

Women's Franchise.

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Notes.

WOMEN are sometimes supposed to have a less high moral standard than men. However this may be, they show special aptitude for expert study of Moral Sciences, to judge from the Cambridge Class Lists. This year the only first classes in the Moral Sciences Tripos were gained by women, one by Miss Pember Reeves, the daughter of the High Commissioner for New Zealand. Since women were admitted to this examination, "they have been at the top of the list or alone in the First Class five times, provoking *Punch's* cartoon in the 'eighties' of a girl graduate entering a first-class railway carriage marked 'For Ladies only.'" Women also did very well this year, as usual, in the Mediaeval and Modern Languages Tripos, in which they gained six out of the nine first classes; they gained two first classes in Natural Sciences, and a place in the first division of the First Class in Classics, the nearest approach to the title of Senior Classic possible. Indeed, the woman in this last case, if a definite order of names had been preserved, would, we have good reason to believe, have been "above the Senior Classic," just as Miss Philippa Fawcett was "above the Senior Wrangler" in 1890. Not one of the women, however, who have distinguished themselves in the Cambridge Tripos Examinations is allowed by the University the titular B.A. degree. Women who have worked to secure recognition are beginning to see that the one hope for this reform lies in the Suffrage; the ludicrous position to which the University clings so obstinately would be absolutely untenable if once the political disabilities of women were removed.

We are in receipt of correspondence relative to the paragraph on co-education which appeared in our last issue. As one correspondent rightly infers, there was no intention of asserting that the one sex is physically inferior to the other. A clearer statement would have been attained had the word "muscular" been substituted for "physical." We also agree with another correspondent who intimates that our paper should be entirely non-sectarian, and while gladly inserting our correspondent's words that our statement regarding the monastic idea "is against historical fact; the old conventual colleges were co-educative—the abbesses taught boys and girls in their schools together"—we repeat that there is no idea of calling attention to a system pursued by one religious body in contradistinction to a system pursued by any other.

Physical Force as a Test for the Franchise.

"THE ultimate test is that of physical strength"—this seems to be a fundamental objection to extending the franchise to women. Many who are hostile to this reform, and who are unable to explain clearly just what their objection is, prove on careful examination to find this the real obstacle, that women are physically inferior to men, and so must remain politically inferior.

It is difficult to believe that in this twentieth century such a cry should be raised, but in many respects the dark ages are still with us, and the argument derived from superiority of brute force is a survival. Opinion based on prejudice is valueless; the teachings of history and science alone can be relied upon to give a sure and rational foundation for belief. Hitherto, these teachings have been too often ignored; and, in consequence, it is not unusual to find skill in manipulating elections and working obstruction tactics more highly rated in a politician than the expert knowledge which is gained by a systematic study of such sciences as sociology, biology, and anthropology.

What then has science—or, in its widest sense, history—to say on this question of the ultimate test being that of physical force? It is an interesting and well-known fact that nature only makes progress by experimenting. Every success is achieved through countless failures, which disappear because they are failures. It seems as though nature first of all adopted the view that the ultimate test was that of physical force; hence there came into existence a race of vast monsters, ichthyosauri, dinosauri, and similar small-headed, large-muscled creatures, having far greater physical force than our present-day elephants. During the mesozoic period, when the coal which we are now using was growing in the form of vast forests, brute force was supreme on the earth. What then became of these vast monsters? Where are their representatives to-day? Nature discovered her mistake; an ounce of brain counts for more in the struggle for existence than a ton of muscle, and it is highly probable that these large, unwieldy beasts were ultimately driven out of existence by an animal not much larger than a rat.

Such were nature's early efforts; to come to modern times, who wins in the struggle for existence, the lion or the armed man? Clearly the tendency is for the lion, the tiger, and the elephant,—beasts typical of great physical strength—to vanish from the face of the earth before advancing civilization. Given even chances, the rabbit would starve the diplodocus out of existence; of so little value is mere physical force. Our whole progress has been in the direction of less muscularity and more brain power, and a study of biology shows the worthlessness of physical strength as an ultimate test.

History furnishes many instances of the futility of opposing intelligence by physical force. For instance, Russia must be considered superior to Japan, as far as mere brute strength is concerned. Physically the Russians are much larger than the Japanese, numerically they are vastly superior; but as the recent war has shown, these qualities were no match for the higher degree of intelligence possessed by the Japanese.

To come to the actual question of the enfranchisement of women—do those opponents who advocate the need of brute strength seriously consider that an elephant is better qualified to vote than a man? Do they really believe that, if we are to have plural votes, they should be given to the navy and the coal heaver? Are members of Parliament selected for their pugilistic skill? Examined in a rational manner, this cry of physical force will be seen to be opposed to all the teaching of science, the record of history, and the actual practices of civilization. The whole story of progress has been the triumph of intelligence over brute strength, and those who seriously advocate the latter are still intellectually in the dark ages.

Why I Became a "Suffragette."

WRITTEN IN HOLLOWAY BY MRS. DESPARD.

(Concluded from No. 1.)

I TRIED to work with women Liberals, and I did meet a few enthusiastic, far-seeing, determined workers. But for the most part these Liberals were party women. They were being inspired by men for the ends of men. Some of them were professedly keen about the Suffrage; but few seemed either to take a large view of the question or to be able to look beyond it, and most of them put their Liberalism first.

I came into contact also with the Women's Trade Union Movement. This I found more hopeful; and, indeed, I consider now that it has in it the beginning of much better things for women. But here again the disabilities of women came in. The men workers did not succeed in having powerful and effective unions until they were represented in Parliament. The women are not represented at all. It was when I was at this stage of my political education that I joined the Adult Suffrage Society. I had seen that women would never make much progress until they were recognized and acknowledged as citizens. Trained in a democratic school, I desired this privilege to be as widely extended as possible—to be extended, in fact, to all. I desire this still, though my conviction as to the method through which the end is to be gained has altered. At that time there was little energy or enthusiasm, and no hope, in this Society, which was composed of men and women. Some of these men told me frankly that, although it was well to keep our aims before the public, there was not the slightest chance of our principle affecting practical politics for many years to come.

I was engaged at the time in Social work, helping to organize the unemployed, lecturing on Socialism and kindred subjects, attending Poor Law and School Management Boards. Everything made me feel how urgent was the question of women's emancipation, and how little hope we could cherish of settling, even approximately, the problems that face society until this one initial wrong—the Subjection of Women—is righted.

I heard, meanwhile, of the formation of a new body calling itself "The Women's Social and Political Union"; it had scarcely got itself together before it made a noise in the world quite out of proportion with its size and its status.

I confess there was something in this society which, from the beginning, appealed to me. The youth of many of the members; the fact that they had come together in womanly frankness and love, not for political ends, not to further the candidature of party men for public place and power, but for social and political ends which would affect themselves and the world; the dashing courage of the little band, their selflessness, their quiet endurance of the results of their lawless action—these things attracted me. Sometimes I asked myself, "Can this be the beginning? Is this indeed a part of that revolutionary movement for which all my life long I have been waiting?"

I gave up my membership of the Adult Suffrage Society and set myself quietly to study the whole question.

The first point I desired to settle was—Is it true, as the Adult Suffragists say, that such a Bill as is demanded by the Women's Social and Political Union would enfranchise only women of independent property, and would thus be undemocratic? I went into the question and found that this statement is untrue.

