerned; whatever influence we may possess, from personal character or the value of any work we have been able to do, the whole of that weight, the whole of that influence, we wish to be thrown into the women's suffrage scale. I would like to say why I wish all thrown into the women's suffrage scale. I believed it impossible to deny the claim, but I was indifferent to it. But ever since I began to work for women's education, I have felt

more and more that we should never get justice in education without the suffrage, and on the other hand the suffrage movement has helped that for education.—Miss Tod, of Belfast, replied to the speeches of The O'Donoghue and Mr. Butt, and met the appeal of the latter to history by pointing to the fact that among the wisest and most glorious sovereigns were women, and that women had taken a leading part in some of the greatest religious and social movements recorded.—Miss L. ASHWORTH, who was the last speaker, after alluding to the uproarious close of the debate last Wednesday, and saying that Midhat Pasha's idea of the respect paid to women in England must have been rather lowered by what he then witnessed, expressed her confidence that whenever the question of Parliamentary reform was re-opened in the Legislature the demand now made would be conceded.—On the motion of Lady ANNA GORE-LANGTON, a vote of thanks was given to the speakers, and her ladyship's kindness in granting the use of her residence for the meeting afterwards received a fitting acknowledgment.

#### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

The annual general meeting of this organisation was held on June 21st, at the offices of the society, in Berners-street, Oxford-street, Mr. M'Laren, M.P., in the chair. There was a numerous attendance, and amongst those present were the Hon. Mrs. Maurice Drummond, Mrs. Mark Pattison, Mrs. M'Laren, Mrs. F. Pennington, Mr. Ashurst, Mr. Johnston, M.P., Mr. Courtney, M.P., Mr. Pennington, M.P., Mr. Lloyd Garrison, Mr. C. M'Laren, Miss Arabella Shore, Mrs. T. Taylor, Miss Tod, Miss Reeves, Hon. Emmeline Canning, Miss Williams, Miss Sharman Crawford, Mrs. Maurice Brooks, Miss Gurney, Mr. Alfred Bennett, and Mr. Alexander Ellis. The report, which was read by Miss Tod, opened with an allusion to the debate upon the Bill of Mr. Jacob Bright, which came to such an unusual conclusion on the 6th inst., referred to the petitions in favour of the measure, pointed to the number of public meetings which had been held in its advocacy, thanked numerous friends for lending their drawing-rooms with a view of assisting the movement, deplored the loss of Miss Martineau and Miss Carpenter, alluded to the steps which had been taken to advance the work, and wound up with an earnest request to the friends of the Bill to put forth renewed exertions during the coming year. The adoption of the report having been moved by Mr. W. Johnston, M.P., was seconded by Mr. Courtney, M.P., who, with reference to the recent debate, expressed his hope and belief that the cause had not suffered thereby. Indeed, it might be readily assumed that the object which they had at heart had been rather advanced than retarded, from a general recognition of the fact that there had been an obvious attempt to stifle discussion. He contended that both the character of woman and the tone of political life would be elevated by admitting women to the franchise.—Mr. William Lloyd Garrison, who was very heartily received, then addressed the meeting. His primary purpose in coming to this country was, he said, to recruit his health, and with this view he had avoided public gatherings. Still, he was happy to be amongst them that day, for their cause was an excellent one, and he was an advocate for women's rights to the fullest extent of the term. Surely Englishmen were precluded from raising any objection to such a sentiment as this, for whom did they see on the throne of this realm? A woman, a wife, and a mother, honoured and esteemed not only throughout this kingdom, but throughout the world. If a woman was qualified to be a queen, the head of the Church and of the State, she was certainly qualified to be something less,

and to exercise the franchise for the election of members to Parliament. The claim now put forward was just and right, and he had never heard an argument against it. Let them assert it, and their efforts would be ultimately crowned with success. Women had the same interests, the same rights, and the same destiny as men, and their influence would be an ennobling one when brought to bear upon the work of legislation. There would be a higher degree of purity and moral feeling than existed at present, and if they boldly persevered in the face of all discouragements they would ultimately triumph over the dominion of prejudice.—Mr. Ashurst, in moving the election of the executive committee, exhorted the meeting to work steadily with one great object, the passing of Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill.—Miss Arabella Shore, in seconding the motion, replied to many of the arguments in the press against this measure.—The resolution was carried, as well as another, moved by Mrs. Mark Pattison, and seconded by Mrs. Charles M'Laren, thanking those members of the House of Commons who had introduced and supported the Women's Suffrage Bill, and pledging their assistance to the cause upon the reintroduction of the measure.—A vote of thanks to the chairman, on the motion of Miss Tod, brought the proceedings to a close.—*Daily News.*

