

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

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ONE of the most noteworthy events in the political world during the past month is undoubtedly the passing of the Ballot Bill—a measure which must exercise a powerful influence on the question of the removal of the electoral disabilities of women. Mr. GLADSTONE, in his speech in the House of Commons in 1871, referred to the objection to the personal attendance of women at election proceedings as being of the greatest force. But he added, "It may be that when we adopt the principle of secret voting we may insure that tranquillity of elections which has been achieved in other countries." Whatever be the merits or demerits of secret voting, both friends and foes are agreed as to its tendency to produce order and quiet at the polling booth. Therefore, one of the most plausible objections to the enfranchisement of women has been removed by the Ballot Act. At the forthcoming municipal elections women will have the benefit of the protection thus accorded to the voter; and we may reasonably expect to witness such a reform in these elections, as regards order and tranquillity, as will remove any cause of annoyance to those who may be called upon to take part in them.

It is somewhat remarkable that the Legislature which has just established the machinery of the ballot box in connection with municipal and parliamentary elections, has refused to extend the plan to School Board elections. A Bill for this, among other objects, was introduced into the House of Lords by the Government, but the Marquis of SALISBURY successfully moved its rejection. In so doing he drew a distinction between parliamentary and municipal elections on the one hand—which he said were of a broad and public character—and elections of a parochial nature, such as those for guardians, etc. His argument was that School Board elections belonged to the latter class, which are determined by open voting. We are not now concerned with the question to which of the two classes School Board elections may more properly be referred, but with the distinction pointed out between

public and parochial elections. The former are those which are conducted with reference to imperial or party interests, and in regard to these the Legislature has determined that the voter needs to be protected by the Ballot. The latter class are usually determined on non-political grounds, the issues at stake are generally of a local character, the office is one of so little social or political significance that there is no temptation to resort to corrupt influence to obtain it, and no one, so far as we know, has proposed to extend to them the operation of the Ballot. The personal intervention of the elector is not required in parochial elections. The voter merely marks on a voting paper, left at his residence by an official, the name of the candidate for whom he votes, which paper is afterwards called for by the collector appointed for the purpose. But the proposal to allow parliamentary and municipal elections to be made by voting papers, without the personal attendance of the elector at the polling booth, has never been entertained by the Legislature. Parliament has marked, in the most emphatic manner, the distinction pointed out by Lord SALISBURY between parliamentary and municipal elections on the one hand, and parochial elections on the other. In the first class it insists on the personal attendance of the elector, and provides the protection of the secret vote; in the second class it dispenses with the necessity of personal attendance, and allows of open voting.

The important fact for us is that women have been permitted to cross the dividing line which separates these two classes of elections. Were the electoral rights of women in this country limited to elections of a parochial character, it might be said that it was one thing to allow a woman to fill up a voting paper at home, and quite a different matter to sanction her appearance at a polling booth. It would be at least a consistent line of opposition to say that women might be permitted the exercise of the franchise in all elections conducted by means of voting papers, but that they should not be allowed to take part

in elections requiring personal intervention at the poll. But there is neither consistency nor reason in admitting women to vote every year in elections requiring personal attendance, and refusing to these same women the right to vote once in every four or five years by means of the self-same machinery and action, on the ground that it is inexpedient that they should personally attend at a polling booth.

We think that although Lord SALISBURY was right in the distinction he drew between the classes of elections, that he was wrong in placing school Board elections in the latter class. The great size of the constituencies, which are larger than the parliamentary constituencies, and the public nature of the questions at issue, place them in the class with parliamentary and municipal elections, and seem to demand the same machinery for conducting them. Should the School Board elections remain under open voting while the others are under the Ballot, the former will become the only battle ground for political parties on which they can not only measure their collective strength, but recognise with certainty the persons who vote for them. We should then have the only public elections extending over large constituencies in which women are both candidates and voters, distinguished as those to be left open to the influences which the Ballot Act is intended to avert.

The question of the Ballot has been intimately connected with that of the extension of the suffrage, and we, who are asking for an extension of the suffrage to ourselves, naturally regard the settlement of the one as tending towards the determination of the other. We presume that the most ardent advocate of secret voting would hardly have desired it if the masses of the people had been permanently excluded from the franchise. He would not have been willing to entrust the householders of a given rental with absolute and irresponsible electoral power. With a limited franchise and open voting every man exercised his vote under a certain degree of responsibility to the opinion of those who were excluded. Had the secret vote been given to the possessors of the narrowly limited franchise, the case for admission of those shut out would have been greatly strengthened. We maintain that the case for the admission of women to the suffrage is greatly strengthened by the establishment of secret voting for men. The influence of the non-electors on the possessors of the franchise, is diminished by the shield of the Ballot, and by the sentiment of non-responsibility created by the secret vote. The lesson taught by the Ballot Act to the elector is that the vote is to be exercised

according to his absolute will and pleasure, free from the influence of others. Such a state of law and opinion is only justifiable on the condition that the suffrage is extended widely enough to embrace all classes who have interests which can be affected by legislation.

In his recent speech at Rochdale, Mr. JOHN BRIGHT, referring to the question of the extension of the suffrage, said that the Bill of 1832 left two nations among the people—a small minority included, and a large majority excluded—the Bill of 1867 destroyed this distinction, and made the people one nation, having authority in one Parliament. But we say that the Bill of 1867 still leaves two nations among the people—one under representative government, and the other under despotic government. We say that one of these nations lives under laws which it has no share in enacting, and is taxed without a voice in the imposition or application of the revenues of the State. We say that the difference between the laws which regulate the personal and property rights of individuals belonging to these “two nations among the people” is such as might be expected from the difference between the character of the governments under which they live. We do not believe that men, in maintaining their political disabilities, are actuated by a conscious desire to do less than justice to women; but they are actuated by a belief that women require a less measure of justice than men. This belief underlies the whole system of laws regulating the personal, educational, and property rights of women. It is beginning to yield to the awakening intelligence and conscience of the age, and various attempts to ameliorate the hardship of the operation of legislation founded on this theory have lately been made. But these attempts can only partially succeed until the concession of political rights to women shall have afforded a foundation for the claim, and a security for the possession, of those personal rights on which depend the freedom, happiness, and self-respect of every individual of the human race.

