

NON-PARTY.

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NON-MILITANT

The Common Cause

The Organ of the National Union of
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
Societies.

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Notes and Comments.

The Failure of Parliament.

Parliament faced this week the most inspiring ordeal which has confronted it in our generation. It faced it, and flinched and failed. We shall not discuss too nicely whether it is primarily the mismanagement of the Government, or the questionable ruling of the Speaker, or the inability of the private members to rise to a great occasion which is chiefly to blame. The broad fact for suffragists is that the Parliamentary machine has broken down and the Commons have proved themselves once more a body impotent to translate their opinions into law. The famous pledge which Ministers have expounded and constitutional suffragists accepted for fifteen months is to-day a detail in history, a promise which could neither be fulfilled nor renewed. We face a new situation to-day, and we face it with the courage that is only strengthened by discarding compromises and makeshifts. We have learned our lesson from experience. We know our Government. We know our House of Commons. We have formed the decided conviction that from that House, under this Government, no free vote on the merits of Women's Suffrage can be expected. We shall pursue our agitation. We shall organise our pressure. We shall lay our plans, if need be, for a long campaign. On one thing we are resolved. We shall not rest until a united Government will apply to this nerveless House the party discipline which it expects, and apply it to secure the enfranchisement of women. We find ample encouragement for this great adventure in the events of this week. A Government has been shaken and irreparably damaged in its prestige. It has lost one of its principal Bills. The "torpedo" of Manhood Suffrage looks very like a boomerang.

The New Offer.

It is of little practical importance to discuss the entanglement of red tape in which the famous pledge has become involved. The Speaker's ruling is, to our thinking, unintelligible. Women's Suffrage amendments were moved to the Reform Bills of 1867 and 1884, and were held to be in order, and in no formal way destructive of the Bill. A Women's Suffrage amendment, we gather, is in order when it is an academic proposal foredoomed to defeat. It is improper only when it stands

a chance of being carried. But enough of dead pledges. Let us turn to the future. The substitute which Mr. Asquith has offered is no equivalent for the opportunity which Suffragists have lost. In the first place a session has been lost. It is almost impossible that any Women's Suffrage measure introduced next Session should mature early enough under the Parliament Act to place women on the register at the next General Election. That was of the essence of the pledge, and short of a miracle it cannot now be redeemed. In the second place, the Private Member's Bill which Mr. Asquith offers us, however lavishly time may be granted to it both for its first discussion and its later passage under the Parliament Act, will at no stage enjoy the full protection of the Government Whips. It would have required a hard struggle to carry an Amendment to the Reform Bill, but, once carried, our battle would have been over. It would have rested with the Government to secure the Third Reading and to deal with the Lords. We should, in a word, have annexed the Liberal Party Machine. No such offer is made to-day. At every point in these two years we must battle, and battle unaided. In any snap division, or by some wrecking amendment, we may be defeated, and these risks will recur not once, but thrice. Assuming that the Bill can be carried a first time, its chances in the two later ordeals would hardly be worth considering. Mr. Balfour made it pretty clear in Monday's debate that Unionists would not help to carry our Bill (or any Bill) under the Parliament Act.

Is a Free Vote Possible?

The new pledge is not an adequate substitute for the old one. We go further. In its present form it is worthless. So long as the Cabinet is divided, so long will the more official Liberals and the Irish Nationalists fear to split it, and to embarrass the Prime Minister by carrying Women's Suffrage. We question seriously whether a Private Member's Bill is perceptibly more free from this peril than the Reform Bill procedure. The two Front Benches joked lightly about forming a sort of improvised "Cabinet" to draft a Bill and manage the debate. The Conciliation Committee was such a Cabinet. Had the Government welcomed that way of escape, it would not have refused facilities to that Bill until 1912, only to "torpedo" it (to quote Mr. Lloyd George's boast) by the introduction of a Manhood Suffrage Bill. We have not forgotten all the emphatic statements by Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Edward Grey and the Master of Elibank designed to persuade us how hopeless it was to attempt to carry a Private Member's Bill, and how safe was the opportunity of the Reform Bill. To-day, the pleading is reversed. We lack the agility to share in these political gymnastics. The final result of this alternate depreciation of each kind of chance, is that we retain the conviction that both were worthless. The Conciliation Bill was killed by the organised "ratting" of Liberals, led by some of the younger aspirants to office, and by the disciplined opposition of the Irish Party. It was all done, in Sir William Byle's phrase, out of "loyalty to the Prime Minister." Are the place seekers and the Irish less "loyal" to-day?

Why Not Try?

We need hardly say that nothing will be done by the National Union to mar the chances of this fresh opportunity. The Conciliation "Cabinet" shall have its chance, and the Liberal

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The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies being
a body which exists solely to obtain the enfranchisement
of women, holds no official view upon any other topic.
Opinions expressed upon other subjects must not be
regarded as necessarily those of the Union.

Message from Mrs. Fawcett To Members of the National Union.

The present is a moment which puts the greatest possible
strain upon the qualities of courage and steadfastness of our
members.

The opportunity which was offered to us by Mr. Asquith in
November, 1911, and emphasised by Mr. Lloyd George and Sir
Edward Grey as the best that had ever been made to us, has
proved absolutely worthless.

The Executive Committee of the National Union regard as
utterly inadequate the suggestion that they should take as an
equivalent to Mr. Asquith's promises of November, 1911, his
proposal of Monday last to give "facilities" to another Private
Member's Bill in the coming session. "Facilities" were
promised for the Conciliation Bill of 1912, which was "tor-
pedoed" from the Liberal side of the House, and there is no
security that the next Private Member's Bill will not be treated
in a similar way. By threats of resignation on the part of Anti-
Suffragist members of the Cabinet and other means, the possi-
bility of a free vote on Women's Suffrage was destroyed in the
spring of 1912. We have no guarantee that the same forces will
not operate to destroy a "free vote" in the spring of 1913.

In the opinion of the Executive Committee it would be idle to
waste strength, energy and money in working for a Will-o'-the-
wisp measure. Above all, let Suffragists not waste, and worse
than waste, self-sacrifice and suffering by allowing themselves
to be led into criminal acts which weaken our whole position
and alienate the support of public opinion.

The National Union is on the eve of a Council meeting and
the Executive will recommend changes and developments of
policy for working for a Government measure and for the return
of a Government to power which is not divided on the elementary
principles of representative government.