#### THE PHYSICAL FORCE OBJECTION TO WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

The following letter was addressed by Mrs. Wm. Grey to the editor of the *Spectator*, but declined, on the ground that he had already accepted a letter on the subject from another correspondent:—

*To the Editor of the Spectator.*

Sir,—Only your known candour and generosity towards opponents could lead me to hope that you will admit into your columns a protest against the doctrine set forth by you last week in your article on women's disabilities. That doctrine, as dangerous as any ever uttered by political demagogues to excite and flatter the passions of the multitude, and as false, I think, as dangerous, is that society rests ultimately on physical force; that political privileges should be conceded only to those who have force enough to extort them, and that women, not possessing that brute force, may and should be denied them. For the moment I will leave out of sight the tremendous consequences of this doctrine, that not justice, not the good of the community, are to decide on the distribution of political power, but only the will of the strongest, and will ask, is it true? Does the history of human societies show that they rest on physical force, that government is the expression of the sum of brute forces existing in the governed? Is it not rather the exact reverse of the truth, and is not government everywhere and under all forms the expression of the ideas and sentiments which have prevailed over physical force? I will take as an illustration the policeman who, by a motion of his finger, guides and controls four meeting streams of traffic, say at Hyde Park Corner in the midst of the season. Does that policeman represent physical force? No, for any one of the carriages he stops could crush him as he stands as easily as the mob could crush his eight thousand brother policemen who protect life and property over the whole of London. He represents law, and law represents the long inheritance of moral and intellectual forces which from generation to generation have more and more controlled, subdued, and governed the brute forces of the country. I venture to affirm that no social order has ever rested on physical force. As Metternich pithily expressed it: "On peut tout faire avec des baïonnettes excepté de s'asseoir dessus." Brute force can destroy social

#### THE PROPERTY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

CLARK v. CLARK.

We extract from the *Spectator* the following commentary on a recent case, illustrating the law on this subject. We have slightly abridged the narrative:—

It appears that in 1872 a Mrs. George, a widow of about nine months' standing, who had been left by her husband, a solicitor, in possession of seven children, a pleasant house, and a settlement of nearly £500 a year, advertised for a husband in the *Matrimonial News*. Mr. Clark, a person with "property in America" of a somewhat unreal kind, a widower with four children, answered the advertisement, and was accepted without inquiry, or rather, in spite of the advice of the widow's family that she should inquire further. Mrs. George, however, though determined to be re-married, was not quite lost to all considerations of worldly prudence, and insisted, as she alleges and the Court believed, that the control of her income should remain with herself. A deed was accordingly drawn up, under Mr. Clark's instructions, by a solicitor who was also her trustee, vesting the life-estate first of all in herself, that is, leaving to her its separate control. The solicitor, however—upon what instructions, or from what motive, is not known—introduced into the deed an interlineation, vesting the first life-estate in Mr. Clark, and the deed thus radically changed was not placed before Mrs. George until the morning of the wedding day. It was then read to her in the regular way; but Mrs. George, either from ignorance of legal language or pre-occupation of mind, or both, failed, as she states in her evidence, to understand how completely its character had been changed, and was married in ignorance that she had signed away all control of her life-income. She does not, indeed, appear to have discovered or repented the fact for some years; but husband and wife, as was natural under the circumstances, ultimately differed, and Mrs. Clark appealed to the Court of Chancery to declare that she was entitled to the first life-estate in her income—that is, in fact, that it belonged to herself and not to her new husband. It was argued, of course, that the settlement having been read to her before marriage could not be upset, but the Vice-Chancellor held that it could, for as it had been executed under Mr. Clark's instructions, he was the agent who undertook to have a proper settlement prepared, and this settlement was not a proper one—that is, one which the Court, if consulted, would have sanctioned. The Court had power in such cases to alter a settlement, as was evident from the decision in "Corley v. Lord Stafford," and he directed this to be done, in such a manner as to give Mrs. Clark the first life-estate in the income, thus re-investing her with the rights which she had so foolishly forfeited. He further marked his opinion of Mr. Clark's conduct and that of the solicitor by burdening them with all the costs they had incurred in the case.