THE PROPERTY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

WE desire to call the attention of those interested in this question to the proceedings in Parliament and in the law courts, reported in another column. The opposition to the imperfect and retrograde measure introduced by Mr. STAVELEY HILL has been so far successful that the Bill has been effectually disposed of for this session; but it is certain that the question cannot remain long

in abeyance. The position of creditors under the present law is manifestly unjust; and as these persons mostly belong to the represented sex, their grievances will command speedy attention. They can be redressed either by taking a further step in advance, or by falling back towards the principle of the old law. It rests with the friends of the cause to determine the direction in which legislation shall proceed. From the reply of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL to the question of Mr. PIM, it might be inferred that he would not be indisposed to introduce a measure which should deal with the question in a broad and comprehensive spirit, and remedy the injustice which he characterised as worse than that suffered by creditors under the existing law. It would be reasonable to expect that the Government would take up this question, seeing that it deals with the property rights of sixteen millions of Her Majesty's subjects—a numerical majority of the nation. But it would be unreasonable to expect that they would concern themselves with the affairs of a section of the people which is excluded from the franchise, and can give them neither opposition nor support. Whatever be their decision, we may expect that a Bill to amend the law respecting the property of married women will be introduced next session; and we trust that our friends in and out of Parliament will endeavour to promote the passing of a measure based on the principle of the Bill which was carried unanimously through every stage in the House of Commons, but rejected in the House of Lords, in 1870.

The judgment of Vice-Chancellor MALINS in the case of Mrs. PRODGERS deserves some comment. It is altogether based on the principle of the law which was abrogated in 1870. The principles which he lays down as those applicable to what is called a wife's equity to a settlement are these: That by marriage the husband becomes absolutely entitled to all the wife's property in possession, and her property which accrues during the marriage becomes also his, subject to her right to have a settlement. But, in order successfully to assert her equity to a settlement, a wife is bound to prove that she is not already amply provided for. In other words, her right is founded on her poverty.

But this condition of the law has been greatly modified by the Act of 1870, which provides that property accruing to a married woman as one next of kin of an intestate, shall belong to her for her separate use. Mrs. PRODGERS'S £6,000 was so acquired, and would have belonged to her if she had been married after the Act became law. But the benefit of the Act is expressly limited to women

married after its passing. According to the letter of the law, therefore, Mrs. PRODGERS had no case; but we imagined that the Equity Courts were not bound by the strict letter of the law. The very phrase, equity to a settlement, implies that the rule of the common law is overruled by considerations of equity. The Equity Courts, taking the common law as the basis of their judgment, make certain modifications in special cases for the benefit of the wife. It would seem more consistent with equity did they take as the basis of their procedure the law in its modified and ameliorated form, even in regard to marriages which took place before the passing of the Act, rather than the law in its original harshness. Under the amended law, the right of a wife to any property she may inherit is not “founded on her poverty;” she has a statutory claim to it. Mrs. PRODGERS might reasonably have supposed that the new statutory claim of wives to property coming to them as her's came, would be taken into consideration in giving judgment in her case. It appears to us that the decision, which not only deprived the lady of her own property, but condemned her in costs for presuming to attempt to retain possession of it, was singularly harsh and surprising. It is hardly necessary to remark that the principles involved in the decision of this case are not affected by any opinion that may be formed on the merits of the dispute between Mr. and Mrs. GIACOMETTI, or on the comparative amiability of the parties.

WE record with hearty satisfaction the decision of the LORD ORDINARY, which, if affirmed, establishes the right of women to study and graduate in the University of Edinburgh. We presume that the effect of the judgment will not be limited to the individual ladies concerned, nor to those who may seek education at the university for the purpose of engaging in the practice of medicine; but that it will open the classes of the university to women students for the purposes of general education, and secure to such students the degree which is the crown of success in academical study.

WOMEN DOCTORS.—The committee of the Birmingham and Midland Hospital for Women held a special meeting yesterday for the purpose of electing a resident medical officer and secretary. This step had become necessary through the large number of women applying to the hospital for relief. The Medical Board reported that there were three candidates who possessed the requisite qualifications—viz., one lady and two gentlemen; the choice of the committee fell on the lady, Mrs. Louisa Atkins, who has recently obtained her M.D. diploma at Zurich, after five years' study at that University. This is the first instance in the country of a lady being chosen for a similar post.—*Times*, July 24.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

A general meeting of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on Wednesday, 17th July, 1872, Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P., in the chair. Amongst the ladies and gentlemen present were Professor Sheldon Amos, Mrs. Amos, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Miss Liliash Ashworth, Mr. Ashurst, Mr. Dudley Baxter, Miss Becker, Miss Beedy, M.A., Miss C. A. Biggs, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, Mrs. Jacob Bright, Mrs. S. W. Browne, Miss Agnes Garrett, Miss Rhoda Garrett, Miss Katherine Hill, Mr. C. H. Hopwood, Professor Hughes, F.R.G.S., Mrs. John Hullah, Mrs. Henry Kingsley, Mrs. Lucas, Mrs. Duncan McLaren, Mrs. F. Malleon, Mrs. Mylne, Mr. Edwin Pears, Mr. F. Pennington, Mrs. F. Pennington, Mrs. Pochin, Mrs. James Stansfeld, Miss Taylour, Madame Venturi, Mrs. Webster, and others.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the meeting, said—Ladies and gentlemen—in meeting here on the present occasion, which I suppose will be considered the first annual meeting of the Central or Representative Committee of this society, it is not unnatural that we should look back and see how much ground we have travelled over, while it is very likely that some will be disposed to look forward and ask how far the path extends over which we have to go before we can reasonably expect to achieve success. I think I may say without contradiction that every year that has passed since this agitation began has been marked by unmistakable signs of the progress of the movement. There may be some who are impatient at the rate of progress, and who think we ought to move quicker; but it should be remembered that in this country where all political changes happily are made by constitutional means, changes come about slowly. They are the result of the growth of opinion throughout the entire country, and when we consider how long it takes to create opinion in a great nation of upwards of 30,000,000 of persons, we must consider that some reasonable amount of time will be required before any movement of this kind can be crowned with success. How has it been with other political movements? There are two questions at the present moment before Parliament to which I may refer for a moment, I mean the Education question, and the question of the Ballot. Some 25 years ago I was connected with an influential association for bringing about a national system of elementary instruction. It is only two years since this Parliament passed such an Act for England, and it is at the present moment engaged in passing such an Act for Scotland. Therefore we see that a quarter of a century was necessary at least to bring about that change. Now take the Ballot Bill. It is nearly 40 years since Mr. Grote, with the authority of a great name, and the influence which always attaches to a man of great intellect, introduced that question into the House of Commons. I believe it was in the year 1833, just one year after the passing of the memorable Reform Bill. I do not deny these are long periods of time. It is evident if there had been more faith in the country, and if there had been a stronger feeling amongst the people for the necessity of these measures—if there had been more earnest and continuous work, it would not have required 25 years to carry the first, or 40 years of agitation to carry the second of these great measures. It is just five years since Mr. Mill, a man with as much intellectual authority as Mr. Grote himself, introduced this question into the House of Commons. When he spoke upon the subject of women's suffrage to that surprised and incredulous assembly,