The women of so-called independent means would constitute only a minority of those enfranchised, were women placed on the same electoral footing as men. The lodger-franchise opened wide through the latch-key decision would embrace a large number of working women, especially in the manufacturing towns. Then again labouring men and mechanics marry earlier and have a shorter term of life than the men of the middle class. The obvious result is that there are many more widows amongst the workers. These, were the Disqualification of Women Bill passed, would contribute a large proportion of members to the new electorate. Remembering my Poor Law experiences, I felt that there is no class of the community to whom the vote would be more precious, no class who deserve it more than these working widows. The Bill, moreover, is not final.

It is simply the opening of a door that, up to this, has been fast closed against us. Our opponents call our measure the Limited Bill. That is a false description, for it is nothing of the kind. Practically it is unlimited. The disabilities that prevent us from taking our place in the nation are imposed on account of our sex. They are imposed on all women alike, rich and poor, married and single, educated and uneducated, idle and industrious, intelligent and stupid. Nothing, so long as we are women can redeem us. It is the bar of sex disqualification that, I perceived, these women desire to have removed.

My thoughts were moving in this direction when I came in contact with several members of the Women's Social and Political Union. I have said that their courage and audacity had appealed to me. I now had a glimpse of what lay behind. Dimly there rose before me a perception of mental and spiritual forces to be disengaged in this struggle—of a hidden volcanic strength destined to force its way outwards, and, in defiance of all efforts to repress it, to shape events. I had sought and found comradeship of some sort with men. I had marched with great processions of the unemployed. I had stood on the platforms of Labour men and Socialists. I had tried to stir up the people to a sense of shame about the misery of their homes, and the degradation of their women and children. I had listened with sympathy to fiery denunciations of Governments and the Capitalistic system to which they belong. Amongst all these experiences, I had not found what I met on the threshold of this young, vigorous Union of Hearts. True love of comrades, strenuous co-operation of those who have realized that union means strength, calm determination to face any difficulty and any danger for a great cause, firm faith in a fair vision of the future which, dreamlike as it may now appear, will win its way to manifestation. These I found in the Women's Social and Political Union, and this is why I became a "Suffragette."

The July Magazines.

In *The Fortnightly Review* Mrs. Billington-Greig discusses 'Suffragist Tactics: Past and Present.' Her defence of the methods devised by the Women's Social and Political Union is vigorous and adequate. Reviewing the history of the movement since 1867, she traces the loss of power which has been characteristic of the last twenty years to the over-cautious methods of the earlier Suffragists, and to their too-great patience under insult and betrayal. They assumed that argument and reason would finally triumph, and devoted their powers to the presentment of an "irrefutable case"; but the "good conduct" theory evolved during the twenty years in which they were building up the desired majority has done much to prevent the attainment of their end. Hence in 1884 it came about that when an amendment to include women in the Reform Bill was moved, "104 pledged supporters broke their pledges at the bidding of Mr. Gladstone, and did so apparently without any sense of their own dishonour."

After this there was a change in tactics, and women devoted themselves to service, for they thought that woman's capacity and usefulness in politics must be proved before political sex equality could be won. But twenty years of energetic and capable administration for the community demonstrated the error of this assumption.

The tactics of rebellion, Mrs. Billington-Greig argues, are not only justified by the inadequacy and failure of peaceable methods in the past, but also by the records of history. They have, moreover, stood the test of success.

"The Women's Suffrage movement is more vigorous, more popular, and more respected than ever before. The question of women's citizenship is in the forefront of politics. . . . Every section of a movement that was almost lifeless is now active and growing."

The Westminster Review contains an article by I. D. Pearce on 'The Enfranchisement of Women,' in which the writer shows that

"the first and most important value of votes is simply that of placing their possessors upon a theoretical basis of equality with each other."

Just as the enfranchisement of the working-classes has improved the status of the worker, so the first effect of the

admission of women to equal citizenship with men will (the writer considers) be to raise the status of women, altering not only the mental attitude of men towards women, but also that of women towards their own sex.

The supposed dangers and difficulties associated with the giving of votes to women are characterized as "purely chimerical." The experience in countries where Women's Suffrage now obtains confirms the view that "women are perfectly capable of taking an intelligent interest in questions affecting the welfare of the nation without upsetting their mental or physical equilibrium."

Turning to the legislative use of the franchise, the writer points out the hopelessness of relying on the advent of the "ideal" politician for the redress of women's grievances. The history of the women's movement during the last half-century has shown only too clearly that it is safe to ignore the interests of those who have no means of enforcing their claims at the polling-booth.

A Glimpse into Russia.

THE struggle for women's rights in Russia began in 1861, when a general intellectual uprising was in the air, when reforms in every branch of Social and administrative life were won even from the Czar's throne. In ten years Russia initiated more reforms than any other country in the same period of time, and far more than the bureaucracy was ready to accept; accordingly, the latter years of the reign of Alexandre II. were spent in cancelling these reforms one by one.

About the first sixties women's rights were discussed and clamoured for by women and men. It seemed as if the freedom and justice for which people fought could not exist while women were enslaved. So it was a common cause in which men were as eager as women. At that time we called it the Women's Question. We had this question thoroughly ventilated and studied. All foreign literature on the subject was translated and disseminated in a multitude of pamphlets and big magazines. A special one 'Woman's Cause,' as large as four numbers of *The Nineteenth Century* put together, was published monthly.

One morning four women entered the lecture hall of the St. Petersburg University and sat down with the students, and this was the beginning of a new era, that of women's higher education. The names of these women headed a long list of women doctors, lawyers, mathematicians, who won their degrees later on. With the reaction of the last years of the reign came also suppression of higher education for women. Several hundreds of them were turned out of the university and medical academy and scattered through Swiss, German, and French colleges and universities.

So just as men took part in the women's movement, the women on their side took part in politics, and fought side by side with men in the struggle for freedom, not only as common rank and file soldiers, but as initiators and leaders. Some names are known and revered abroad, even in Great Britain, some never crossed the Russian frontier, some took their tragic history to Siberia and far beyond, and will be heard no more. It is not for me—a Russian woman myself—to say anything in praise of those who faithfully kept their high ideals through storm and oppression, giving up their strength, health, comfort, their very life, undergoing tortures and exile thousands of miles away from their homes. History will give them their place in the world's work, and hand their names down to posterity.

But who ever heard a word about the peasant women of Russia? What historian will ever record the suffering of these patient, creative women? Women—mothers of the best hope of Russia—whose lives are lived in the far-away immense Steppes of the South, where their village houses, hundreds of miles from railways, hardly rise above ground, nearly lost in a sea of wheat, and women who live in northern snow-covered villages among endless forests, cut off from the world in summer by swamps, in winter by intense cold and snow rising in dazzling hills up to the roofs of the houses? With endless patience and perseverance, with an inborn gift of creating life and joy, the peasant woman manages to bring up her sons and daughters in spite of men and nature in arms against her, manages to fill their hearts with lore of far-away ages, of wonderful pictures of valiant knights and

peasant heroes fighting the oppressors, lyric songs of infinite tenderness and poetry wrought to fit every important moment of peasant life—birth, marriage, soldiership, death. Every movement of the spirit has been over and over again expressed by wonderful peasant-women songsters, discovered at last by some diligent searchers of folk-lore—discovered on the very eve of their total disappearance.