We have discovered in our Election Fighting Fund a means of
making our political work effective. The policy embodied in the
fund is capable of expansion and development, and schemes for
this will be laid before the Council for its decision. The steady
pursuance of this policy needs courage, self-sacrifice and devo-
tion of a far higher order than any mere destructiveness can
possibly call for. Strengthen the forces of the National Union
so that the Executive and Branches may develop their work in
this direction.

women will doubtless do their best. For our part, we propose
to reserve our energies for the winning of a real opportunity.
Something is due to the dignity of the Women's Movement.
The patience which allowed an insincere House to imagine that
it can always play with women, by offering makeshifts after
delays, would inflict a grave moral injury not only on the
women, but on men also. We do not propose to allow it to be
said that Women's Suffrage has had by our consent a fair field
and an open trial, and that it has been beaten by a
free vote when in fact no free vote is possible. By
going into the trial before an incompetent and fettered jury, on
terms that ensure an adverse verdict, we should prejudice our
own case. If we are, after all, too pessimistic, the surprise will
be the more welcome. Meanwhile, by agitating in every con-
stituency for a Government Measure, we shall continue to put
pressure on Members. If that work is well done, its effect will
be felt in the lobbies and registered in the divisions.

In the Speculative Future?

"But, after all," it will be said, "a Government measure is a
remote hope. Mr. Asquith can never concede it, and the aspect
of the Conservative Front Bench is not promising. Let us rather
work for to-day." Well, we have lived to see one "dim and
speculative future" materialise, and materialise in farce. We
want to be sure of the next. No Government is immortal, nor
is Mr. Asquith the only possible Liberal Prime Minister. It is
not an uncommon thing for Prime Ministers to seek a refuge in
the Upper House. Conservatives, moreover, have a way of
"stealing the clothes" that Liberals are afraid to wear. Our
business is to make our movement a political danger to any
Government which refuses straightforward action to secure our
rights. We felt our strength at Crewe and Midlothian. That
strategy can be developed. Public opinion counts for some-
thing, and public opinion regards the Government's record on
our question with contempt. To shake a Government is to
shorten its life. So much we have done already. Better a
brave fight with the goal before us, than tedious years of
fumbling and disillusionment in which the ardour and self-con-
fidence of our movement would be quenched. Governments
alternate rapidly in English politics when reform is afoot.

The Renewal of Militancy.

Every sincere suffragist shares the indignation which inspires
the militant societies. But their means are disastrously ill-
adapted to attain the end. Our problem is, and has always
been, to win, to arouse, and to organise public opinion. It is
to-day on our side. Its instincts of fair play have been affronted.
It is but a step to rally it into such a display of sympathy as
will impress the Government. No Government resists a popular
movement, and no Government can stand against public indig-
nation. What the militants apparently propose to do is to make
war deliberately on the public, to injure, alarm, and exasperate,
where we need countenance and support. The only consequence
will be once more to make the suffrage movement un-
popular, and to convince the Government that so far as the
electors are concerned it may safely leave our grievances un-
redressed. The notion that the British public can be coerced
into active support of the suffrage cause is almost too foolish
for argument. It is not, perhaps, a very brave public, but it
is numerous and it is rich. It can be annoyed, but hardly
intimidated by the loss of £2,000 worth of plate-glass once or
twice a year. The Boer War cost £250,000 a day, and the
British public stood it for two years and a half.

Government by Consent.

Violence may seem a short cut, but in the end those who use
it have to realise that democracies must be governed by consent
and won by persuasion. Let us assume, for the sake of argu-
ment, that this Government could be coerced by physical
violence into introducing a Suffrage Bill. The very suspicion
that it yielded to fear would destroy it, even if in fact its con-
version were sincere. It would fail to "whip" its doubting
followers into the "aye" lobby. It would go to the country
to suffer a crushing defeat from an angry electorate. Its failure
would condemn us to wait for another twenty years. That
has happened once before in English politics. Outrage pre-
ceded the Home Rule Bill of 1885. Cynics said that outrage
produced it. The Whips for once failed to do their work. The
electorate drove a divided party into interminable opposition,
and Home Rule had to wait until a generation had grown up
which had forgotten Clerkenwell and Phoenix Park. We shall
get a Government measure when the country is persuaded to
demand it. It would bring us no nearer our goal if we could
get it by force.

Bankrupt.

A Shilling in the Pound.

The *Observer* began its leader on Sunday last with the sentence:—"We make this concession to the Suffragists—that the extraordinary proceedings during the past week have been a satire upon male government." The exact nature of the Speaker's ruling on the 27th and of the fresh offer made by Mr. Asquith will be found elsewhere. There is, one would suppose, no fair-minded person who would not say that after having for the past five years dangled before the women pledges which he now admits he is unable to fulfil, the least Mr. Asquith could do was to meet representatives of the women in conference and discuss with them what could be done to offer apology and reparation. The National Union raised no cry of treachery. In language of studied moderation, the Executive asked the Government to declare how it intended to fulfil its pledges and applied for an interview in order to put before Mr. Asquith considerations which—to judge from the tone of the House—it is exceedingly unlikely any of his colleagues have effectively urged. He refused this moderate and reasonable application, and with immoderate and unreasonable haste declared on Monday night that he would now offer the women the facilities which they craved in 1908, and which he himself superseded by his offer of an amended Franchise Bill.

It is necessary to recall exactly what occurred, to see in what sense Mr. Asquith interprets the most sacred pledges to voteless women, and to ask fair-minded men to judge what they would think of such interpretation if it were applied to their own demands.

It was the majority of 179 for Mr. Stanger's Bill in 1908 which induced Mr. Asquith to promise a deputation of Liberal Suffragist Members that he would introduce a Franchise Bill "in this Parliament;" that it would be open to amendment to include women "on democratic lines," and that, if the amendments passed, the Government would make itself responsible for the Bill as amended. Liberals all over the country took this pledge as a basis of work and adjured all Suffragists to do so. The National Union made many and vain endeavours to induce Mr. Asquith to define two essential points:—(1) What did he mean by "democratic lines"? (2) In what session would he introduce the Bill? He obstinately refused any answer whatever, declined all suffrage deputations, and alluded to his pledge as one which would be redeemed in "the dim and speculative future." As a matter of fact, he did not fulfil it, either "in this Parliament (1908) or in the next."