was there any person within its walls, was there anybody outside its walls, was there anybody anywhere who believed that in so short a period as five years so much work would have been done, and that the question which he then initiated would have taken such general hold of the country? (Cheers.) We have made some substantial gains. I refer to Municipal and School Board votes. There are something like 150 members of Parliament who are willing to go down on a Wednesday and vote for this Bill. I am not aware there is any—nay I believe I am justified in saying there is no other question before Parliament, except those questions which are taken up by either one great political party or the other, which can get 150 men to come down to that House and vote in its favour, as members came and voted for the measure which we promote. (Cheers.) Every year has seen an increased number of petitions. The number of signatures this year was surprising. Where they came from and how they were secured I cannot tell, but they did come from almost every part of the country, and, as some of you know, with very little effort. Look at the number of public meetings and the influence they must exercise. Consider the increased number of workers; the many ladies of character, ability, and position who have come forward in defence and advocacy of this cause. I heard of one member of the House of Commons who said he was very much in favour of women's suffrage, but very much indeed against women taking part in its advocacy. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I do not hesitate to say that as soon as women shall cease to advocate this question, it will be dead and buried. (Cheers.) It will be quite time enough for women to cease to advocate their own claims when they see a sufficient number of disinterested and earnest men who are willing to come and take up their cause. (Laughter and cheers.) One sign of progress there is which to me is very cheering. Whenever you see a movement growing and becoming powerful, the hostile portion of the press attacks those who are connected with it, and those who are in any degree engaged in leading it. After that remarkable meeting which was held in the Hanover Square Rooms I observed that in some portions of the press, attacks were made upon ladies and others connected with this movement, such as I remember to have seen made against men leading various other political movements,—attacks which I may describe as abusive and vituperative. It gave me great pleasure to read these attacks. They made me feel that the cause was growing, and that those who disliked it had discovered it was a real movement, and that they were anxious to discredit at least the public characters of those who were engaged in it. If then in the past five years what I have attempted to describe has been accomplished, in connection with this question, what may not the next five years do? Five years, let us remember, soon pass away. Another five years will go before those of us who are busily engaged in public matters are aware of it; and if that time be usefully employed, I venture to say you may make this question one of the leading subjects, if not the leading subject of political discussion. The times are favourable for you. It so happens that neither of the great political parties have any programme before them. Our Conservative friends are in a state of political inaction, and perhaps they are not uneasy at the absence of a programme. But the Liberals, I believe, are really uneasy. They have worked out nearly all their pet questions, and I often hear members of Parliament asking what on earth they shall have to say at the next election, or at their various meetings when they see their constituencies; and I think it depends upon you as to whether they shall have to speak upon this question or not. (Hear, hear.) And the times are favourable in other respects. The world is fortu-

nately at peace, and when the world is at peace each nation attends to its own domestic affairs. I hope and believe the time may be distant before another sanguinary war breaks out; but I believe also, whether we have peace or war, women will not let this question drop, but will continue the agitation in a more and more earnest fashion. (Cheers.) I said a moment ago that there was no programme before the Liberal party, but the county franchise is being thought of. It has once come before the House of Commons this session. It is a very important subject. I would like to see men in the counties have votes, just as men in the boroughs have them, and there would be a degree of life, independence, and progress in the counties which in recent times we have never seen, if the agricultural labourer could get a vote. (Hear, hear.) But seeing that already 2,000,000 of men in the United Kingdom have votes, and not a single woman, I confess I should regret if even the question of giving votes in the counties had precedence of this. (Hear, hear.) With regard to the House of Commons I think I may say that when a House has existed for, say three years, it becomes a middle-aged Parliament; when it has lived four sessions and is about to go into its fifth it becomes an aged Parliament. I do not often find that, in the individual, age adds to generosity or courage, or to the sense of justice, and I believe exactly the same thing may be said of the House of Commons; therefore I am not at all sanguine that you will get a greater degree of support from this House of Commons than you have hitherto obtained. There may be some here, and I hope there are some, who take a different view and probably, feeling that it is possible to get more support from this House of Commons, they will, by the work which they will give to the cause, realise their own expectations; but what I want to point out is that this question is not to be won in the House of Commons. No question of political privilege was I believe ever won in any Parliament. I believe it has to be won in the country. Parliament never gives electoral privileges of its own accord, it only gives them when forced to give them. It is to the country then that the various associations formed to promote this question should turn their attention, and I am bound to say they have a very serious and arduous struggle before them. I believe you must look to the constituencies everywhere. It is a great and arduous undertaking to convince the constituencies of the United Kingdom that this measure should be passed; and on that account your most intellectual, your bravest workers, wherever they may happen to be, will have to be put into the front of the battle. (Cheers.) I am not sanguine, as you may observe from what I say, of an early victory; but I have entire faith that you will one day obtain this claim. I believe you will obtain it because I believe it to be necessary to the civilisation of this or any other country that it should be won. The world has been almost without exception from its very beginning under the government of men. What have they made of it? Is the result satisfactory? We have as sanguinary wars now as ever we had. We have a military system covering every great country, weighing upon it, producing poverty everywhere, and as you know, poverty everywhere produces crime. We have social disorders so great that people are afraid either to look at them, or speak of them. I say, seeing that the world has not yet got beyond these tremendous evils, when it has been altogether under the government of men, it is not an unreasonable thing that in some way and to some extent women should take their place in the councils of the world. (Cheers.) I believe in the necessity of a change of this kind, and believing in its necessity I have no doubt whatever the thing will be accomplished. In the future, then, you have to do precisely what you have done in the past,

only on a larger scale, and perhaps, if possible, with greater earnestness. You have to petition, to hold meetings, to influence members of Parliament, to put questions to members of Parliament in their constituencies; in fact you have to imitate all other great movements which have gone before, and happily in England we have had so many important political movements for great objects which have succeeded that we have examples before us which I think may inspire us to greater and greater efforts. (Cheers.) I did not come here, however, to make anything but a very few remarks. It is a day meeting, and therefore I suppose we shall all wish to get the business over without any great amount of delay. I will therefore call upon the hon. secretaries to produce the report and financial statement.

The report stated that the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage was formed in November, 1871. For a long time previous there had been a growing feeling among the supporters of women's suffrage in London and the more prominent committees in the country that the constantly increasing width and strength of the movement called for a more centralized mode of action than its initial stages rendered necessary, or perhaps possible. Prompted by this feeling, a number of friends in London, at the request of Professor Sheldon Amos, met and formed themselves into a committee. At their request Mrs. Frederick Pennington, Professor Amos, and Mr. Charles H. Hopwood undertook to act as honorary secretaries. On the committee being formed it lost no time in putting itself into communication with the leading existing provincial committees, which at once promised co-operation to the fullest extent. The sole aim of the new committee was declared to be to remove the political disabilities of women by constituting itself a central medium of communication between the various provincial and local committees, and the members having charge of the Women's Disabilities Bill, in order to afford them the most energies; and opportune support, both in and out of Parliament; by aiding in the formation of new provincial and local committees and by acting as a centre for the collection and diffusion of information with regard to the progress of the movement in all parts of the country. The report went on to state that a large amount of work was undertaken by individual members of the committee, and success rewarded their labours. Many members of Parliament added their names to the committee, and numerous subscriptions were obtained. The committee had reason to believe that by its formation a real and lasting impulse had been given to the cause. The report could not "refrain from expressing admiration and gratitude for the eloquent advocacy of Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Eastwick, and other friends, in the debate" on the proposed Bill. Local committees, 66 in number, had connected themselves with the central, and 45 members of Parliament had joined the committee.