The Russian peasant women share all the life of the commune in house, field, forest, and, when need be, in administration. The daily work of a peasant woman in Russia appears to me very different from women's work in other countries. Usually, a woman's work is a degree lighter than men's work. In Russia it is not. There is no field work which she does not share, including threshing, reaping, mowing. When the men are out seeking additional earnings in towns, she does not shrink from ploughing, wood-cutting, sowing, fishing. Housework, bearing and bringing up children are additions to her task, and it is an everlasting wonder how with all this overwhelming amount of work she can preserve all the poetical beauty expressed so evidently in song and elaborate needlework. Our ideas about the development of artistic feeling must be totally wrong, for one can see plainly that the more leisured life which is usually considered as conducive to this development, has worked quite differently in our towns. Beauty and art seem to have vanished, scared perhaps by all the turmoil and noise we are creating. It seems impossible to expect independence in a country so full of slavery as Russia is at this moment.

Yet some of the features of women's work which one meets in various parts of Russia seem to point to a certain degree of independence and to show at any rate a capacity for self-help. In the province of Toula during the last fifteen to twenty years was developed a peasant co-operative organization, whose members are all women. The organization developed without any theoretical principles, without any help or suggestion from the educated classes—entirely on practical economical grounds. These women, some married, some widows, but, for the most part, girls, band together and during the winter send out their delegates to make contracts for work. I will quote here a little conversation with a nobleman of this province, possessor of 18,000 acres of land.

"You must be overwhelmed with the work on your estate in summer," said I, speaking of some social work which he was expected to perform. He smiled. "So I used to be. But just now you find me in most happy circumstances. As you know I have several farms (chutors) on my estate, and what with the dishonest bailiffs, agricultural, scientific managers, and the complaints of the peasants working under them, I was driven to madness. Some years ago in the winter, came two women from the province of Oral. They are very short of land there, and not only men, but also women are obliged to seek earnings elsewhere, even in summer. They offered to work my farms from the beginning of the season to autumn, from ploughing and sowing to reaping and thrashing of wheat. They spoke very modestly and were very businesslike. They said that they could put to work as many hands as would be required, would not want any bailiff, any supervision, any preparation of food or any meddling at all. They would see the work done well; that's all. I thought to myself that I could not fare worse than I had up to this time, and resolved to try them on one of my farms."

"This is most interesting! Did they keep their word?"

"Indeed they did beautifully, and now all my farms are worked by these unions, and I am quite happy and satisfied. I often take my friends in picnic fashion to some of these farms to see how these women manage. They work hard, but harmoniously. One of them acts as cook, and at noon they send out a few more to bring the dinner to the fields. You should see the picturesque scene of this dinner! Women in their home-spun skirts, gaily-embroidered shirts and pinafores, and the shapely red kerchiefs tied round their heads, make a picture you never forget! In the evening they come home singing."

These unions are known in this province under the name of the first village which sent out women—Mananky. They received no notice in the press, no investigation by theoretical co-operative workers, but the mention of their achievements may give us something to ponder over.

A. POGOSKY.

Under High Patronage.

THE Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Bill, which made such a successful début in the Upper House, will probably not be heard of any more during this session.

The debates in the Lords were instructive and amusing—instructive because of the frequent reference to Women's Suffrage, showing how largely this question occupied the minds of our hereditary legislators; and amusing because of the arguments of the supporters of the Bill to prove that women possessed some of the best qualities for citizenship, and yet were unfit to exercise the franchise.

Lord Crewe, in introducing the Bill, spoke of the general opinion that women had done excellent work, but in proceeding to show that women should not be granted the franchise, he gave as a reasonable argument for excluding them from that privilege that there was an "instinctive feeling" against admitting them to vote on Imperial matters. He claimed that women were not concerned with a vast area of national interests—excluding the army, navy, and police—but omitted to state what this vast area included. It would indeed be difficult to show that women are not concerned with the defence of their country, whether in war or in peace, and also to prove that women are not even vitally affected by the carrying out of the laws by which they are governed.

The Bishop of Southwark, whose feelings were strongly opposed to Women's Suffrage, was nevertheless of opinion that "it would be unwise not to enlist the valuable and enthusiastic reinforcement which women could bring to the councils in their great work of administrative philanthropy."

Lord Lansdowne called attention to the fact that it was of the utmost value to secure the co-operation of women in regard to all subjects which touched the home life of the people. Lords Londonderry and Northampton both testified to the excellence of women's work and the enormous value of their services.

Another reference was made to instinct by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was convinced that it was a true instinct of the community as a whole to enlist the services of women for the community. "It was not a question of the rights and wrongs of women, but of the rights and wrongs of the community." His Grace, however, was evidently loath to trust to this instinct, because he called attention to the very obvious fact that to vote for a woman candidate was to vote to exclude a man—a result which he no doubt regarded as one open to grave objection—not on the ground that the man was a better candidate, but simply because he was a man.

It was small wonder that Lord Halsbury should have asserted that Women's Suffrage was the underlying principle of the Bill. He characterized the Bill as the wedge for Women's Suffrage, and rashly committed himself to the statement that if it passed into law he saw no answer to the demand for Women's Suffrage. When it does pass, however, Lord Halsbury has still the safe refuge left of "instinctive feeling against it," on which he can rely and so dispense with all argument.

Lord James of Hereford asked "Where was the man who would be able to argue against the Parliamentary franchise if the House accepted this measure?" He would not be far to seek. Lord James of Hereford himself would be that man.

One noble lord provoked much laughter by one of his objections to women being qualified to sit on County and Borough Councils—viz., that women were inclined to be hasty in expenditure. From the examples supplied by Poplar, West Ham, and Hammersmith Guardians it would appear that men also have some capacity in this direction.

The opponents of Women's Suffrage are logical in resisting the admission of women to a share in local government, not because there is any real connexion between women being made eligible to sit on County and Borough Councils and their being given the Parliamentary franchise, but because every recognition by law of women's capacity to serve the community renders it more impossible to keep them in the category of perpetual minors and to deny their claims to become full citizens of the nation they are expected to serve.

C. G. B.

The Case for the Suffrage.

A NEW BOOK FROM MANY PENS.

A FEW years ago women were asking men to get the vote for them; to-day, women are determined to win the vote for themselves. That is the striking change which has come over the question of Women's Suffrage. That is why to-day, for the first time, in recent years, it is a question of practical politics.

The idea finds embodiment right through the series of essays which go to make up the useful volume published by Mr. Fisher Unwin, under the title of 'The Case for Women's Suffrage,' edited by Brougham Villiers (2s. 6d. net).

The women who contribute belong to different shades of thought, and adopt different policies; but this one idea is common to them all. Miss Balgarnie notes that the loyalty of women to their parties which have made them Primrose Dames, Unionists, or Liberals *first*, and Suffragists *second*, has been "a drag upon their march towards their goal of attainment." Miss Gore-Booth refers to "the unpleasant truth which has been gradually soaking into the mind of the Lancashire cotton women that those who have been their equals and comrades in industry are as deaf to the appeals of the politically helpless as are the princes in whom the working men of old time 'put their trust.'"

The co-operative women are catching the same fire, the society woman is not going to be far behind. As for the writers who are members of the Women's Social and Political Union, it is, of course, the key-note of their policy and breathes through every line of their writing.