Suffragists who meant business therefore concentrated on securing a majority for a Private Member's Bill, and in 1910 the first Conciliation Bill passed its second reading with a majority of 110. It is most important to remember that this Bill was not the production of a doctrinaire or an idealist evolving a franchise out of his inner consciousness; it was a measure hammered out, within the House of Commons, by all sections of Suffragist Members of Parliament concentrating on a greatest Common Measure. As such, and not because it fulfilled their demand, all sections of Suffragists outside the House supported it. The Government refused further facilities in 1910 on the ground that the Bill was not open to amendment, and refused time for its recommittal in order that this alleged defect might be remedied. This was absolutely inexcusable, since, owing to the lamented death of King Edward, all party measures were suspended, and there was ample time. Facilities were, however, offered for 1911, on condition that the Bill was made open to amendment. This condition was fulfilled, and in 1911 the Bill passed its second reading by a majority of 167. It was again refused facilities, and absolutely no reason whatever was alleged; presumably there was none which could by any stretch of imagination hold good. It was the sword of Brennus. The Government had the power to refuse justice, and it did so.

Again, however, it offered full facilities in 1912, and these included facilities for a fight to a finish. The militant societies, which had refrained from outrage ever since the formation of the Conciliation Committee, accepted, like the National Union, under protest, this greatly and unreasonably delayed opportunity, and steady work progressed in the country. The Conciliation Bill was a Private Member's Bill which had passed its Second Reading by a majority of 167 in a really free House. It was a measure which undoubtedly would have passed its remaining stages that year in a really free House. Then came the torpedo. In November, 1911, Mr. Asquith announced that

in 1912 he intended to bring in his long-delayed Reform Bill, and, receiving a deputation of Suffragists, he categorically renewed and amplified (in reply to four questions from the National Union) the pledges which on January 27th, 1913, he found he could not fulfil.

Mr. Lloyd George went down to Bath, and in a speech to the Liberal Federation, advocating procedure by amendment to the Government Bill, declared triumphantly: "We have torpedoed the Conciliation Bill." (We note that the Chancellor's memory was at fault when, in the course of Mr. Balfour's speech in the House last Monday, he interjected that he had used the word "torpedoed" of the first Conciliation Bill which was not open to amendment; this is not so, as a reference to the newspaper files will show. Mr. Lloyd George spoke at Bath on November 24th, 1911, and alluded to the Conciliation Bill of that year. When challenged as to the meaning of the word, the Chancellor assured us that he had only "torpedoed" the Conciliation Bill in order to give us "something very much better." Every Liberal speaker repeated this assurance. Mr. Crawshay Williams carefully organised extensive defections among Members pledged to vote for the Conciliation Bill on the plea that they had a far better thing in the Franchise Bill.

Sir Edward Grey speaking to the Women's Liberal Federation on December 16th, 1911, said "The introduction of the Government Bill provides a better opportunity than Women's Suffrage has ever had of making real progress in the House of Commons. Mr. Lloyd George, on the same occasion, said "Our success next year, I think, is assured. I do not see what there is to prevent it." Mr. Runciman on November 19th, 1911, said he "considered Mr. Asquith's latest suggestion, a much better offer than the granting of facilities for the discussion of the Conciliation Bill." Sir John Simon in the Opera House on December 4th, 1912, said that "what had now happened was that the Government had given to Women Suffragists an opportunity they had never had before. The Prime Ministers had made certain declarations, and it was clear that these declarations put Women's Suffrage in a position vastly superior to the position which private individuals had ever put in it. In every form, these assertions have been repeated by Liberal speakers and the Liberal press—it is too much now for us to be told that, because the Government cannot fulfil the pledges it made as long ago as 1908, these pledges were after all, no such great things, and a Private Member's Bill is as good as, or better than, amendments to a Government Bill.

Suffragists may have held that if a Private Member's Bill in 1910 were given a fair field and no favour they could win on it then. The situation now is a very different one. Endless intrigues in the House have made it practically impossible to secure a free vote. The policy of exasperation pursued by certain anti-suffrage Ministers has wrought its effect upon some women; less, far less, we believe, than would have been the case had men been so tricked, slighted, and mocked. Is this good government? To admit a grievance, as Mr. Asquith did, to propose a remedy, to find that remedy impossible, and then to propose to go back to the old situation! Is that good government? We were told by Liberals to wait until the Lords' Veto was abolished and then we should have the advantage of its abolition. The Lords' Veto is abolished, and we are not to have the advantage of it; for no one supposes for a moment that Conservative suffragists could vote for any Bill to come under the Parliament Act. The Government has driven the question irrevocably on to party lines and now offers us a non-party solution. This is not to redeem its most solemn pledges.

There is a story told of a customer who had run up a very big bill and had paid a small instalment. On being dunned by the patient tradesman for payment in full, he remarked:—"There must be some reciprocity in this matter. I have paid something on account. It can't be all on one side!" This is the position of the Government. It promised us Government protection and the benefit of the Parliament Act if we could get a majority on a free vote. It has destroyed the free vote, it cannot give us the protection of the Franchise Bill, and it throws us back on a Private Member's Bill without the benefit of the Parliament Act. This is to admit bankruptcy and to offer us a shilling in the pound. If there are assets, let the Government pay its just debts. If there are none, we cannot see that the Government is of any further use to us.

H. M. S.

"It is always inopportune to meet the demands of women."

The Rt. Hon. D. LLOYD GEORGE, in the House of Commons, January 23rd, 1913.

The Present Position.

A Conservative Outlook.

BY LADY BETTY BALFOUR.

To write calmly at this moment from the point of view of a Conservative Suffragist is not easy. One's party sentiment is at a low ebb, and one's Suffragist sentiment is rampant. If "Militancy" could undo the Speaker's ruling, and bring back the chance for Women's Suffrage to be incorporated this year in a Government Bill—it would be hard to remain "constitutional." But can any form of militancy conceivably have any such effect? To win the vote is even more important than to fight for it. It can only be won by Parliament, and support in Parliament is not likely to become more ardent in the future than in the past by reason of militancy directed against any party in the State.

Moreover, the present situation, we may frankly agree, is not due to the bad faith of the Government, though it may surprise those who are not Members of Parliament that a contingency foreseen by Ministers should be so lightly dismissed by them without consulting the only individual whose opinion could settle the point.

The alternative now offered as an even better opportunity to Suffragists, is the very one demanded by Suffragists in 1910, and refused by the Government. It is not the only alternative. It might have been possible for the Government to meet the Speaker's ruling by a promise to re-introduce the Franchise Bill next Session with a Woman Suffrage Amendment incorporated into it, leaving the House free, if it so pleased, to knock it out. That would have been in the spirit of the Prime Minister's pledge to the deputation of 1911. But from a Conservative point of view, there are no doubt advantages in the plan of facilities for a non-party Private Member's Bill divorced from a Manhood Suffrage Bill, hateful to all Conservatives. Here are two points for Conservative Suffragists specially to consider. In the first place, for what form of Woman Suffrage will they agree to work? The Dickinson Amendment was gaining support, in view of the large increase of the male electorate which would have been brought about by the Franchise Bill. But on the existing male representation, will it be possible to concentrate Conservative support on anything wider than the Conciliation Bill?