Mrs. McLAREN moved, "That this meeting adopts the report and financial statement as audited, and directs that they be circulated." This, she said, was not an occasion upon which she thought it necessary to make a speech, especially after the address they had just heard from the chairman. Those who read the report, the adoption of which she now moved, would find that a very great deal of practical work had been done, and she herself could testify from personal observation to the work which was done in Berners Street. Labour of that description was not often apparent to a casual observer, but it was sowing the seed for a future harvest, and from that point of view she was sure the report would give great encouragement for the work which would be set on foot during the coming year. (Hear, hear.)

Miss BECKER said she had great pleasure in seconding the motion. No one could have paid anything like close attention to the progress of the movement during the past year without being conscious how much it was owing to the exertions of the committee that the success upon which they now congratulated themselves had been achieved. It was a great advantage that a centre had been formed by means of which the associations throughout the country could combine, and promote in common the object of the society. During the past year large meetings had been held, at none of which had they failed to elicit the most enthusiastic and well nigh unanimous support of the people, and it certainly was necessary in the forthcoming year to bring their principles even more widely before the country than heretofore. Within the past few days they had had a great speech made by one who had been long silent in the national councils. In this speech it was said that previous to the Reform Bill of 1867 there were in this country two nations, the one represented, the other unrepresented. She ventured to say that these words exactly described the state of affairs at the present time, although the speaker assumed that the condition which he deprecated had now passed away. She would ask him, and others, to cast their eyes over the nation at large. Did they not see that there were indeed two nations—the nation of men and the nation of women—and that one lived under despotic government, and the other under representative government? (Hear, hear.) Did they not, comparing the laws as they affected those two portions of the people, see that one had an advantage over the other? (Hear, hear.) Did they not see that those who were not represented were under tremendous disadvantages? In the House of Commons there were that afternoon two questions down for discussion deeply touching the interests of the unrepresented. One of them referred to giving mothers some small right over their own children, for the law at present treated the mother as a stranger to her own child. The House of Commons, if the Bill came on, would be asked to allow a mother to petition a judge that she might have some modified rights over her own child; that was all that the men of this country could offer as a satisfaction to the claims of women; and this was the spirit in which questions affecting women would be dealt with so long as the feminine half of the nation was entirely unrepresented. (Hear, hear.) There were many women, and men too, who had a keen sense of these legal disadvantages, who were moved to just indignation when they looked at the laws as affecting women, but who could not see the connection between this state of the laws and representative government. It must be the task of the Society to show to the world that connection, and she believed that as soon as it was clearly made out to the satisfaction of the consciences of the people who now held electoral power, their demand would no longer be refused. That was the broad question which she believed would ultimately decide the point at issue, but the injustice to individuals was also great. She believed there was now present in the room a lady who had refused to pay her taxes because she was not allowed to vote. (Hear, hear.) She hoped the effect of the example would not be lost on the minds of the people of England. (Cheers.) Referring for a moment to the assistance the women's suffrage movement had received from the press, she would remark that she could not fully sympathise with the chairman in what he said of the attacks to which those who had been working in the cause had been subjected. She hoped the press would take a different way of showing its attachment to the movement. (Laughter.) While saying this, however, they were bound to express their gratitude to a large por-

tion of the press. (Hear, hear.) She could note a very remarkable change in the manner in which the newspapers discussed the movement. She found, time after time, articles treating the question on the most broad and generous and just principles; indeed, scarcely a week passed where some instances of considerate and fair treatment did not come before her. She thought, therefore, the Woman's Suffrage cause owed these writers a great debt of gratitude. (Hear, hear.) She had much pleasure in seconding the resolution.

The motion, being put by the chairman, was carried unanimously.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD next moved a resolution of thanks to Mrs. Pennington, Professor Sheldon Amos, and Mr. C. H. Hopwood, for the zealous and efficient manner in which they had discharged the duties of the office of honorary secretaries, which they had undertaken *pro tempore*.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. ASHURST, and carried unanimously.

Mr. C. H. HOPWOOD, after acknowledging the vote of thanks on behalf of himself and his colleagues, moved the adoption of the form of prospectus and rules recommended by the executive committee. A discussion arose, in which Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Patterson, Mr. Levi, Mr. Ashworth, Mr. Amos, Mr. Hopwood, Mrs. Kingsley, Miss Ashworth, Mrs. Glover, and Miss Tylour took part, after which the resolution was adopted.

Professor SHELDON AMOS moved the appointment of the executive committee.

Mrs. POCHIN had much pleasure in seconding the resolution. She congratulated the society upon having secured the services of so many valuable persons. She had been struck with the remarks made respecting the working classes, and thought it would be well on some future occasion to make some appeal to them, and elect some working men on the committee.

The resolution was carried.

On the motion of Mrs. WEBSTER, seconded by Miss BIGGS, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to the chairman, who briefly acknowledged the compliment, after which the proceedings terminated.

The first meeting of the newly-elected Executive Committee was held on July 24, Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P., in the chair. The gathering was remarkable for its representative and influential character. Miss Caroline Biggs and Miss Agnes Garrett consented to accept for the present the office of honorary secretaries. Mr. Henry Hoare was unanimously re-elected treasurer. Miss E. A. Smith was appointed secretary. The next meeting of the Committee is fixed for Wednesday, August the 7th.

THE PROPERTY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

LAW REPORT.

VICE-CHANCELLORS' COURTS, LINCOLN'S-INN, JULY 10.

(Before Vice-Chancellor Sir R. Malins.)

GIACOMETTI v. PRODGERS.

This suit was instituted by Mrs. Caroline Giacometti, otherwise Caroline Giacometti Prodgers, a lady whose name is familiar to the public, and unpopular with cabmen, in order to assert her equity to a settlement of a sum of about £6,000, which had accrued to her since her marriage.

The facts of the case will sufficiently appear from the judgment of the Vice-Chancellor,

Mr. E. K. Karslake, Q.C., and Mr. E. C. Willis appeared for Mrs. Giacometti; Mr. Glasse, Q.C., and Mr. Shebbeare for Mr. Giacometti; and Mr. Cotton, Q.C., and Mr. Montague Cookson for Mr. Prodgers.