The only essayist who fails somewhat to realize the new spirit and the necessity for it is Mr. Cholmeley, and that for the very reason that he is a man, and an "intellectual" and so honourable a supporter of the movement. He is not apparently aware how many *masked* guns of opposition still exist. Again on the question of by-election tactics he states that the policy of opposing Government candidates could only be effective if the *great mass* of those who want votes for women were prepared to subordinate every other political conviction to this. Here he is logically wrong, for if only a hundred voters in each constituency (and there is evidence that this figure is far below the mark of actual fact) were to place this question first, and to oppose the Government in consequence, it would produce a very serious change in the balance of parties in the House of Commons. This question is very fully dealt with by Mrs. Pankhurst in her essay on 'The Present Position of the Movement,' and incidentally by Miss Mabel Atkinson in her masterly exposition of policy.

The book contains many other essays of special interest which, for lack of space, we do not propose to reproduce here—as every one who has a shadow of interest must read the book for themselves. Mrs. Fawcett writes of the pioneer, Mary Wollstonecraft; Mrs. Martel of the effect of the vote in Australia and New Zealand; Miss Edith Palliser of the international movement; Miss Christabel Pankhurst gives an outline of women's present disabilities, and shows what women have to fear in the future if men alone are to be entrusted with the sole prerogative of law making. Mr. Keir Hardie, Miss Constance Smedley, Mrs. Rosalind Nash, Miss Margaret Macmillan, and the editor also contribute essays of considerable importance; and, finally, there are reproduced two speeches of Mr. Israel Zangwill, which, for quiet wit and cogent and irresistible reasoning, leave nothing to be desired.

Notice to Contributors.

The Editor will be glad to receive Articles containing information on the subject of Women's Suffrage, and will return those not considered suitable as soon as possible if a stamped addressed envelope is sent with the MS. As the paper is on a voluntary basis, and all profits go to help the cause, no payments are made for contributions.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

OBJECT.—To obtain the Parliamentary Suffrage for Women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to Men.
The Union is a Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies in Great Britain.

President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.
Hon. Secretaries: MISS FRANCES HARDCASTLE, M.A. MISS FRANCES STERLING.
Telegrams: "VOICELESS, LONDON."

Treasurer: MISS BERTHA MASON.
Parliamentary and Organising Secretary: MISS EDITH PALLISER.
Telephone: 1960 VICTORIA.

OFFICES: 25, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

The Union will send Organizing Agents, Speakers, or Literature to any place requiring them, its desire being to form a Women's Suffrage Society in every County and Borough. All persons interested in the movement, or desiring information about it, are requested to communicate with the Secretaries. Increased funds are needed for the growing work of the Union, and subscriptions will be gladly received by the Treasurer.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 1907.

Chairman—MR. WALTER S. B. MCLAREN.

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LADY STRACHEY
And the Hon. Officers,
ex officio.

Meeting at Cambridge.

ORGANIZED by the Cambridge Association for Women's Suffrage, a meeting was held at the Guildhall, Cambridge, on Monday evening, presided over by Mrs. Fawcett, LL.D. The room was decorated with the banners of the different branches of the Union. There was a most satisfactory attendance, and whilst the audience was assembling, Mr. Stocks, assistant organist of Ely Cathedral, played selections on the organ. A number of university students and other young people were present, and were disposed to turn the proceedings into ridicule, and have what they would term, "a rattling good time," but though the interruptions became very pronounced as the meeting progressed, and this part of the audience showed themselves particularly inclined to badger Mr. Bertrand Russell, Mrs. Fawcett kept the meeting well in hand, and the speakers met their tormentors with good-humoured banter or well-worded appeals, so that there was never any apprehension of heckling developing into rowdiness. On the whole, the Council of the National Union had every reason to congratulate themselves upon having made a considerable and favourable impression in Cambridge, where only a short time ago the supporters of Women's Suffrage have had a decidedly rough experience.

Mrs. Fawcett, whose family connexions with Cambridge render her a *persona grata* in the University town, received a very hearty greeting on taking the chair.

Mrs. Heitland, the acting secretary, read an apology which she had received from the Borough Member, Mr. S. O. Buckmaster, K.C.

The Chairwoman said there was an argument used against Women's Suffrage which she always listened to with pleasure, because on each of the occasions she had heard it used it seemed to bring them back. It was the statement that Women's Suffrage was so entirely an untried and novel experiment that no thoughtful or civilized community had ever committed itself to its approbation. (Applause.) The first time she heard that argument used was in the House of Commons, when Mr. Bryce said the colonies had not ventured upon the experiment. Within a few weeks New Zealand had granted the Suffrage to women, and South Australia followed, with the rest of the great Australian continent, excepting only Victoria. Last March almost the same observation was made by Sir Francis Cohen, who said no European State, great or small, had ventured upon the tremendous experiment of Women's Suffrage. Of course he spoke from the depth of his ignorance of the subject. (Laughter.) He had overlooked what all the newspapers had reported, that in granting a new Constitution to Finland the Czar of Russia had granted the Franchise to women. In both cases, in our colonies and in Finland, women had shown themselves worthy of the trust which had been placed in them. She would like to make an earnest appeal to young men—and young women especially—to throw themselves, with all the ardour in their power, into their side of the question, which was one of the great questions of the world. It was not a chance movement, here and there; it was affecting the lives of men and women in every country in the world. It was an immense world-wide

movement, and it was the chance of their lives, with those young men and women she was addressing, to throw themselves into it and help to develop it on sane, sober and prudent lines. They had had great examples at Cambridge, and she made especial allusion to the late Miss Mary Bateson. She appealed to them to remember those examples. She was delighted with that large meeting, and hoped that great results would follow it.

Mr. A. Cameron Corbett, M.P., proposed the first resolution, "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the continued exclusion of women from the Parliamentary Franchise is neither just, expedient, nor politically right. It therefore pledges itself to do all in its power to press forward the reasonable demand of women to be represented in the councils of a nation which claims to be governed on a representative system." He referred at the outset to the advantages which had followed women's administration in local affairs, as to which none of their opponents could cast a stone at them, and then pointed to the admitted success of the admission of women to the Franchise in the colonies. That being the experience everywhere where women had a share in political power, their opponents had to make some very strong case as to the peculiar conditions of their own country. Some of them told them that it was altogether impracticable for this country, and that those who advocated it were political dreamers. He begged them to remember that the leaders of both political parties had declared themselves in favour of Women's Suffrage. In the House of Commons speeches were made by the mover and seconder of the amendment for the rejection of the Suffrage proposal. One of those hon. gentlemen said that women had such high ideals, religious and moral, that they would be lowered by contact with our political life. (Applause.) The other said that our political life had become of such a character that it was impossible for anybody to be absolutely honest and true in politics. Well, his answer to that was that if women had such high ideals, moral and spiritual, and if the country had reached such a point that it was impossible in politics to be entirely true and honest, then surely it was the strongest possible argument for giving the vote to women, so as to enable them to raise their politics by the moral influence which was so much required. Sometimes the question arose as to what were the best means by which women could advance their cause. He himself disbelieved entirely in violent measures. (Applause.) He believed their cause was very injuriously affected in the House of Commons by the demonstration which took place there, but he believed women had got to use their political power exclusively on behalf of candidates who were in sympathy with women's rights, and when that had been done they would have such a House of Commons as would not allow this question to be trifled with.

It was urged that women had no right to take part in elections. (Prolonged applause.) If women felt that they had an intelligence which might be brought to bear upon electors to enlighten them, and if they felt they had noble ideals by which they could aid their country, they had a right to take part in elections. (Ironical laughter and applause.) He saw that some of the young men present sneered at ideals. When they were older (more ironical laughter) they would realize that our political life needed ideals. This movement they were

advocating that night had been nearer being realized than many of them imagined, and when they had achieved their end—as achieve it they would—the public opinion of this country would become as unanimously in favour of Women's Suffrage as was the public opinion of New Zealand and Australia to-day.