The second point is this. Will the Conservative leaders pledge themselves to carry on the facilities for a Private Member's Bill promised by this Government if an election and change of parties should take place before those facilities have been carried out?

It is good to read in Mr. Balfour's speech that he talks of himself as a possible member of the new Suffrage Committee in the House of Commons. As a Conservative he objects to the application of the Parliament Act for a measure of Woman Suffrage before the will of the people on this subject has been tested by a General Election.

But how can any but Party Measures receive this test? Will every Member of Parliament consent at the next General Election to express his views about Woman Suffrage in his election address, and to take the verdict of his constituents, so far as it may be possible to do so, in his opinion whether for or against the subject?

It is relevant to the present situation to ask these questions, for the events of the last few days have at least made it clear even to the enemy, that Woman Suffrage is a question of first-class importance; a question which must be faced and dealt with; a question which can wreck a principal Government Bill; a question which can divide and embarrass Cabinets.

The interest and the feeling behind the Women's Amendments which were not in the Bill far outweighed any interest or feeling behind the Manhood Suffrage Bill itself. That Bill has been dropped, and the only cry of indignation and disappointment comes from those who believe that a genuine opportunity for bringing about the Enfranchisement of Women has thus been frustrated.

"It is manifest that women are already politicians . . . and whether they have the vote or not, they will go on being politicians. . . . Therefore I cannot honestly think that it is possible to maintain the position that women should not take part in politics at all."

Lord HUGH CECIL, in the House of Commons, January 24th, 1913.

"Timeo Danaos!"

Last March, a "Private Member's Bill" for Women's Suffrage was defeated. Why?

Because other members thought its passage would embarrass the Government. That is to say, the issue on which they voted was not Women's Suffrage only, or (in the case of the Irish Party) Women's Suffrage at all. The Bill was defeated on issues which had nothing at all to do with the political enfranchisement of women.

This week, the Government, withdrawing its Franchise Bill, offers us the chances of another "Private Member's Bill," and the offer has been greeted by Liberals and Conservatives alike, with some appearance of enthusiasm. We are even assured that it is, not equal, but superior to the chance of an amendment to the Government Bill. The reason given is this:—

"When the Private Member's Bill is introduced, there will be no other issue which can possibly affect the decision of the House. It cannot have any effect upon the life of the Government, and it cannot have any effect upon the position of any individual member of the Government, because they will be perfectly free to vote upon the issue."

All this might have been said of the last Private Member's Bill. Nevertheless that Bill was defeated precisely because other issues did come in.

It is conceivable that some of our supporters outside the House of Commons, not realising this, may be induced to think this amazing "offer" deserves serious consideration. It is necessary, therefore, to point out that—apart from the innumerable chances of political life which may arise in the course of the next two years—the debate itself immediately proved that, in this respect, the fate of a new Conciliation Bill would certainly be that of the old. Mr. Lloyd George said:—"No other issue can possibly affect the decision of the House." And at once Mr. Balfour rose up to protest against the application of the Parliament Act to a Private Member's Bill, in these words:—"Far more important than all these questions is the last question, which is the relation of the Bill with the Parliament Act. The House can see that I am not speaking either for or against Women's Suffrage."

And later:—"I again repeat, entirely irrespective of the particular measure which is proposed . . . it is of procedure and procedure only that I speak."

In other words, Mr. Balfour—and with him, no doubt, a large number of his former followers—will vote against this "Private Member's Bill" when it tries to pass the House of Commons the third time, because he does not approve of the application to it of the Parliament Act. Here already is another issue! How many more will yet arise?

Sir Edward Grey, meeting Mr. Balfour's point, assured the House that it need not arise till the Bill came to the House of Commons the third time. "That is the proper time, I think, for the Right Hon. Gentleman to raise his point."

We, then, are to toil and slave to get this Bill through the House of Commons three times, in order to have it defeated at last on a question of "procedure and procedure only." We shall be, in fact, just where we are to-day, only having wasted two years.

Curiously enough, the plan upon which Mr. Lloyd George and others look with favour, emanates from Mr. F. E. Smith—Mr. Smith's record on the suffrage question—his ingenious plots against the Conciliation Bill, and his cynical defence of pledges never meant to be kept, but given only to "avoid the apparent disagreeableness of making answers, possibly unpopular, to women workers in their constituencies," has hardly been such as to inspire confidence; yet, *mirabile dictu*, Mr. Lloyd George accepts his advice with the ingenious plea "Though the gift comes from an enemy, I think, on the whole, we can accept it without close scrutiny [the italics are ours] because, on the face of it, it seems to be a very sensible suggestion."

This suggestion was endorsed by Mr. Dillon, who frankly said "My counsel is that of an opponent." To anyone less lamb-like in his innocence than Mr. Lloyd George, the inference is obvious—"Timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes."

"After all, there are questions in which women are keenly interested and which do not appeal equally to men, and they therefore ought to have representation."

Sir JOSEPH WALTON, in the House of Commons, January 24th, 1913.

The Government and Women's Suffrage.

The Press Department of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies has issued the following statement:—

Before considering the situation created by the Speaker's reply to Mr. Bonar Law, it is necessary to consider the events which led up to the present position.

In the years 1910 and 1911 the Conciliation Bill was supported by all the Suffrage Societies. In July, 1910, it passed its second reading by a large majority. The Government refused to grant time for its further stages, although Government business was not then congested. In May, 1911, the Conciliation Bill again passed its second reading by a large majority, and the Government again refused facilities, but, under considerable pressure, gave a definite promise of facilities for 1912. The Suffrage Societies accepted this compromise with reluctance, as they felt that the Bill should have been immediately proceeded with; the militant Societies continued to observe a truce, and an energetic campaign in support of the Conciliation Bill was carried on.

In November, 1911, Mr. Asquith suddenly announced that the Government would next Session bring in a Franchise Reform Bill, and that it would be possible to move amendments to it with the object of enfranchising women. The militant Societies at once decided that the Government had hereby broken its promise for the Conciliation Bill and resorted to violence. The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies framed a series of questions, which were put to Mr. Asquith on the occasion of a deputation on November 17th, 1911, the answers to which constitute his pledges on the subject of the Reform Bill, and to which allusion is made later.