The VICE-CHANCELLOR said that the circumstances of this case were of an extraordinary and painful character. It appeared that Miss Caroline Prodgers, an English lady, not at that time possessed of any property, had while travelling abroad become acquainted with Mr. Giovanni Battista Giacometti, an Austrian subject, a gentleman of great respectability, holding the rank of captain in the Austrian navy, and in command of one of the steamers of the Imperial Austrian Lloyd's. They fell in love with one another, and were married in February, 1862; the gentleman, who had no other income than that derived from his profession, giving up his appointment. As neither of them had at that time anything to settle, no settlement was made upon the marriage. Two sons were born to them. They lived together until 1865, when life with the lady had apparently become insupportable, and the husband was obliged to leave her. After the marriage sums of stock amounting to £56,000 had been settled upon the lady for her separate use, with remainder to her children, producing her an income of £1,700 a year, and out of this she allowed her husband an income of £100 per annum. The plaintiff subsequently saved over £6,000, and thus having an income of some £2,000 a year, and having the children living with her, the husband, who had given up his profession and had no means of subsistence, was driven to a suit for the restitution of his conjugal rights. In that suit he obtained a decree, in November, 1870, which was so unpalatable to the lady that her husband was compelled to have her arrested for disobedience to it. This, however, led to the execution of a deed whereby the plaintiff agreed to pay her husband an annuity of £300 a year during her life, and £100 a year after her death, when, under one of the settlements, he would become entitled to £200 per annum. Towards the end of 1870 a sum of about £6,000 accrued to the plaintiff as one of the next of kin of her aunt, and it was in order to have this sum secured to herself and her children that the present bill was filed. Now, what were the principles applicable to what was called the wife's equity to a settlement? They were these,—By the marriage the husband becomes absolutely entitled to all the wife's property in possession. Her property in reversion or expectancy which accrues during the marriage becomes also his, subject to the wife's right to have it made the subject of a settlement upon her and her children, which right she is entitled to assert if the circumstances call for the interference of the court. But, in order to intercept the marital right of the husband, there was the first requisite—that the wife must require a provision. In other words, her right was founded on her poverty. Suppose a wife already had an income of an amount twice as much as would answer all her wants, and that her husband were a bankrupt, would any court admit the right of such a wife to a settlement of further property which might accrue against her husband's assignees? In order successfully to assert her equity to a settlement a wife was bound to prove that she was not already amply provided for. As Sir John Leach said in "Aguilar v. Aguilar," 5, *Maddock's Reports*, 415, the principle of the wife's equity to a settlement "does not apply where the wife has secured to her a competent separate maintenance." In this case the income of £1,700, which this lady enjoyed, was ample for the support of herself and her two children, as was shown by the fact that she had already saved £1,000 a year, and raised her income to some £2,000 per annum. His Honour found no grounds to disentitle Mr. Giacometti to the enjoyment

of his marital rights. He had conducted himself with propriety; the separation was not to be attributed to any misconduct on his part, and letters to him from the plaintiff's brother were in evidence, in which the writer, after expressing his pleasure that at last an independent income had been settled upon him, alluded to the years he had been "sorely tried," and spoke of him in the highest terms as an upright and honourable man. On the whole case, therefore, his Honour dismissed the plaintiff's bill with costs.—*Times*.

DESERTED WIVES.—In the year 1871 there were 690 orders registered in the County Courts of England and Wales, protecting property acquired by a deserted wife since her desertion by her husband. This is 151 fewer than the number registered in 1870. The orders are made by magistrates and County Court Judges under an act passed in 1857.—*Times*.

[The decrease in the number of protection orders in 1871, as compared with 1870, is probably owing to the operation of the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, which covers the majority of the cases which formerly needed the special provision of a magistrates' order. We are surprised to find that so many as 690 orders were registered in 1871, and think it probable that in a large proportion of them the Act of 1870 would have given the requisite protection without the necessity for the magistrates' order, had the women concerned been aware of the change in the law. But there are some cases in which the new Act does not apply. The case of Mrs. Digges, quoted in our last issue, decides that presents are not protected under the Act of 1870. Therefore, if the friends of a woman deserted by her husband desire to furnish her with money necessary for the purchase of a sewing machine or other instrument for obtaining a livelihood, they must resort to a magistrates' order to secure such property from the claims of the husband or his creditors.—Ed. *W. S. Journal*.]

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, JULY 15, 1872.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT, 1870.

Mr. PIM asked Mr. Attorney-General whether it is not the case that, under the provisions of "The Married Women's Property Act, 1870," if a woman possessing property and owing money should marry without having any settlement effected, she transfers her property to her husband, but neither her husband nor she herself, nor the property she has conveyed to him, is liable for her debts: And, whether, if this be the case, he will without delay provide a remedy for such manifest injustice.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that under this Act a woman possessed of property and owing money, and marrying without having any settlement effected, transferred her property to her husband, and neither her husband nor herself nor the property was liable for her debts, and added that that was not the only, nor even the worst injustice which might follow from the present state of the law. He could not, however, on the 15th of July, undertake to introduce a Bill dealing with the injustices under the Act.

WOMEN'S UNION IN GERMANY.—This society was formed in 1865 to open out new paths of industry for women. The next annual conference will be held at Eisenach on the 5th and 6th of October. The managing committee consists of Mesdames Louise Otto Peters, Auguste Schmidt, Alwine Winter, and Henriette Goldschmidt. Letters to be addressed to Madame Alwine Winter, Leipzig.

THE LADY MEDICAL STUDENTS AND THE
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

Lord Gifford has just issued an interlocutor in the action raised by Miss Jex-Blake and others against the Senatus and the Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh. His lordship holds that the defenders have entirely failed in their attempt to show that the University is restricted to male students. He is of opinion that the regulations for the education of women, which were approved of by the Chancellor in November, 1869, are valid and binding in every respect; that the pursuers are entitled to all the rights and privileges of lawful students—subject only to the condition that they shall be taught in separate classes, confined entirely to women; and that on completing the prescribed studies they are entitled to proceed to examination for degrees. Lord Gifford finds the defenders liable to the pursuers in modified expenses.

The following are some passages from the judgment:—

"The object of the present action may be shortly stated to be—first, to declare the right of the ten ladies who are the pursuers of the action to prosecute their studies as students at the University of Edinburgh, with a view to the profession of medicine; second, to declare their right, on finishing their studies and being found duly qualified, to obtain from the University, through its Senatus and Chancellor, the usual and customary medical degrees; and third, and with a view to enforce these rights, to compel the Senatus to make arrangements for the complete instruction of the pursuers, and to do what is necessary for the examination of the pursuers and for their reception as medical graduates of the University.

"The importance of the question to the present pursuers and to all ladies who, like them, may contemplate the practice of medicine as a profession, lies in this, that, by the provisions of the 'Medical Act' of 1858, no one is entitled to be registered as a medical practitioner without possessing a medical degree from one or other of the universities of the United Kingdom, or a licence equivalent thereto from certain established medical bodies mentioned in the Act. A foreign or colonial degree is not available, and does not entitle to registration unless the holder thereof has been in practice in Great Britain previous to October, 1858. Unless the pursuers, therefore, succeed in obtaining degrees, they will be practically excluded from the profession of medicine, for they are not in a position to demand licences from any of the authorised medical bodies, and it can scarcely be expected that they will prosecute their medical studies merely in order to be hereafter classed with empirics, herbalists, or medical botanists, or with those who, in common language, are denominated quacks. Without legal registration under the Medical Act of 1858, the pursuers would be denied all right to recover fees; they would be incapable of holding any medical appointment; and they would be subject to very serious penalties if they so much as attempted to assume the name or title of medical practitioners.