Mrs. Philip Snowden said she was glad to second the resolution, because she believed in it; but she felt a little sad on thinking of all the efforts that had been made, and the number of noble lives which had been lived almost entirely devoted to that cause, and that they were still advocating this cause. Yet, after the speeches they had listened to that night, what right had any one to be sad? (Laughter.) They were, she firmly believed, far nearer the consummation of their hopes than certain young people in that meeting were aware of. (Cheers.) She was perfectly sure that if women had not come to realize the awful amount of unnecessary suffering (Voice, "Poor dears!") and degradation which was the direct result of the exclusion of women from the Franchise, they would have been content to shelter themselves in what was still called woman's sphere. But with the knowledge of the injustice prevailing they could not. There was only one argument used against the justice of that great claim of theirs, and that was that as a sex they were not fit to exercise that great power. (Applause.) Well, one felt that to argue with persons who put forward that objection was a little lowering to one's self-respect. (Applause.) It was not only a political question that they were advocating; it was not only a woman's question; it was a great human question. (Applause.) As had been said, it was a great moral and spiritual question. Those who thought that they were simply discontented with their sex and circumstances, and that they thought this question was merely one of taking part in the game of politics, were sadly wrong. This question was as wide as humanity, and, if she might say it with reverence, it was as deep as divinity. An argument used against them was that some women did not want the vote. Well, there were slaves in America who did not want their liberty. To say that because some women did not want the vote the whole of them should not have it was a queer way of reasoning. She supposed that was man's logic. (Ironical applause.) It was for the good of the country that women should be given the Franchise, so that they might save their sisters from the slavery many of them were enduring, not of their own free will, but because of economic conditions. Ruskin had said, "I do not wonder at what men suffer; I wonder at what men lose." Some of them wondered at what this country was allowing itself to lose by refusing this opportunity of development to more than one half of its population. In the end, she declared, it would be to the best interest of the country that women should have the Franchise, and she joined her appeal to that of Mrs. Fawcett in asking them not to be merely content in approving of Women's Suffrage, but, if they believed in it, to have the courage of their convictions and help in the movement as much as ever they could. (Applause.)

The resolution was put to the meeting, and met with opposition, but the Chairwoman declared it to be carried by a large majority. This produced a protest and a demand for a recount, but Mrs. Fawcett said she was perfectly satisfied that she was right, and called upon the next speaker.

The Hon. Bertrand Russell proposed "That this meeting calls upon the Government to take steps to introduce a measure early next Session to remove the disqualification of sex in regard to the Parliamentary Franchise."

He said the question had become very pressing, and was one which a great democratic Government, such as the present Government professed itself to be, should take up. It was quite time the Government should listen to the demands of women who wanted the Suffrage. To effect that, they must be in a position to offer them advantage if they took it up, and disadvantage if they did not. Otherwise their claims would be put aside for other things, which more clamorous groups urged upon them. If they were to be in that position, it was vitally necessary that they should be strong throughout the country, they should be energetic, and they should be numerous in advocating the Suffrage, and they should not give the candidates who were not in favour of the Suffrage the same support they were pre-

pared to give to those who were. If men would reflect more upon the subject, if they would not allow their first prejudices to overcome them, they would realize that the relation of co-operation was better than the relation of dominion, and when that relation of dominion was an unwilling one it should not be the part of any one with any generosity in his nature to insist upon retaining that dominion against the will of the other party.

Referring to the Suffragist fight at Wimbledon, Mr. Russell said it was undertaken chiefly as propagandist work. They thought so pronounced an opponent of the Suffrage as Mr. Chaplin ought not to be allowed to be elected without any protest whatever. There was nothing like an election for bringing home facts to people who would not otherwise be reached. At first people laughed, but at every meeting a change came over them. They began to see that the Suffrage was a serious question, and that to laugh at it did not prove one a serious person. (Applause.) Fighting an election was an extremely effective method of propaganda, and one in which they would do better and better every time they adopted it. After a time their opponents in the Wimbledon election laid their heads together, and indulged in the unusual exercise of thinking. (Laughter.) As a result they produced a poster of a man who said to his wife, "No, thanks, my dear, you go home and mind the baby, and leave politics to me." (Applause.)

"I thought that would be just about the intellectual level of those here to-night who are opposing it," said Mr. Russell. He went on to say that, in answer to the poster, they pointed out to the electors that if they wished to mind the baby they must see that the causes of infant mortality—such as bad milk and insanitation—were seriously dealt with. An enormous number of infant lives were sacrificed quite unnecessarily, and it was essential that women should have votes if these things were to be prevented. They were in the last phase of the fight, and victory could not be long delayed. (Applause.)

The Chairwoman, in thanking Mr. Russell for his speech, spoke of his splendid fight at Wimbledon, and mentioned, for the benefit of those who were only impressed by figures, that the supporters of the movement had to find 1,500*l.* with which to fight the election, and they did so with the greatest possible ease. (Applause.)

Miss Frances Sterling, hon. secretary of the Women's Suffrage Society, seconded the resolution. She asked why, if the slight experience of persons who had just attained their majority, and who happened to be males, was of some small use to the country, the experience of women should not be of some use also? Many of the most difficult spheres of activity were considered to be suited to women. Was there anything more difficult than the education and upbringing of the human race? Women were supposed to have some capacity in that direction. (Applause.) What could be definitely outside woman's sphere? (A voice, "Fighting.") She was glad some one mentioned that. In the last war much injury was done to our troops by muddling, and bad feeding and bad nursing, and the experience of the housekeepers of this country might have been as valuable as that of those in authority. (Applause.) They were told that the Women's Suffrage question must wait until other important matters had been dealt with. Why should women wait until these very matters which most vitally concerned them were settled without them? (Applause.)

The motion was put to the meeting, and declared carried by a large majority, although there were some dissentient cries of "No."

Miss Julia Kennedy moved a vote of thanks to the Chair and speakers.

Mr. D. H. Macgregor, of Trinity College, in seconding, referred to a debate at the Cambridge Union Society in the Lent Term, when a large and representative meeting of undergraduates threw out by a small majority a motion against Women's Suffrage. In those circles he thought it was evident that interruptions at meetings of this sort, even in Cambridge, were not representative of the general trend of undergraduate opinion. (Applause.) One argument brought forward against the granting of the Suffrage to women was that the majority of the women of the country did not want the Franchise. He hoped no one who supported this movement would ever get it into his

London Branches.

THE Committee Meeting of London branch secretaries on July 6th, which took place on this occasion at Mrs. Despard's country house at Oxshott, was the greatest success, a really fine day adding greatly to the enjoyment of all. All kinds of plans for the future were discussed with vigour and received with the greatest enthusiasm. Mrs. Pankhurst, who was taking a week-end's rest from her splendid work at Jarrow and Colne Valley, came over from Holmwood with Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and Miss Annie Kenney. The latter gave an interesting and vivid description of her work in Lancashire, which made many of her listeners long to be able to cast "bread-and-butter" considerations to the winds and be up and doing. When evening came to break up the party, the regret that so pleasant a day had come to an end was tempered by the thought that on July 27th Mrs. Despard had again placed her pretty garden at the disposal of the W.S.P.U., so that all present hoped to meet again, and bring with them any members of the Union able to accept the kind invitation.