The story seems to us not so noteworthy on that side [the references to the *Matrimonial News*] as on this—the evidence it offers of the excessive unfairness of the existing laws affecting property held by women. According to the evidence accepted by the Court, Mrs. Clark was done out of her property—we do not mean fraudulently done out of it, but still deprived of it without her consent or knowledge—solely because she was a woman. She never intended to give away her income. If she had had the same rights as a man, she never would have given away her income. But being a woman, her income, from the mere fact of her marriage, passed away, for her life, in the absence of settlements, to her husband, and a complicated legal arrangement was necessary to protect her in the possession of her own, which ought to have remained hers without any settlement at all. It was, in fact, necessary to execute deeds

order, as it has done again and again, as it will do wherever governments acting on the doctrine you advance refuse to do justice, to yield to a rightful claim, until the wronged are powerful enough to extort concession, but it can never be the basis and *ultima ratio* of society. To refuse the vote to women because that power is not theirs is a direct premium on the appeal to force against constitutional law.

Another of your arguments, that women being unable to defend the country in war should not have a voice in deciding questions involving peace or war, seems to me equally untenable. Even in countries where conscription is the law, large classes of men are exempted from its operation on the ground that their services in other ways are indispensable to society; and a considerable number of those not exempted are rejected from physical disability—yet never has it been proposed to disfranchise them in consequence. I need not consider the impossible cases you suggest of questions in which all the female voters should be on one side and all the male on the other, and the female vote should carry the day; but I may give a real instead of a hypothetical case of the exercise of political power by women. In the territory of Wyoming, U.S., universal suffrage in the literal sense of manhood and womanhood suffrage has been the law of the land for some years. Before women were admitted to the suffrage, the Legislature was disgraced by drunkenness and general rowdiness to such an extent that the members would roll drunk into the sittings, and sometimes be presided over by a drunken speaker. The women, when they obtained the vote, set their faces against this state of things, and aided, no doubt, by the best of the male voters, opposed drunkenness and rowdiness in their candidates so successfully that they have been driven out of the State Legislature, and an altogether higher and purer standard of political morality has been practically enforced; nor does it appear that family life or the normal relations of the sexes have in any way been disturbed. One word more as to the threat which is always thrown out, that if women obtain an equal place with men as citizens they will lose the power and privileges they owe now to the chivalry of the other sex. What chivalry? that of carpet-knights and squires of dames, ceasing at the door of a drawing-room; a chivalry which like that of old is not incompatible, to use the words of the historian, "with the coarsest profligacy, the narrowest caste-spirit, and a brutal indifference to human suffering," as those too well know who look below the smooth silken surface of society into the festering depths which underlie it. The true chivalry, the chivalry of the manly man, of the *gentle-man*—gentle (that is, noble) not perhaps by birth, but by word and deed—will live so long as there are helpless ones to be protected against the strong, oppressed ones to be defended against the oppressor, weak right to be vindicated against wrongful might. Women will lose none of the privileges they owe to that chivalry by obtaining the status of citizens. They may lose some lip-honour, some formal homage; they will gain, if they deserve it, respect; and the woman who respects herself will scorn the hollow form of homage which is not based on what in her is deserving of respect.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

MARIA G. GREY.