"It is a fact, whatever may be its effect in law, that no University in Great Britain has ever yet granted a medical degree to a lady. The medical register of Great Britain only contains the names of two female practitioners—Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell and Dr. Garrett Anderson. Dr. Blackwell obtained her degree in America, and being in practice in Great Britain before 1858, she obtained registration in virtue of the exception in the Act. Dr. Garrett Anderson obtained a licence from the Apothecaries' Hall, London, and is registered as such; but since her admission, regulations have been made which prevent any other lady from hereafter obtaining a licence from the Apothecaries' Hall. Accordingly, the course pursued by Dr. Blackwell and Dr. Anderson is not open to any of the pur-

suers, and their only hope of being allowed to practise medicine in Great Britain rests upon their being able to obtain a degree from one or other of the Universities.

"Practically, therefore, the questions are now raised for the first time, Can a lady obtain a medical degree? and, Is any lady to be allowed to practise medicine in Great Britain?"

"The Lord Ordinary is clearly of opinion that, by the law of Scotland—indeed, he may say by the law of every civilized country—their is no inherent illegality in women prosecuting the study of the science of medicine, using the word in its largest sense, or in their engaging in the practice of medicine as a profession.

"There is no natural impropriety in a woman becoming an educated and accomplished physician or surgeon, and no unsuitableness or impropriety in her practising the profession. Indeed, some branches of the profession are peculiarly appropriate to women, and peculiarly inappropriate and unsuitable to men.

"The practice of all civilised nations, indeed of uncivilised nations also, testifies most loudly at once to the fitness and to the suitableness of many if not most of the branches of the medical profession being undertaken by women. From the earliest times in Italy medical degrees were conferred upon and medical honours held by women, and at the present date women are allowed fully and freely to graduate in Italy, France, Spain, Switzerland, Russia, and America, as well as in several other countries. Indeed, Britain is almost the only country in which the right of women to graduate in and practice medicine has not been fully recognised. One object of the present action is to try whether the right accorded in other countries does not also exist in Scotland.

"If, then, in Scotland there is no inherent illegality in women studying medicine and obtaining degrees therein, it is scarcely necessary to add that there can be no inherent illegality in women practising medicine as a profession. It would indeed be strange if women, merely on account of their sex, were by law excluded from a high and honourable calling for most departments of which they are peculiarly fitted, and for some departments of which they seem to be by nature almost exclusively designated. The law of Scotland, like that of many other countries, has in many instances been unjust to women, but it has never gone so far as to exclude them from the legal practice of medicine as a profession."

WOMEN AS UNIVERSITY GRADUATES.

In the case of the lady students and the University of Edinburgh, there is a contention that "according to the laws by which Universities are governed, and apart from any special circumstances connected with the University of Edinburgh," which, however, is modelled on these laws, women are entitled to receive such instruction and graduation, and this is supported by some interesting averments of practice in various Universities. The Glasgow University, it is stated, was founded by a Bull of Pope Nicholas V. in 1450, which was obtained at the suit of King James II., and in this Bull the University received all privileges enjoyed by the Pope's city of Bologna. At the University of Bologna women were allowed to graduate, and several women filled professorial chairs there. Of these the following names are given:—Bettisia Gozzadini, made Doctor of Laws in 1236, and lectured on that subject at Bologna; Novella Andrea, who lectured on law for her father, Giovanni D'Andrea, about 1340; Alessandra Gigliano, who studied medicine at Bologna early in the 14th century; Novella Colderini, made Doctor of Law in 1358, and lectured on behalf of her husband, who was Professor of Law; Maddalena Buon-

signori, made Doctor of Laws, and held a professorship in that subject from 1380 to 1396; Dorotea Bocchi, made Doctor of Philosophy, and Professor of Medicine, and died 1436; Laura Bassi, who graduated in philosophy 1732, and was, without her request, made Professor of that subject, and, in 1776, also Professor of Experimental Physics; Anna Morandi Manzolini, made Professor of Anatomy in 1760; Maria Gaetana Agnesi, made Professor of Mathematics by Pope Benedict XIV., about 1750; Maria Vittoria Dosi, who graduated in law in 1722; Christina Roccati, who was made Doctor of Philosophy in 1750; Clothilde Tambroni, Professor of Greek Philosophy in 1793; Maria Dalla Donne, who graduated in medicine in 1799, and was made Professor of Midwifery by Napoleon Bonaparte; Zaffira Feretti, graduate in medicine in 1800; Maria Mastellari Collizzoli Sega, graduate in medicine in 1799; Maddalena Noe Canedi, graduate in civil law in 1807. Women are further averred to have graduated at the Universities of Pavia, Ferrara, and Padua, at which University Elena Lucrezia Piscopia Cornaro graduated in 1678. Previous to graduation she was offered a chair in the University, which she accepted after graduating. Bettina Novella l'Andrea taught in the University of Padua for her husband, Giovanni Sangiorgi, during his illness. In the Spanish Universities of Salamanca, Alcalá, and Cordova; in the German Universities of Heidelberg, Göttingen, Giessen, Würzburg, Halle, Marbourg; in the Dutch University of Utrecht, and the Swiss University of Zurich, women have graduated. The following women received degrees in Paris from the University of France:—Emma Chenu, Bachelor of Sciences, 1863; Lucie Marie Bassetti, B.S., 1866; Catherine Goutcharoff, B.S., 1868; Magdaleine Brèce, B.S., 1868; Clarisse Berthe Marandel, Bachelor of Letters, 1868; Antoinette Brulant, B.L., 1870; Julie Victoire Daubié, Licencié ès Lettres, 1871; Elizabeth Garrett, M.D., 1870; and Mary C. Putnam, M.D., 1871. At Lyons the following degrees were granted:—The Baccalauréat ès Lettres to Julie Daubié in 1861, and to Caroline Sibert in 1869. At Montpellier, the same degree was conferred on Mdle. Cellaria in 1865; and Mdle. Doumergue has passed the two first examinations as a graduate in pharmacy at Montpellier, and will pass the third when she has reached the age of twenty-five. There are several women now, July 1872, studying at the Ecole de Medicine in Paris, and 63 at the University of Zurich.

A WOMAN AS INSPECTOR OF THE POOR.

We have pleasure in quoting the following article on the recent action of the Stromness Parochial Board, from the *Northern Ensign*, of July 11.

THE STROMNESS PAROCHIAL BOARD.