The "Kensal Rise and Paddington" branch has now changed its rather cumbrous name to "Harrow Road." The hon. secretary, with Mrs. Drummond to help her, arranged a capital programme for several weeks' propaganda work, and they are holding many open-air meetings outside McVitie & Price's biscuit factory and in other places. These meetings are resulting in fresh members joining the Union, and much interest is shown [by the women, who listen with close attention. The canvass of women ratepayers now going on in the constituency of Mr. Chiozza Money is going on well, but more helpers are needed, and will be welcomed if they will go to 22, Carlton Vale, Maida Vale, any time between 10.30 A.M. and 6 P.M.]

A meeting of the Croydon branch was held on June 29th in Mrs. Ridley's garden at Dingwall Road.

Mrs. Raphael presided, and in her opening speech showed that the position of the Union to-day was due to the fact that quiet, peace-loving, home-making women had been willing to crucify themselves on the cross of notoriety for the sake of the cause which they had at heart.

Miss C. Conolan moved the following resolution: "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the extension of the Franchise to women will benefit the community and increase the welfare of the State." She held that women's influence would bring about reform in expenditure; women had much experience in making money go as far as possible, their lives were largely spent in administering funds wisely and economically, and getting the best value for their money. Government, which is the largest employer of labour in the country, had set the example of underpaying women workers, an example which was only too readily followed by public bodies and private employers. Thirty thousand women teachers received salaries less by as much as one-third—or even in some cases one-half—the salaries paid to men teachers for doing the same work.

Mrs. Heasman seconded the resolution, which was carried. She drew their attention to the new paper, *Women's Franchise*, in which they were sure of getting faithful and unprejudiced reports.

A small, but very successful Social was held by the Canning Town Branch on July 2nd, about fifty members being present. Refreshments were most kindly provided by Mrs. Baldock.

At the inaugural meeting of the Beckenham Branch, Mrs. Dice, who occupied the chair, in her opening remarks, alluded to the injustice of withholding from woman her rights as a citizen.

The secretary, Miss Hazlewood, then proceeded to correct a misconception as to the word "social" in the title of the Union, and after reading the aims and constitution of the Union, announced that the first branch meeting would be held in the Board Room of the Co-operative Hall, Parish Lane, Penge, on the evening of Monday, July 15th.

In the discussion which followed addresses by Miss Conolan, and Miss E. Sharpe, Dr. Alice Drysdale Vickery, who has worked for the reform for over forty years, vigorously attacked the present system of Franchise, and Dr. Drysdale ably defended the tactics of the W.S.P.U.

C. H.

Provincial Branches.

MARSDEN is the luckiest branch in England, for is it not situated in the Colne Valley district? and its members are ready and eager to help to repeat the brilliant success achieved at Jarrow. At Huddersfield, which is just on the edge of the constituency, branch meetings are given up, so that all members may devote their time, and energies also, to assist in the by-election. A good beginning has been already made with open-air meetings at Honley.

The secretary of the Liverpool branch reports that "during the month of June our work has been more educational than propagandist, as, owing to the weather, our out-door meetings have had to be abandoned time after time. Five members have lately made maiden speeches, which in all cases promised well for the future success of the speakers."

Leicester has found the open-air meetings most successful, and have invariably carried the resolution demanding the Franchise for women on the same terms as men have it. Mr. Whybrew, of Walthamstow, kindly spoke at the last meeting.

At a very successful meeting of the Cheltenham branch Dr. Earengy moved the resolution, "That, in order to give effect to the will of the people, the Parliamentary franchise must be so reformed that the House of Commons shall represent not men alone but the women of the country also," taken from our 'House of Lords' leaflet. His arguments in support of the resolution, which was carried unanimously, were mainly drawn from the present House of Lords crisis.

A branch meeting was held at Birmingham on July 3rd. Mrs. Burman, speaking on the historical aspect of the Women's Suffrage question, showed the important part played by women in this country from earliest times, they, under certain conditions, being free of the City of London, founders and members of guilds, members of corporations, and having full power to exercise their right to vote for members of Parliament. In 1641, when women marched to the House of Commons to present a petition against the way in which their ancient rights were being taken from them, Serjeant Prym was sent "to speak them fair."

E. H. M.

Scottish Notes.

THE week's meetings bid fair to share the fate of those held recently, and be spoiled by the wet weather. But unless the rain descends in floods they are to be held all the same. It is this effect of the continual downpour that is the most distressing—that the work for which the workers are eager cannot be done because of it.

Miss Fraser has been busy in Paisley—a town of women workers—and has held as many meetings as the weather permitted, and canvassed every possible and some impossible persons. Though a branch is not yet formed, some practical results both in money and converts have been obtained.

The Edinburgh branch is not only busy with the arrangements for the Suffrage Procession, but has also two propaganda campaigns in hand. Six out-door meetings have been arranged for the coming week, and big open-air demonstrations are being fixed for the five Saturdays of August. Miss Fraser will be the chief speaker during next week's campaign.

From Ayrshire I shall go to Forfar on Tuesday to hold meetings in that town and also in Kerriemuir, Brechin, and Montrose. This district, which lies in the constituencies of John Morley and the Secretary for Scotland, needs much attention. No Suffrage work has previously been done here, and it behoves us to make the subject a live one for all Cabinet Ministers. Mrs. Amy Sanderson has the arrangements in hand, and that is a guarantee of sound preparatory work.

The Dundee Secretary, the indefatigable Miss Wilkie, reports a great addition of members since the last demonstration. Another big demonstration is proposed for September, and out-door meetings are now being held to work it up. As one means to make the Suffrage Procession a great success, the branches are arranging to hold special public meetings when the holidays are over. Several of these are already fixed up. T. B.-G.

The By-Election at Jarrow.

ONLY the party politicians and the people inside the constituency of Jarrow have realized the importance of the contest to the cause of the enfranchisement of women.

The work of our Union has been so minimized and misrepresented by the press that the outside world is unaware of its effect on the result of the election.

Inside the constituency the overwhelming defeat of the Government nominee is attributed to our determined opposition to his candidature.

This is how the battle was fought and won.

Immediately the vacancy was made known Miss Annie Kenney and I went to Jarrow, and on the very night of our arrival we held the largest open-air meeting that had ever been held in the town, and carried with practical unanimity a resolution demanding the immediate enfranchisement of women. From that night to the night of the polling day we held many meetings in halls, in open spaces, at works gates, and at the collieries, and always they were larger and more orderly than those of any of the other parties. At most of these meetings unanimous resolutions were adopted. It should be noted that when resolutions were forwarded to the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition, only the latter had the courtesy to acknowledge their receipt.

Miss Kenney and I were followed almost immediately by Mrs. Martel, Miss Gawthorpe, Mrs. Mitchell, Mrs. Baines, Dr. Jones, Miss Stephenson, Miss Alice Milne, Miss Munro, Miss Lamb, Miss Dalley, and Miss Bullock, a splendid band of speakers and workers, and many local women assisted during the campaign.

We organized special meetings for women in addition to the usual public meetings, and a systematic canvass was made of women householders. These were invited to a meeting. There are more than 1,000 in the constituency. They attended in large numbers, and unanimously adopted a resolution protesting against the disqualification of sex.

This meeting was followed by many more in various parts of the constituency, the result being that there was an extraordinary uprising on the part of women which culminated in the wonderful women's procession on the polling day. Let me tell how it came about.