The N.U.W.S.S. accepted these pledges, and resolved to work both for the Conciliation Bill and for amendments to the Reform Bill. In the meantime, the suffrage ministers pointed out that the Reform Bill offered not only a better opportunity than the Conciliation Bill, but the best chance Women's Suffrage had ever had.

The Non-militant Suffrage Societies having honourably accepted the Prime Minister's pledges, continued to work for amendments to the Reform Bill. Thousands of pounds, and untold work on the part of the women, have been poured into the movement. Success seemed within reach, when, at the eleventh hour, the Speaker intimated that if the Women's Suffrage Amendments were carried he should probably consider the scope of the Bill so much altered that it would require to be re-introduced.

This entirely alters the situation, and practically wipes out the Prime Minister's pledges given on November 17th. These promises were:—(1) That the Government Franchise Bill should be so drafted that amendments to include women or other terms than men would be in order. It is in order to move the Amendments, but if one of them is passed it will probably not be order to include it in the Bill.

2. That the Government would not oppose the Amendments, but would leave the question to a free vote of the House of Commons. This promise has been partly fulfilled. The Government has not opposed the Amendments, but the Speaker's suggested ruling makes a "free" vote of the House an impossibility.

(3) That any Amendment, if carried, would be adopted by the Government as an integral part of the Bill and defended in all its stages. This promise cannot now be fulfilled, since it has been declared that it is probably technically impossible to incorporate a Women's Suffrage Amendment in the Bill at all.

(4) That the Bill should be put through all its stages in the present Session. This promise cannot now be fulfilled either, as has already been shown. And since the Bill cannot go through this Session, it cannot in the normal course obtain the protection of the Parliament Act, a condition which the last two promises have always been held to imply.

We submit that the Government is now placed in an impossible position with regard to Women's Suffrage. During the past fourteen months responsible Ministers have assured and reassured us of the excellent opportunities offered by the Reform Bill. Why were not the Speaker's views obtained beforehand?

We maintain that, regarding the Government as a body of honourable men, we have a right to claim that it shall offer us at least an equivalent for the pledges which it cannot now fulfil.

To sum up:—

(1) We could have proceeded by means of a Private Member's Bill in 1910 or 1911, but facilities were refused.

(2) We were willing to accept the Government's offer of proceeding by means of Amendments to the Reform Bill with the promise of a free vote of the House, but a free vote has been rendered impossible because supporters of the Government would not vote for the Women's Suffrage Amendments, knowing that their passage would involve the withdrawal of the whole Bill.

(3) We have lost the benefit of the Parliament Act; it is probably impossible now for women to be on the register before the next election.

What can the Government offer us? We are opposed to:—

(a) Proceeding with the Franchise Bill without Women.
(b) The substitution of Mr. Harold Baker's Bill abolishing Plural Voting. Such a course would undoubtedly suggest complicity of the Government in bringing about the present situation. It has always been prophesied by those who refused to accept the Government pledges.

The only course now seems the inclusion of women in a Government measure. After all that has happened no Private Member's Bill could have as good a chance as that which was offered by the promised Amendment to the Franchise Bill. A Bill runs more risks than an Amendment, and a Private Member's Bill runs extra risks. Any Bill involving a preliminary vote which decides whether or no the Government is to take the responsibility for it would, if introduced now, make a "free vote" for that preliminary vote an impossibility. No amount of latitude in granting of facilities can compensate for the loss of the protection of the Parliament Act, and the immunity from the danger of wrecking Amendments which would have been guaranteed by inclusion in the Government's Franchise Bill this Session.

Our Claims.

The following extract from an article by Mrs. Fawcett in the February issue of *The Englishwoman* will be of great interest to all our readers:—

"The National Union views the withdrawal of the Manhood Suffrage Bill with unqualified satisfaction. The Government's mismanagement of the whole question has however had this result, that even those Suffragists who were in the past the most reluctant to reject any workable opportunity, are now resolved to demand nothing less than an official measure.

"Experience has shown that under this Government a free vote on the merits of Women's Suffrage is unobtainable. So long as some Liberals and most Nationalists affect to think that they can best serve the interests of a divided Cabinet by defeating Women's Suffrage, so long will every unofficial effort be doomed to failure. Had the Government really welcomed the prospect of settling the question by the expedient of a Private Member's Bill, it would not have 'torpedoed' the Conciliation Bill. It is too late to salvage that wreck. The chances of obstruction and cross-voting in committee, the difficulty of combining Suffragists of all parties in a solid majority, the hazardous position of any Bill introduced next Session under the Parliament Act, and above all the certainty that Irish Members and ultra-official Liberals would again cast a tactical vote to relieve the Prime Minister from embarrassment—these considerations convince the National Union that in pronouncing this offer inadequate, it is prejudicing no real chance for Women's Suffrage.

"The National Union invites all Suffragists to combine in demanding a Government measure. It asks its friends in the House to frustrate any attempt to deal with the franchise in any form until women's claims are met. It appeals finally to all sections of the movement to take their part in a resolute constitutional agitation. Public opinion regards the record of the Government on this question with disgust. It can be rallied to demand fair dealing and straightforward action."

M. G. FAWCETT.

Women's Labour League Conference.

At the Conference of fifty-five branches of the Women's Labour League, held at Caxton Hall on Tuesday last, the following resolution was carried unanimously:—

That this Conference of the Women's Labour League, in view of Mr. Asquith's pledge that he would place the issue of Women's Suffrage before the House of Commons this Session, and of the unprecedented ruling of the Speaker, demands the immediate introduction of a Government measure containing clauses enfranchising women, and further demands that facilities should be given for the passing of the Bill so that it could come under the provisions of the Parliament Act.

In Parliament.

When THE COMMON CAUSE went to press last week Parliament was preparing to hear the Prime Minister's speech upon the allocation of time to the Franchise and Registration Bill, and the Nationalists were being urged to stand aside and leave England and Scotland to settle their own affairs. The decision, it was supposed, lay with the Irish vote, which could if so directed grant or refuse enfranchisement to the women of the larger island. But this view was mistaken. The decision was in other hands and on Thursday afternoon the speaker descended—a *deus ex machina* into the Parliamentary arena and changed the face of events.