The Stromness Parochial Board is showing an amount of pluck which will be duly appreciated wherever independence and the right of self-government are prized. It has, as would be seen by our last week's columns, once again put the right woman in the right place, by re-electing Miss Corston to the vacant inspectorship of the poor of that parish, and boldly challenged the Board of Supervision to show statutory reason why the appointment should not be confirmed. What the latter board will say, now that the subject has become matter of public interest, and will without doubt be brought under the notice of Parliament, remains to be seen. Certain it is, it will require something more than the mere fiat of the Edinburgh Board, unsupported by reason, precedent, or statutory chapter and verse, to vindicate them in the event of their again declaring Miss Corston "ineligible," and dismissing her. We have before re-

marked that there is a great deal more in this case than the mere accident of sex. For though it is true that but for the unfortunate fact that Miss Corston is a woman, there would have been no objection to her appointment, the case has important elements of still greater public moment. Let it be remembered, and impressed on the reader, that not a word was uttered against Miss Corston's fitness. On the contrary, while she was *de facto* inspector, during her father's illness, the manner in which the business of the Stromness Board was conducted received official eulogy more than once. She kept the books, visited the poor, intromitted with the funds, and conducted the details with complete satisfaction to the Board of Supervision, and with such thorough satisfaction to the local board, that on the inspectorship becoming legally vacant, they naturally appointed to its emoluments the person who had done the duties of the office with such fidelity to the board and such filial devotion. The appointment was natural. It was an act of justice. It was a public tribute to efficiency. And it was unanimous. Had it been otherwise, there might have been some reason for the Board of Supervision questioning the expediency of confirming an appointment regarding which the local mind was divided; but there being not a whisper of dissent at the Board or in the whole parish, the interference of the Board of Supervision involves grave issues closely connected with the effective administration of the Poor Law throughout the kingdom, and aims a blow at the great constitutional right of self government, which in this case is as effectively taken out of the hands of the Stromness Board as if the Edinburgh dictators had sent down an official to take the entire management out of the local hands. It is here the sting of the Edinburgh Board's veto is to be found. The question of sex is comparatively trifling, but that the right of the Stromness Board to appoint the person whom they judge most suitable, and that their unanimous appointment and re-appointment should be challenged, vests this case with importance to every Parochial Board in the kingdom, and commends that of Stromness to the sympathy and, if needed, the generous support of all interested in the great question which it involves. Every consideration with which this case is freighted; every detail in matter of fact, and every principle involved are on the side of the Stromness Board. And weak though they are, "thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just," and whether they succeed or not in asserting for themselves—and for others—the right of selecting the most suitable individuals, they are entitled to credit for their pluck, and have already done much (and will probably do more ere the matter is decided) to expose the unconstitutional system of a centralised despotism of which the Board of Supervision is (we say it with due respect to the honourable gentlemen composing it) an apt illustration.

Gurdon, in his antiquities of Parliament, says the ladies of birth and quality sat in council with the Saxon Witas. The Abbess Wilde, says Bede, presided in an Ecclesiastical Synod. In Henry III. and Edward VI. time, four Abbesses were summoned to Parliament, namely of Shaftesbury, Berking, St. Mary of Winchester, and of Wilton. In the 35th of Edward III. were summoned to Parliament, to appear by their proxies—Mary, Countess of Norfolk, Alienor, Countess of Ormond, Anne Despenser Philippa, Countess of Marsh, Johanna Fitzwater Agusta, Countess of Pembroke, Mary de St. Paul, Mary de Roos, Matilda, Countess of Oxford, Catherine, Countess of Athol.—*From a Correspondent.*

Amongst managers for schools in various districts lately selected by the London School Board were Lady Augusta Stanley, wife of the Dean of Westminster, and Lady Herbert of Lea.

MEETING OF LIVERPOOL NEEDLEWOMEN.

Another meeting of needlewomen was held on July 25th, in Camden-street, Liverpool, when there was a large attendance, the room being filled by a well-conducted and respectable gathering. The chair was occupied by Mr. N. Simpson. Mrs. and the Misses Simpson were also present. The chairman read a letter from Mr. J. L. Bowes, of Dale-street, in which was enclosed a cheque for £10 towards the chairman's project of establishing a workshop for needlewomen. He might also tell them that he had very good promises of support from two or three dozen different sources. (Loud applause.) He was quite sure that after he had had his public meeting there would be no lack of money to enable him to do that which would be so advantageous to the needlewomen of Liverpool, viz., a reduction of their hours of labour, and also an increase of their pay. (Applause.) The agitation had already been attended with good results, for in some establishments there had been an increase of pay and reduction of their hours. He had received many letters on the subject of their grievances, but as it would take him four or five hours to read them all, he would content himself with acquainting them with a few of the most important ones. One letter to which he wished to draw attention was from a "Waistcoat-maker," who asserted that the Jewish firms in the town ground their workpeople down to the lowest state of English slavery, for the poor waistcoat-makers received for making a young man's vest 9d., and out of that they had to find silk twist and thread. The women in addition had to endure great heat from the fires kept up to press their work off, and the vile and insulting language used in those shops to the women was shocking to hear. The writer concludes by saying: I have written this on behalf of my fellow-workers, and, to compare their case with mine, we receive as much as 4s. 6d. for some vests.—A trousers finisher wrote: I finish tweed trousers at 5½d. per pair; youths' lined, linings to cut and make, at 4d. per pair, to find our own thread. To work from six in the morning till eight o'clock at night, four pairs is all I can make with a helper, which is 11d. each, and thread out of that.—Another needlewoman stated that a forewoman of a house in Bold-street gave her a baby's robe to make, also a pattern. She asked what she paid. "3s. 6d.!" The needlewoman then informed her that twice that sum would not pay. The forewoman said she did not mind 5s. 6d., but it must be much better made. She undertook it conditionally, put double the work in it, which she had to design; and it took her eight days at ten hours a day. It was finished off in a most superior style, but all she received was 5s. 6d.—He had received other letters, and some had been sent to the newspapers.—A mantle maker said she worked for a house in Bold-street from half-past eight in the morning to half-past eight at night. When the inspector came round, it was represented to him that there was a less number of females employed than was the fact, so that the place might not be brought within the operation of the Workshops Act. The wages paid there were 5s., 7s., 8s., and 10s. a week for experienced hands, and they had to find themselves. They were doing the same thing now to cheat the inspector.—Mr. Simpson: Well, we can stop that. The inspector has only to be made acquainted with it to stop it.—An Old Woman (a plain sewer): I have to work twelve; get one shilling a day, and have to find my food. (Sensation.) Another Old Woman: But I have worked five days for 1s. 6d.—(shame)—working at home. I will state that, for it is true, before any judge.—A Canvas Sackmaker said she worked from seven to seven; had an hour for dinner. She got 7s. a week, and was bound to make 24 sacks, with tarry twine, in