We secured the hall of the Mechanics' Institute for the afternoons of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th July for women's meetings, and at the first of these one of the speakers proposed that on the 4th (the polling day) we should walk in procession round the booths to tell the men who had votes to vote for the voteless women. The proposal was received with wild enthusiasm, and we at once set to work to organize the procession. By the day all was ready. Our national banner came from London, and a number more were quickly made bearing the words "Votes for women. Vote against the Liberal Government."

We assembled inside the Mechanics' Hall. Long before the time fixed (2.30 P.M.), a mob of Liberal men and youths had gathered in the street, and even inside the doorway, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the women succeeded in forcing their way through the crowd of well-dressed rowdies, decorated with their party colour, who jeered at and insulted us as we entered the building. The two policemen on duty were of little use. Many women, especially those with children, were unable to get in, and had to join the procession *en route*. At 3.0 P.M. precisely we started, headed by the national banner and an excellent band. On reaching the street we found the police had vanished, and we had literally to fight our way through the organized opposition of the enemy. At no time had we the assistance or protection of the so-called guardians of the peace.

Immediately after the band came a dear brave lady, eighty-two years old, who had come some distance to take part in the demonstration, and who insisted on going with us. She walked between Mrs. Martel and myself. Once away from our opponents, all went well, and all along the route from the kerb, from windows, from trams and vehicles cheers were raised and handkerchiefs waved as the procession, with band playing and banners waving, proceeded on its way.

En route our numbers grew. It seemed as though the entire feminine population was in the street, and when at last, tired but very happy, we returned to our starting-point, we felt that many a vote had been won for women's freedom.

At night we met again in the open air. To the gathering came men as well as women, many thousands, and long after the poll had closed they listened to the speeches, full of hope and enthusiasm, but spoken by strained and broken voices. So ended the election.

For the result we had to wait until the morrow; but we felt that even if we had failed to defeat the Government we had succeeded in rousing the women as they had never been roused before, and in convincing the men that, for their own sakes as well as for the sake of the women, political equality of the sexes was a necessary reform.

The result of the poll is known to all. The Government candidate was third on the list, and another message had been sent to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet from the voters of the Jarrow division.

How many more must go from by-elections before a pledge is forthcoming to the women of the country that justice shall be done, and that the long struggle shall be ended?

E. PANKHURST.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

From July 10th to July 16th.

			P.M.
Wed.	London, Prince of Wales, Harrow Road	Mrs. Drummond	8
	Streatham, Garden Party	Mrs. Despard	6
	Winchester, Home Counties Council	Mrs. Martel	
	Edinburgh (The Mound)	Miss Fraser	
	Forfar	Mrs. Billington-Greig Mrs. Sanderson	
Thurs.	Darlington, Women's Mtg., Parochial Hall	Miss Nellie Kenney	2.30
	Darlington, Branch Mtg., Temperance Institute	Miss Nellie Kenney	7.30
	Bournemouth, Public Mtg.	Miss C. Pankhurst	8
	Hammersmith, Ravenscourt Avenue	Mrs. Drummond	8
	Walthamstow, 6, Adderley Road, Leyton	Miss Lane	8
	Tottenham, High Cross Institute	Mrs. Eileen Mitchell	8
	Leith Links	Miss Fraser Miss Menzies	
	Kerrie Main	Mrs. Billington-Greig	
	Dunfermline	Mrs. Bell	
Fri.	Bournemouth, Drawing Room Meeting	Miss C. Pankhurst	
	Battersea, Falcon Road, open-air		8
	Edinburgh (Dalry)	Miss Fraser	
	Brechin	Mrs. Billington-Greig Mrs. Sanderson	
Sat.	Edinburgh (Meadows)	Miss Fraser and others	
Sun.	London, Hyde Park	Miss C. Pankhurst	3
	London, Victoria Park	Mrs. Drummond Mrs. Baldoek	3.30
Mon.	London, Finsbury Park	Miss Irene Miller	3.30
	Bilston, Market Place	Miss Nellie Kenney	
	London, 4, Clements Inn, "At Home"	Mrs. Pethick Lawrence Miss C. Pankhurst	4-6
	London, 4, Clements Inn, Evening Meeting	Mrs. Baldoek	8
	Glasgow and Edinburgh, Conference re Procession		
	Dunoon	Miss Fraser and others	
Tues.	Wolverhampton, Market Place	Mrs. Sproson	7.30

COLNE VALLEY BY-ELECTION.—Meetings every day in different parts of the constituency. Speakers, Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Martel, Miss Annie Kenney, Miss M. E. Gawthorpe and others.

A canvass of women householders is being conducted in Paddington. Helpers are badly needed. Please apply to Mrs. Drummond, 22, Carlton Vale, Maida Vale, W.

Members of the Union who may have arranged for their holidays at the sea side, and who would like to combine "business with pleasure," should send their seaside addresses and date of holiday to the hon. secretary, 4, Clements Inn, Strand.

Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

OFFICE: 38, MUSEUM STREET, LONDON, W.C.

Telephone: 9953 CENTRAL.

Woman's Sphere.

It is one of the advantages of the Women's Suffrage question that so many other questions are bound up with it. In a sense, the plea for a vote is a plea for one thing, the value of which is sometimes not very highly spoken of; but when we come to examine the plea, and the arguments for and against it, we find that they cover a pretty wide field. Women ought to have votes for two reasons—first that they may use them, secondly that they may escape from the reproach of being without them; and when we have thoroughly discussed the subject in those two aspects, there will be very little left to be said either about votes or about women.

Let us consider for the moment what is implied in the second of these two reasons. Why is it a reproach to a woman to be without a vote? Why, on the other hand, do some people think it a reproach to a woman to want a vote? These people think, and we deny, that there is something incompatible about votes and women; that if you give a woman a vote either the vote will not remain a vote or the woman will not remain a woman. Either politics will go wrong or women will. If politics are too bad for women, as some say, then of course women will come to grief by doing political things; if, as some others say (though this is less fashionable), women are too bad for politics, then obviously the country will go to the dogs as soon as women get the vote. Either women will demoralize politics, or politics will demoralize women; there is no third possibility. Well, that is very melancholy, because women are certainly going to have the vote, and therefore the case is hopeless either way.

But let us see what this view of the question means—for there is really but one view, though it looks like two. It means that whereas men's business and men's character fit them for politics, women's business and women's character do not fit them for anything of the kind, unless cajoling people into voting for one's husband be a kind of politics, which some have maintained. This, if anything, is the meaning of that familiar old villain of a phrase: "Woman's sphere is the home." She must run the home: therefore she has neither the time nor the capacity, nor, if the truth were known, the inclination to vote. Some men go further than this, and, with a charming humility, declare that she has something better to do. Now if nobody at all had the vote, nobody need be at the pains to examine this form of objection. It does take time to vote, it does take a kind of capacity to vote sensibly, which is not too common; and if the voter doesn't want to vote, it is likely that there will not be much voting. But the difficulty about leaving it there is this, that if these are good arguments against Women's Suffrage, it ought to be proveable that they are not good arguments against the possession of the vote by men; and that is just what nobody succeeds in proving.

Nobody has really maintained that even the wife of a labourer works so much harder than he does, or so much longer, or that her work is so much more absorbing, or so much less sensible, that she ought not to vote as well as he. Yet that is what has got to be proved, if the exclusion of women from the franchise is to be founded on reason. Woman's sphere appears to be imagined as something not only so sharply defined that it is impossible to move out of it without ceasing to be a woman in any respectable sense, but so effectively enclosed that not even an idea can get into it—or if it does get in it must be content with buzzing about inside, like a fly in a glass globe, and never doing any honest work any more.