At a recent meeting of the Royal National Lifeboat Association in London, it was decided to present the thanks of the Institution, inscribed on vellum, to Miss O'Lingan, daughter of a farmer residing near Ballywalter, for her bravery in rushing into the surf and assisting to rescue five of the ten men who were thrown into the sea by the capsizing of the coastguard boat on its way back from the wreck of the smack Boaz, of Carnarvon, near Ballywalter, on the ninth of April.

in order to prevent the confiscation of property which she did not intend to part with—that is, she was bound, merely because she was a woman, to understand some very technical points of law, or submit to lose what was her own, and what she never intended to give away. A man knowing as little law would have been absolutely safe, for no arrangement would have been necessary to enable him to retain his own. He would have kept it as a right, without any deeds or any necessity for a recourse to a lawyer, and if he had wished to give it away, must have done so by deed. The man, in fact, can only be robbed if he wishes it, while the woman must be robbed unless she appeals to law to protect her against robbery.

Nobody will entertain much sympathy for Mrs. Clark, but it is a case like hers, in which no pity is stirred, that most clearly illustrates the unfairness, the rank injustice, of the existing law. Here is a woman deprived of an income, carefully settled upon her by her first husband, without any fault of her own, solely because she marries, and because, though she tries to protect herself by repudiating the general law, she is ignorant of or indifferent to legal terminology. However foolish or vulgar her conduct may have been in advertising for a husband, as regards her property Mrs. Clark did nothing foolish, but not only intended to keep it, but took all the proper legal steps to break the general law and secure that it should be kept in her own hands. She failed from ignorance alone—ignorance which would have been no burden to a man, but which, she being a woman, and therefore conventionally assumed to be ignorant of law, deprived her of the property she was trying to keep. The law, in fact, because she is weak, weights her with a burden from which it exempts the man, who is assumed to be strong. It is nonsense to argue, as everybody does argue, that she is rightly served, and only punished for her own vulgarity and folly. She was not punished for anything of the kind, but simply and solely for being a woman. She was not less foolish or vulgar before she had married than after, but before she had married her property was her own, and after she was married the Court of Chancery, knowing all the circumstances, and openly condemning her for her part in them, as a mere matter of justice handed the property back to her absolute control—that is, restored to her through law the precise rights with which it is asserted law ought not to invest her. If it is wrong or inexpedient that law should leave a married woman control of her own property, why is it right that the Vice-Chancellor, in defiance of the general sentiment of the law, should insist that she should have it? Women waste money? Well, the Vice-Chancellor gives it to them to waste. They ought to be submissive to their husbands? Well, he says as far as money is concerned they ought not. . . . Which is right, the law which robs, or the law which restores? Suppose Mrs. George had made no settlement at all, but had married without deeds, she could not have recovered anything,—and that is considered just; but if it is just, why is it juster that the Chancery Court should virtually annul the general law? One of the two sets of ideas must, at all events, be bad. Everybody, of course, feels that the Vice-Chancellor, whether his decision is upset or not—always an uncertainty at this Court—is morally quite right, yet almost everybody adds that the injustice which he, exceptionally, seeks to remedy, ought, as a regular thing, to be enforced by statute. The plain truth is that the law and human conscience are, on this matter, in flat antagonism, and that there is not a single argument for depriving married women of their right to their own which is not really an argument for placing all women in a state of tutelage. If the Mrs. Clarks ought to be treated like children or lunatics, why allow settlements giving them independence? and if there ought to be settlements, why not make

settlements universal, by leaving them under the same law as men? We quite understand the assertion that there ought to be but one purse in the household, but then that is the very argument which the Chancery Court declares to be wrong, and heavily fines people for acting upon. Mr. Clark thought very strongly that there ought to be but one purse in his house, and for so thinking he is heavily fined in costs, and loses the property which, had he only refused to consent to any deeds at all, would have been left for his wife's life absolutely in his hands.

#### MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

The Committee call the attention of their friends to the debate, on the 21st of June, in the House of Lords, on the Married Women's Property Act (1870) Amendment Bill, and to the admirable speech of Lord Coleridge in moving the second reading.

Though they regret the loss of the measure this session, they are fully assured that their final success is but a question of time and effort. The anomalies of the existing law are wholly indefensible, and time will but make them more manifest, whilst they urge all friends to increase their efforts to secure the full recognition of the right of a wife to her own property.