one day. It was very hard work. The sacks sold at 14d. to 1s. each, and the stuff cost about 4d.—Mr. Simpson: Of course they expect you to appear respectable. (Laughter.) The Female: Yes, sir.—A poor, pinched-looking old woman: I have worked two years for 4s. a week, from half-past seven to six o'clock, and have half-an-hour for dinner.—A Middle-aged Female: I get 6d. a dozen for making sacks. My wages is 6s. a week.—An Oilskin Jacket maker said her wages were 11d. a day, and she worked in a first-class house.—Mr. Simpson: It is strange that "first-class houses" pay the worst.—The Female: We are not able to move our feet when we come out of the shop at night.—A woman: I make gentlemen's pants at 11d. per pair.—A Machinist: I work from six in the morning to twelve at night; I have the assistance of a "baister." The two of us make a dozen pair of the best gentlemen's pants, and get between us 4s. a dozen.—Mr. Simpson: 2s. for working eighteen hours? The Woman: Yes; and find our own silk.—Young girls, workers in linen cuffs and collars, stated that they worked from nine in the morning to seven at night, and get 7d. a day. An elderly woman said she kept two machines, but could not make 5s. a week. She had to wait half a day sometimes for work, and was dragged from any portion of the town. She worked for a member of the select vestry.—Another woman: I have to do the same, and my master goes to a Methodist chapel.—A Voice: Religion has nothing to do with the payment of wages. (Laughter.)—Mr. Simpson said he intended to open a shop in the neighbourhood of St. Anne-street, where the needlewomen might come and have the use of the rooms and sewing machines without paying one penny.—A Young Female: I have been discharged from a first-class shop because I have attended these meetings.—Mr. Simpson said this should be attended to. He also announced that there would be a registry opened for entering the names of the needlewomen, and that the next meeting would be a public one.

[If Thomas Hood had lived in these days he might have written a far more piteous "Song of the Shirt" over the picture of a woman chained to a sewing machine, than over one plying her needle and thread. The boon of a machine to those whose work is a definite quantity, and who are by its means enabled to accomplish in one hour what it would have taken ten to do by hand, is incalculable. Materfamilias, with the cares of her household on her hands, and the clothes of half a dozen children to make and mend, may well be thankful for the invention which brings her rapidly to the bottom of her work basket. But the professional seamstress, whose work is determined by the hour and not by the piece, finds that the substitution of the machine for the needle brings no shortening of her hours of labour, while it increases largely the severity of the labour, without bringing a corresponding increase of pay. The "machinist," who works from six in the morning to twelve at night, and, with the assistance of a "baster," makes a dozen pairs of the best gentlemen's pants, probably receives no more for the dozen pairs than she would have obtained for the one pair she could have made in the time with the needle before the introduction of the machine, while the strength expended has been much greater. We have been informed that in three years a woman is used up at the sewing machine. The condition of women grinding for 18 hours a day at sewing machines seems little better than that of omnibus horses, and the only effectual method of relieving them from this exhausting toil would appear to be the organisation of their labour in such a manner as to admit of the use of steam power in driving the machines. Mechanical power has superseded human nerves and muscles in turning looms and spindles. We do not see why it should not do the same with regard to sewing machines.—Ed. W. S. Journal.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

WOMEN AND WORKING MEN'S CLUBS.

To the Editor of the Women's Suffrage Journal.

Madam,—In glancing through the newspapers and periodicals of the day, it must strike every candid and unprejudiced reader, how much every topic is treated of, as simply a *man's question*. The few men, generous and just enough, to propose any improvement in the present condition of women, are looked upon as mere dreamers—idlers with a hobby. It seems clear enough that any movement must emanate from women themselves—till they bestir themselves, the silence will remain unbroken. These thoughts occurred to me recently, while perusing an account of the proceedings at a late meeting for the laudable object of benefiting the working classes. While we hear of "the working man" *ad nauseam*, we look vainly down the columns of our daily journals for any mention of that silent sufferer, the Working-man's wife. "The Working-man" is at present the *pet* of the public. His clubs, his privileges, his pleasures, the duration of his hours of labour, are under constant discussion and consideration. Will no one suggest any plan for ameliorating the condition of those "weaker vessels," the wives, who have to struggle through their uncheered labours from day to day. Not "nine hours" for *them*, but oftener twelve or fourteen, and frequently having their short slumbers broken by ailing infants and sickly children—a large part of the money that should feed and clothe them being spent by the father in beer and tobacco. It seems to me marvellous, that women subjected to such physical tension, and deprived of all mental and moral stimulus, with weak nervous frames, do not sink into hopeless despondency or intemperance. The wonder is, not that drinking is frequent among such, but that it is not more so. Our modern philanthropy can devise no better means of improving this state of things than by enticing the working-man to reading rooms and clubs. The same money, thought, and effort expended on giving him a cosy fire-side and a rain-proof dwelling would do more for him. The married working-man, especially if a father, has duties and responsibilities *within* his home, as well as outside its walls. It will be a sad day for England when the poor man comes to imitate the peer, and clubs are set up to out-rival the attractions of *home*. The very word, expressive of all endearment, may be expected in time to drop out of the language as containing only an obsolete idea. It is a falsehood to say, as many do, that women must be either the slaves or the rivals of men. All we want for ourselves and our humble sisters, is simple justice. A woman's heart is the same in every grade of society, and responds at once to generous treatment. Her powers of silent self-sacrifice for those she loves, are infinite. A wife may then surely be forgiven for desiring that her husband will spend his hours of rest and recreation *chiefly* with herself, or at least where she can be admitted. If the man leaves the woman to domestic drudgery *entirely*, and is himself *exclusively* immersed in outside business or pleasure, or even so-called "elevation" (meaning the herding of men together to air before each other, their smattering of politics, &c.), the lives of men and women must ever drift more and more widely apart; instead of enriching each other both will deteriorate. Man made both the public-house and the club—God himself made the home. In my estimation, all efforts made to reclaim the working man, if confined to schemes without the walls of his dwelling, will fail, because they begin at the *wrong end*, and ignore completely those whom God has given as help-meets for him.—I am, Madam, yours respectfully,
A FRIEND TO WORKING WOMEN.

"NO VOTES—NO TAXES."

The following letter has been addressed to the editor of the *Echo* :—

Sir,—Some time since the above motto was suggested to women householders who desire the suffrage. I adopted it, and when applied to for the Queen's taxes refused payment. This week my goods have been distrained upon for £6. 18s. 3d. the amount due from me in January last, together with expenses and charges thereon. In due course they will be offered for sale by auction.

I thus make the strongest protest in my power against the injustice of taxation without representation.—Enclosing my card, I am, &c. R.A.H.

July 18. (COPY.)

To Miss —,— I hereby distrain upon the undermentioned goods, in the name of her Majesty, the Queen, for Queen's taxes amounting to £6. 18s. 3d., due 1st January, 1872, together with expenses and charges thereon.

EDWIN SMART, Collector of Taxes.

Hendon, July 16th, 1872.

Inventory,—1 doz. silver table-forks, threaded; half dozen, ditto, fiddle.

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