Now is there really any sense in that view? And if there is not, what argument can be brought forward against the political enfranchisement of women? It is quite impossible to say to women: You shall be personally free, you may go where you like; you shall be socially free, you may choose what manner of life you like; you shall be economically free, you may earn your living as you please; but you shall not be politically free, for

that kind of freedom is outside your sphere. In this country all other kinds of freedom are unreal and incomplete without political freedom: for all are subject to law, and those who have no share in the making of law are brought up at every turn by the rules of an alien power. We claim votes for women because the denial of the vote means the denial of enfranchisement in every aspect of life. Whether the laws which we all have to observe are good laws or not is a secondary question; they are made by one sex for both, and that is wrong, unless a serious reason can be given for it.

It is perhaps a hopeful sign that even a man who believes in Women's Suffrage finds it difficult to write about woman's sphere without a sense of impertinence. What business, after all, has any one but a woman to say what a woman's sphere should be? Yet, since it is mainly by our laws and our customs and our traditions that the freedom of women has been limited, we cannot shift the responsibility in that way.

If the traditional view of woman's sphere is wrong, we are to blame, and we have to help to set it right. There were women who acclaimed Mr. Chaplin's fatuous poster at Wimbledon—"You mind the baby—and leave politics to me, my dear"; but it was an imperfectly educated man who invented the sentiment, and it is in the minds of imperfectly educated men that it finds its chief support. To argue against it is like arguing that two and two make four against some one who does not yet know that one and one make two; for it depends upon so many things which every one ought to know to be untrue. What proportion of the women of England are at any given moment minding babies? The last census gave the number of females in England and Wales as 16,799,230, of whom thirteen million odd were of the age of ten years and upwards. Suppose we consider everybody under ten a baby—which some of our young friends would hardly allow without protest—how many of the odd thirteen million have got to spend all their time in looking after those three or four million helpless creatures—and not only all their time but all their sense, so that they cannot be allowed to do anything else without grave danger to the body politic?

There are at least a million more grown women than men in England and Wales; and a few of the men are bachelors still. Are all that million and more to spend all their time in helping to mind somebody else's babies, or else for ever to hold their peace? It seems a waste of energy. How much of her time and thoughts does the average mother spend upon her children? How much does the best imaginable mother? For how much of her life can the mother of even the largest family be said to have babies to mind? When she has finished minding babies, is she to have learnt nothing from it that may be useful to a community which makes a good many regulations about babies? The mind-the-baby argument would be merely amusing if it were not so essentially hypocritical. It is hypocritical with the hypocrisy of the man who offers to take the mote out of his brother's eye, forgetting the beam that is in his own. It is impossible that any man who thinks at all can really believe that the difference between his competence to vote and a woman's depends upon the fact that he has more time to spare.

But then we are told that it is not the time spent, it is the nature of the occupation that makes the difference. Man is a "political animal," because his occupations are in themselves political, while those of women are not; and since it can no longer be maintained that all occupations are either exclusively male or exclusively female, we are told that the case is proved by those which are necessarily confined to one sex. Although women can be teachers, doctors, farmers, to say nothing of publicans, the fact that they cannot well be soldiers or policemen rules them out of politics. The odd thing is that some people really believe this. The fiction that women are necessarily domestic creatures has long vanished; we invite them to work in factories, we offer them posts as teachers, insisting that they

shall resign if they marry; whenever it is convenient to us, or as some would say, to the community, we employ them in conditions which make domestic life impossible; and we still refuse them the vote, because their sphere is the home.

When the Reform Act of 1832 took away from women the chance of political power by creating a new disability, there was some excuse for the blindness of reformers.

Woman's sphere is the home; it is not, after all, the phrase itself, but the use made of it, that is wrong; she shares that sphere with man, as she shares many others; and none of them has a chance of being properly organized so long as her interests and her intelligence and her aims are left without a responsible voice.

The Jarrow Election.

In pursuance of a unanimous resolution of the Executive Committee, the following questions were submitted to Mr. Rose Innes, Mr. Pete Curran, and Mr. S. L. Hughes:—

- I. Are you in favour of granting the franchise to women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men?
II. Are you prepared to give the question a prominent place in your election address and at your meetings?
III. Will you, if elected, vote in favour of any measure for the enfranchisement of women on the lines indicated above, whether introduced by the Government or by a private member?
IV. Will you do your best to induce your party to adopt a measure for the enfranchisement of women?

To these questions Mr. Rose Innes returned no answer. Mr. Pete Curran and Mr. S. L. Hughes both replied in the affirmative without reservation.

In the absence of any immediate prospect of legislation, we therefore regard the result of the election as a distinct gain to the cause of women's enfranchisement, and congratulate Mr. Curran on his success.

Notes and Comments.

THE day on which the present number of Women's Franchise is in the hands of our readers is the day of the Kensington Town Hall meeting. We cannot too strongly urge all our members to make every effort to be present themselves and to bring friends.

The organization of the Men's League is young, and its financial resources are as yet comparatively small. It follows that our mechanism for making such a meeting widely known

by means of personal canvass is by no means as good as that possessed by societies which have been longer in the field. Moreover the season for public meetings is far advanced. We hope, therefore, that all who can possibly arrange to be present will not fail to come.

We would remind our readers that the tickets—5s., 2s. 6d., and 1s.—are on sale at the doors. The speakers are the Rev. R. J. Campbell, Dr. Stanton Coit, and Mr. R. S. Cholmeley, all members of the Men's League. The meeting begins at 8.30 p.m. A full report of the meeting will appear in the next number of this paper.

We would further remind members and friends that we look to them to help us in making the Men's League columns of Women's Franchise as interesting and representative as possible by sending to the Editor (at 38, Museum Street, W.C.) original contributions and news. These columns afford the best possible opportunity to us for keeping in touch with one another during the summer months.

We are glad to be able to announce that a large number of new members have joined the League during the past week, and urge upon our members the necessity of inducing their friends to join, in order that we may start the autumn campaign with a large roll of members and a good balance at the bank.

From our Brighton correspondent we have received the following letter:—

Brighton, July 7th.—The Men's League were to have held a joint meeting on the "Level" with the W.S.P.U., but unfortunately one of the London secretaries, Mr. Mitchell, who was to have spoken, was unable at the last moment to attend. In his absence Mr. A. P. Hardy spoke on behalf of the local branch, to be actually formed next day, Monday, the 8th.

We hope next week to be able to announce that a Brighton branch has been formed, and we congratulate Mr. Hardy on his successful propagandist work. The founding of such branches is absolutely essential if the Men's League is to have real effect. It is obviously impossible for the Central Society to get into close touch with isolated members all over the country, and we therefore most strongly urge our members in extra-metropolitan centres to band together with the object of concentrating their energies.

Apropos of this, we are glad to hear that the Clapham branch (secretary, Mr. J. Edward Francis, 43, Park Hill, Clapham) is hard at work. Open meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. The meetings so far have been most successful.

The members of the branches which we hope to form will be regarded as members of the League in this respect that literature and notices will be sent to them, not individually, but through their secretaries. In return for this, according to the system which the Committee is inclined to recommend, a small capitation fee will be paid to the Central Society.

STUDENTS OF . . . WOMEN'S INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS SHOULD READ:—

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