A step towards this will be the passing of Mr. Anderson's Married Women's Property (Scotland) Bill, which went into Committee of the House of Commons on the 15th of May, and may be proceeded with at any time. As the success of this measure must largely depend on the public interest shown in it, they request any friend of their cause at once to petition the House of Commons in its favour.

Forms of petition will be forwarded on application to the Secretary, Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, Congleton, Cheshire.

#### Obituary.

MISS MARY CARPENTER.—We regret to record the death of Miss Mary Carpenter, which occurred at her residence, Red Lodge, Bristol, on June 15th. She was the daughter of the late Rev. Dr. Lant Carpenter, of Bristol, and was born in 1807. She had published several works on the best methods of dealing with youthful criminals, and on various other philanthropic and educational subjects. She read many papers before the Social Science Association, and took an active part in the deliberations of that society. She has paid four visits to India, for the purpose of promoting female education and prison reform in that country. Her last visit was made in 1875-6, and only last month a Parliamentary paper was issued containing two letters which Miss Carpenter had written to Lord Salisbury at his Lordship's desire, giving her views upon the question of female education and prison discipline in India. Miss Carpenter took an active part in promoting legislation on reformatory and industrial schools, and her latest effort in this direction was to obtain the insertion of a clause in the Elementary Education Act of 1876 authorising the establishment of day industrial schools. Like all leaders in philanthropic movements Miss Carpenter was a supporter of women's suffrage, and was a member of the society almost from its beginning.

Mrs. Garrett-Anderson has been elected by the brewers as one of the representatives of their body on the North London Collegiate and Camden Schools for Girls.

#### MEDICAL DEGREES FOR WOMEN.

The following memorial has been addressed to the Chancellor and Senate of the University of London:—

We, the undersigned women, who are engaged in the practice and study of medicine, have heard with the greatest satisfaction of the resolution of the senate to admit women to the medical examination and the degrees of the London University. The fact that a complete medical school for women, with the necessary hospital practice, has recently been established in London, leads us to think that the present is a fitting time for extending to women the incentive to wide and patient study which is afforded by the high standard of the London degree. We believe that this incentive will prove to be in all its bearings as valuable to women as it has been to men. We beg, therefore, to tender our sincere thanks to the senate for the action they have already taken, and to express our earnest hope that the necessary arrangements will be completed as soon as possible.

Elizabeth Blackwell, M.D. (Geneva, U.S.); Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, M.D. (Paris), L.S.A. Lon., 4, Upper Berkeley-street; Louisa Atkins, M.D. (Zurich), L.K.Q.C.P.I. (Dublin), 68, Abbey Road; Eliza Walker Dunbar, M.D. (Zurich), L.K.Q.C.P.I. (Dublin), Bristol; Annie Reay Barker, M.D. (Paris), Birmingham; Mary Edith Pechey, M.D., Bern, L.K.Q.C.P.I.; Sophia L. Jex Blake, M.D., L.K.Q.C.P.I. (Dublin); Isabel Thorne, Seven-oaks; Edith Shove, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Jean E. McCall, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Janet Monteath Douglas, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Jane E. Hammond, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Isabella Bartholomew, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Annie de la Cherois, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Isa M. Foggo, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Constance V. F. Hitchcock, 22, Norfolk Crescent, Hyde Park; F. Helen Prideaux, 22, Woburn Square; Elizabeth Ireland Walker, 121, R. de Morney, Paris; Helen Johnston Burchier, 85, R. Monge, Paris; M. G. C. Hoskins, 13, R. des Halles, Paris; E. A. Mouncey, 19, R. de la Glacière, Paris; Mary A. Marshall, 77, R. Notre Dame des Champs, Paris; Mary Waite, 48, R. de Madame, Paris; Alice M. Hart, 59, Queen Anne-street, W.; Ella Lawson, 6, R. de la Sarbonne, Paris; Rose A. Shedlock, 4, R. des Ecoles, Paris; Anna Dahms, M.D. (Paris), Faculté de Médecine, Paris; Fanny Jane Butler, 26, Brompton Square, S.W.; Adela Bosanquet, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Jane E. Waterston, 30, Henrietta-street, W.C.; Charlotte Ellaby, Ecole de Médecine, Paris.