Mr. Bonar Law asked a question concerning, not the Suffrage Amendments, but the Government Amendments to the Reform Bill. He submitted that the amendments brought forward by the Government made so material a difference in the Bill that in accordance with the practice of the House a new Bill ought to be introduced and read a second time. He cited an instance—the Tithe Rent Bill in 1880—in which Mr. Speaker Peel had given as his ruling concerning amendments proposed and not yet made in Committee and had decided that they had transformed the Bill so as to require a new one.

The Speaker in replying said that he had looked up the circumstances to which Mr. Bonar Law referred and that, speaking with all respect, he thought Mr. Peel's ruling to have been "a little previous on that occasion," and that since the Amendments were changing from day to day, and many of them might not appear in the Bill, he did not think he ought "to pronounce at the present time any opinion in regard to them." It might be supposed by ordinary persons to whom the getting done of business appears the really important thing, that a Speaker's opinion would be most usefully known before time was wasted over amendments which if passed would wreck the Bill to which they were appended. Surely the moment of drafting is the moment at which the validity of amendments ought to be decided. In fact, the Speaker ought to treat Bills as the Prayer Book bids objectors to treat married couples—to speak, that is, in the preliminary stage "or else hereafter for ever hold his peace."

Mr. Speaker, however, on this occasion contrived to combine the disadvantages both of speaking and holding his peace; for he next proceeded to observe, gratuitously,

"There are also other amendments relating to Female Suffrage, which, of course, would make a huge difference if they were inserted, and at the present time heaven only knows in what shape the Bill will emerge from Committee. Therefore, I think, it would be improper for me to give any ruling with regard to the particular point now, but for the general information of the House I may say that the general principle appears very clearly stated on page 401 of the last edition of May, and broadly speaking, it is this: that if such substantial amendments are made during the passage of a Bill in Committee as materially to affect the form and substance of the Bill in such a way as to make it for all practical purposes a new Bill, then it is necessary for that Bill to be withdrawn and a new Bill, then it is necessary for that Bill to be introduced. That is simply the general statement and there, I am afraid, I must leave it for the present. We must wait and see in what position the Bill reappears."

Of course this pronouncement was equivalent to warning the House that the passing of Women's Suffrage Amendments would not improbably wreck the Bill. Such a pronouncement annihilated at one blow the possibility of a really "free" vote upon these Amendments, and rendered Mr. Asquith's repeated pledges valueless.

Mr. Asquith himself, suffering from a cold which rendered him, at times, almost inaudible, proceeded, somewhat later, with his proposals for the allocation of time to the various parts of the Franchise and Registration Bill; and in the course of his speech he repeated in plain terms what he had consistently, for five years, promised. He said:

"Very shortly after I assumed my present office, may be in the spring or early summer of the year 1908. . . . I announced . . . to a deputation which came to see me on the subject of Woman Suffrage—and the announcement was published far and wide—that the Government, as everybody knew, were pledged and deeply pledged, to bring in before the expiration of the lifetime of that Parliament of 1906 a Bill substantially for the purpose for which this Bill is introduced. I also dwelt on the notorious fact that in regard to Woman Suffrage opinion was sharply divided within the Cabinet itself. . . . Therefore, I said, it was impossible for any Government which felt itself called upon, as we were bound by all our pledges to do, to deal with the question of the franchise as a Government, to propose, one way or another, the enactment of Woman Suffrage. I said, and I think truly. . . . that that imposed a great hardship upon the supporters of Woman Suffrage. . . . I therefore, talking with the full assent of my colleagues. . . . said that when the time came round for us to introduce our promised Franchise and Registration Bill we should leave it an open

question to the free judgment of the House of Commons. From that position we have never receded. . . . That being so, we having now introduced our Franchise and Registration Bill. . . . are bound to carry out, or endeavour to carry out, the undertaking which I, on behalf of my colleagues, then gave."

The method devised by the Government was, of course, the introduction of a Bill specifically declared to be open to amendment, together with a promise that, should a Women's Suffrage Amendment be carried, it would be accepted and become an integral part of the Government measure. Suffragists were urged to abandon the Conciliation Bill, because the Franchise Bill would give so much better an opportunity. Under this pretext many a Member ran away from a previous pledge and voted against the Conciliation Bill, to which the Irish Party vote gave the *coup de grâce*. Since then intrigues and false suggestions innumerable have been employed by the opponents of Women's Suffrage; almost every Member has had it impressed upon him that the enfranchising of women would endanger whatever particular object was dearest to him; and the House of Commons, accustomed to leading strings, showed itself unable to rise to the unwonted dignity of independence. *The Nation* of last Saturday published a whole alphabet of reasons why this or that member would or would not vote for the Women's Amendments—and every one of the twenty-six was perfectly familiar to Suffrage organisers. The average member proved incapable of using his freedom to express an honest conviction upon a living issue, but was prepared to cast his vote according as he believed that the enfranchisement of women would help or would hinder some other cause.

Of the Members who spoke on Thursday only Lord Robert Cecil spoke as a genuine Suffragist might be expected to do. He warned the House of the impression, undoubtedly existing, that women are not fairly treated in the House:

"They say, with great truth, as I think, that somehow or another they have always been prevented from getting a clear decision on a clear issue."

After reviewing the progress of affairs from the time when the Prime Minister gave his pledge, Lord Robert continued:

"We are forced to ask ourselves and to ask the Government, have we really got a free and unfettered power of discussing these amendments? . . . If there is any impression that the effect of the voting for, let us say what is called the Dickinson Amendment, will be to destroy the Franchise Bill, then that is not giving the power of free and unfettered decision to the members of this House."

THE "GREY" AMENDMENT.—On Friday morning Mr. Alfred Lyttelton moved, in place of Sir Edward Grey, the omission of the word "male" before the word person in Sub-section 1. In a well-arranged speech he commented on the work done in modern times by women, their appointment to the offices of Guardians, Councillors, etc., and made a special point of those political energies at elections of which so many Members had availed themselves. Then he recalled the principle upon which extensions to the franchise had admittedly been made, viz., that "you cannot entrust one class to the uncontrolled guardianship of another." Passing on to current objections, he quoted:

"the supposed preponderance of women in the community, and the idea that they will combine and form a combination against men. I wish to speak with respect of my opponents, but I find it impossible not to say that I think that proposition is ridiculous."

Mr. Harcourt, who immediately followed, made a sorry exhibition, of which Mr. W. H. Massingham spoke as it deserved in Monday's *Daily News and Leader*.