#### WOMEN PHYSICIANS AMONG THE SAINTS.

We learn from the *Æsthetic Review* that among the early Christians three women physicians are commemorated as Saints. Their names are Callisthene, Nicareta, and Sophia.

1. S. Audactus was a man of rank and wealth, and held an important post at Ephesus at the beginning of the fourth century. He had a beautiful daughter named Callisthene, who unwittingly attracted the admiration of Maximinus, nephew of the Emperor Galerius, the same who, as Augustus, divided with Sicinius the Empire of the East. Audactus concealed his daughter, and Maximinus revenged himself for her disappearance by confiscating the goods of the family, and banishing them to a neighbouring province. There the local authorities were ordered to compel Audactus to sacrifice to the gods—he,

being a Christian, refused, and was beheaded. Callisthene, to escape from further persecution, cut off her hair, and dressed herself as a man, and under this disguise lived for several years at Nicomedia. During this time she appears to have maintained herself by the practice of medicine. When we next hear of her, she had crossed the Bosphorus, and was in Thrace, attending a girl who had a disease of the eyes, and was threatened with blindness. She recovered, and her grateful parents were so pleased with their young doctor that they proposed to marry him to their daughter. Callisthene then confided her story to them, and she seems to have remained with them till she heard of the defeat and death of Maximinus. The same year an edict was published in favour of the Christians; and Sicinius, whose wife Constantia, sister of Constantine, was a Christian, succeeded to the power and dignities of his colleague and rival. Callisthene applied for protection to Constantia, who received her into her house, and placed her children under her care. Sicinius was induced to restore the property of Audactus to his daughter. She next obtained permission to remove her father's relics from the place of his martyrdom to Ephesus, where she lived righteously, and died in peace.

2. S. Nicareta, or Niceras, lived about a hundred years later than Callisthene, for she was a friend and disciple of S. John Chrysostom; she was skilled in medicine, and cured him of a disorder of the stomach, from which he had long suffered. Nicareta was of a noble family of Nicomedia. Whether she had studied medicine from her youth, whether she had been piously brought up, or had mingled for a time in the dissipations of Constantinople, dressing in the manner condemned by the holy Bishop, and visiting the theatre and the circus, and sharing in the other amusements so vehemently reprobated by him, she became under his direction the superior of a community of women who lived in ascetic seclusion, employing their time in prayer and manual labour, and in tending the sick of their own sex.

3. Scanty as is our information concerning the two women just described, we know still less of S. Sophia Medica, for we cannot say with any certainty in what century she lived, though it was probably not later than the beginning of the fourth. She is called "Medica," to distinguish her from several saints of both sexes of the name of Sophia. She is mentioned in several old Greek Synaxaries and Menologies, and her memory is preserved in a distich, which says that she was a physician first of bodies and afterwards of souls, and was at length beheaded for the faith. Hence we infer that she practised her profession of medicine before her conversion to Christianity, and that she afterwards took advantage of the opportunities it afforded her of bringing others into the Christian Church.

#### REVIEW.

*Woman and the Scriptures.*—A lecture by Miss Corke. Published by request, by Robert Banks, Racquet Court, Fleet-street, 1876. The theme of this lecture is indicated by its title and the motto prefixed. "Philip, the evangelist, had two daughter virgins, who did prophesy," (from St. Luke) and "Mighty luminaries have fallen asleep in Asia; Philip and two of his virgin daughters sleep at Hieropolis, the other and the beloved disciple, John, rest at Ephesus,"—(from Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History.) The lecturer traces the course and deeds of noble women in Biblical story, and shows that they played there no subordinate part. The lecture will be valuable and convincing to those who are deterred from joining the movement for the enfranchisement of women from a notion that the principle is contrary to Revelation.

MARRIAGE OF MISS LILIAS ASHWORTH.

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than those where women were politically ignorant; and that, as it helpeth a man in all his work to be happily married, it would also help a woman. After breakfast, the bride and bridegroom took their departure for North Wales; and after remaining a little while in the beautiful grounds of Claverton Lodge, the wedding guests separated.

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