"How is it that so many men, who owe so much to women, cannot speak of them in public without a tone of insult? For it is insulting to address oneself to a subject like Woman Suffrage in the tone of Mr. Harcourt's speech. I see the Parliamentary reporters describe it as 'witty.' What is wit, without refinement, without human nature, without feeling, without subtlety? What coarse cheap stuff is this, which tells women they are unfit for a Foreign Office clerkship, when nine-tenths of the suffering life of the sex is taken up with the business of diplomatising for and about men; when, in fact, the life of women, partly by virtue of their exclusion from public affairs, is largely a course of diplomacy."

After his display of wit, Mr. Harcourt made the amazing declaration that if any "lesser form of Female Franchise is engrafted on this Bill. . . . I shall hold myself free, and probably feel myself compelled at some later stage to recur to the proposal of Adult Suffrage." This remarkable statement may rank as a minor bombshell, the explosion of which was somewhat discounted by the Speaker's preceding and superior one.

The speech of the afternoon was that of a Member comparatively little known, Mr. McCurdy, whose utterances showed a full comprehension of the position and an uncompromising outspokenness.

Here are some of the things he said :

"Long disuse of the exercise of free judgment has the result that when, on this exceptional occasion, we are called upon to exercise it, we find that our faculties of free judgment are atrophied. . . . At last we may speak the truth; and we find that our powers of truthful utterance are paralysed by long disuse. . . . I submit that the honour of Members of Parliament, and the reputation of Parliament itself, are at stake in regard to this question of Women's Suffrage. . . . Unless we can persuade the women of this country that this matter has been decided on its merits, . . . they will be justified in thinking that they have not been treated as they ought to be treated in the English House of Commons."

After such words as these the ordinary Parliamentary platitudes sound emptier than ever, and even Lord Hugh Cecil's banter of Mr. Harcourt seems but thin.

The Hon. Neil Primrose, however, did perform the feat of introducing a new argument—from the City. Parliament would, he said, "not only be introducing a new element into the Constitution without consulting the electorate," it would be doing "what is worse—destroying the vested interest of the present elector," in short, "watering the stock." Parliament proposed to "diminish the value of the present vote by, it may be, 25 per cent., or 50 per cent. . . . without consulting" the electors. Mr. Primrose thought it would be a crime "to deliberately weaken the powers of the present male electorate" by enlarging the basis of representation. So fine an example of crusted Toryism must, we fear, have been too pure and undiluted for a degenerate twentieth-century House of Commons.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT.—On Monday Mr. Asquith asked the Speaker to pronounce a definite opinion as to the effect upon the Franchise Bill of the three Amendments, any one of which would have enfranchised women.

The Speaker replied that if "one or two of the Amendments designed to grant Women's Suffrage were to be inserted in the Bill, my opinion is that under those circumstances the Bill would be substantially a new Bill." Therefore the Bill ought to be withdrawn and a fresh Bill introduced.

Mr. Asquith, while accepting the Speaker's ruling, said that it was not "in the least degree anticipated by His Majesty's Government or, as I believe, by the great majority of the House." The Government would, in obedience to the ruling, withdraw the Franchise and Registration Bill. As regards Women's Suffrage, two possible courses remained: one, the introduction of a Government measure, which the Government refused to undertake "for reasons which must be obvious." The other course, which would be adopted, was to engage that if a Private Member's Suffrage Bill were introduced next Session the Government would give it facilities, "by which I mean an adequate share of their time for its reasonable discussion and amendment in the House." Such a Bill must be so framed as not to exclude "the possible amendment of any of the various proposals of enfranchisement," and everybody would be perfectly free to vote as he pleased. The Government would grant to such a Bill, at every stage the same facilities "as regards the expenditure of Government time as we are prepared to give to any controversial measure of the Government itself."

Mr. Bonar Law expressed an opinion that a private Member's Bill would give Women's Suffrage a better chance than the late Franchise Bill did, because the Conservatives would have felt bound to vote against the third reading of that.

Mr. Henderson took a very different tone, and his speech, with its refreshing tone of reality, was so important that we print it practically entire. He said:

"We on these benches cannot allow the Order to be discharged without expressing an opinion as to our position with regard to the new situation which has arisen out of the ruling you, Sir, have given this afternoon. The Leader of the Opposition appeared to be much more concerned in scoring a party advantage than in putting before the House the seriousness of the situation so far as some thousands of honest women in this country are concerned. It may be that the two orthodox parties in this House are so much at sixes and sevens with regard to women enfranchisement that the less the position is seriously faced the better it may be from their too purely party standpoint. We on these benches occupy an entirely different position. We are not at sixes and sevens on this question. I think it can be said to our credit, that not only do we stand solid and united in favour of women enfranchisement, but it can be said of us, as it can be said of no other party in this House, that the more women we could have secured in the Bill which is to be withdrawn the more satisfied would the whole of this party have been and the more satisfied would those whom we represent in the country have been. I suppose the more women that might have been included in the Bill the more dissatisfied would either of the other parties in the House have been. I am delighted to hear that is contested by some of my hon. friends on this side of the House. I am only sorry I have not the opportunity of moving the amendment standing in my name, because I would have been glad to have put those cheers to a very definite test. I am inclined to think that at seven o'clock to-night many of those

who are now protesting against my statement would have been found in the Lobby against the enfranchisement of the whole of the women. So far as I have been able to follow the course of events, I believe the Prime Minister, notwithstanding his opposition to women enfranchisement, has done his very best to give effect to the pledge he has not only made, but reiterated time and again to deputations of women when they have approached the Government on this matter. I am not, however, satisfied upon this. The Prime Minister, in the proposal he made at the end of his statement, set forth the future intentions of the Government. I do not think he quite kept up to the standard he has all through this business set. We must not underestimate the value of the pledge which the Prime Minister gave. We must not undervalue the position it has created in the country. I want to remind the House of the use that has been made of it over and over again by members of the Government in order to carry with the Government in its programme the great mass of non-militant women. I want to call attention to a statement made by the Foreign Secretary. He said—"The introduction of the Government Bill provides a better opportunity than Women Suffrage has ever yet had of making progress in the House of Commons." Compare that statement with the statement the Prime Minister has just made as to the intention of the Government to redeem the pledge by allowing a private Member next Session the necessary time to introduce a Suffrage Bill. Is that the redemption of the pledge? I want the House to notice that if a private Member introduces the Bill he has got to be responsible for it until it goes to another place. I think the Prime Minister gives assent to that. I could quite have understood it, in his statement to-day, the Prime Minister had said, "In order to give effect to my pledge, a pledge made in the name of the Government, we will afford time for the second reading of the Bill." Yes, but we say, "Afford time for the second reading by a majority of the House, our position will then be what it would have been during the present week if a suffrage amendment had been carried by the House." The pledge, as we understood it, was that the Government would take charge of the amended Bill and hold to the amended Bill in this House or in the other House during the necessary time to carry it into effect under the Parliament Act. That is the interpretation we placed upon the pledge, but to say that not only shall a private Member introduce the Bill, risk its second reading, and risk all the tricks that may be played during the Committee stage of the Bill—Yes, tricks. I do not withdraw the word. I am too well aware of what has been going on in the smoke-room and in the Lobbies during the past two or three months. It is not necessary to mention names. Cabinet Ministers have been busying themselves more during the last six or eight weeks than I have ever known in the cordiality and friendship they have shown to every Member who was suspected of being sufficiently weak-kneed to listen to their tales about the embarrassment of His Majesty's Government. Those Cabinet Ministers who have not been working quite so hard as the Colonial Secretary, those on the other side of the question who have not been working so hard as some of us who are with them with regard to Women Suffrage would have liked to have seen them work, and who have been making these statements to deputations that this Bill afforded a better opportunity than we had ever had before, expect us to-day to be content with the Prime Minister's statement made in their name, made, I assume, in the names of all the members of the Cabinet. They expect us to be satisfied with this fulfilment of this important pledge—that a private member shall carry the whole responsibility of the Bill from its introduction until the time it leaves this House. I protest that this is not a fulfilment of the pledge. I was hopeful, in spite of the speech delivered on Friday by the Colonial Secretary, that having a strong desire to carry out their pledge honourably, and having denied the women this golden opportunity—I am speaking of the statement made by the Prime Minister on behalf of the Government as a whole. If there was a desire to give full effect to the honourable pledge made it seems to me that nothing short of the Government making themselves responsible—I may be wrong, but I am perfectly sincere when I say that nothing short of the Government making themselves responsible for a Bill which includes the women would, it seems to me, meet the case and the expectations which have been created. But, if they will not go so far as that, surely we have a right to expect—and I hope it is not too late—the Government even now to reconsider their position to this extent: That after this private Member has been provided with the time, the Government should, providing the Bill meets their demands as laid down in the speech of the Prime Minister and the House gives it a second reading, assume charge of the Bill. The Prime Minister dissents. Then all I have to say, in conclusion, is that I fail to see that this pledge which has been hawked about the country, the pledge by which the non-militants were kept quiet—hon. Members object to that statement, but surely it is a very reasonable one to make; it is true that the non-militants have been resting on the complete discharge of this pledge, and to that extent they have been kept quiet—and they have gone about the country to meeting after meeting saying, "We believe that the Prime Minister is going to carry out in letter and in spirit this pledge." I venture to say that to ask a private member to be responsible for this Bill, when, in the present case, the Government were themselves going to take the responsibility immediately any one of the three amendments was carried, and would from that time hold that responsibility till the Bill passed, under the Parliament Act, on to the Statute Book, I venture to say it cannot be accepted that they are discharging their pledge by throwing the onus on a private member to see the Bill right through all its stages to the other House. I hope, therefore, the House will recognise that we have a right to press the matter still further, and to ask the Government itself to take charge of the Bill after it has succeeded in getting a second reading. From that point the Government should be responsible for its passing into law.

Lord Robert Cecil thought a private Member's Bill preferable, although he knew the difficulties in the way of a private Member or a private organisation to be very great. He felt "the enormous advantage of the Bill being in the charge of those who believe in it."

Mr. F. E. Smith proposed that the Suffragists in the House should form a Committee "almost as if they were a Cabinet," while the Anti-Suffragists should resist "like a regular opposition" and, the House appearing to agree with his proposal, expressed his belief that a prospect of testing the real feeling of the House of Commons at an early date had now arrived.

Mr. Lloyd George declared himself opposed to Mr. Henderson's suggestions. He enlarged upon the advantages which the proposed Bill presented, and in answer to a question about the chances of the ballot, said that the Government would guarantee time for the Bill.

Mr. Balfour welcomed the promise of facilities for the proposed Bill; but he saw a dangerous precedent in introducing a far-reaching change in the constitution by means of a measure for which no Government was responsible. He asked several questions as to the procedure on the Bill; and indicated a strong opinion that the proposed procedure might become a serious danger. Particularly he thought it improper that such a Bill should be passed under the Parliament Act.

Mr. Keir Hardie emphatically protested against the new proposals of the Government. He considered them "as a fresh trap to catch the women outside." "The enfranchisement of women," he said, "sooner or later must become a Government question."

Speaking with that concentrated and controlled indignation which has always given character to his public utterances, he added:

"In view of the speeches made and of the levity with which this, the greatest of all British political questions, has been treated, I believe the promise now made is mere chaff to deceive the supporters of Women Suffrage outside into the belief that the Government means business when the Government knows it means nothing of the sort. The decision of the Government will cause not only disappointment but will cause despair in thousands of hearts outside the walls of this House to-night. . . . What possible hope is there of a private Member's Bill going through? Let the Government be honest. Let the Government say either that they will drop it altogether, in earnest and in sincerity or that they will respect both of friends and of opponents of Women Suffrage. But to trifle and toy with the question in this manner will disgust the women outside, and shock the confidence in the Government's own good name."

Mr. Leif Jones suggested that if a Resolution in favour of Women's Suffrage were passed by the House, the Government should insert it in its new Reform Bill. As to the present offer of the Government it ought to be calmly considered, but he hoped the matter would not be decided that night.

Lord Hugh Cecil thought that the Government's offer provided two opportunities instead of one, and so was advantageous. He, however, like some other speakers, was anxious for a Referendum.

And so the debate tailed off; the Bill was withdrawn, and Suffragists are left to face an entirely altered situation.

Extracts from the Press.

"THE GLOBE," January 21st, 1913:—

"We have held that it is an injustice to women who assume all the burdens and responsibilities of householders, to be denied the Parliamentary franchise."

"THE DAILY GRAPHIC," January 24th, 1913:—

"It would, indeed, be a scandal if the Government were to proceed with a Bill for enfranchising two million more men under circumstances which render it impossible to enfranchise a single woman."

"THE DAILY HERALD," January 24th, 1913:—

"Truly the women pioneers have made themselves a power in the land, and now the politicians realise that they have to be reckoned with accordingly."

"THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN," January 27th, 1913:—

"Whatever course be taken—and of course the happiest would be that the Government should screw up its courage, and so far compose its differences as to make the question its own—one thing is clear: the promise given must be redeemed, and at least as good an opportunity must be accorded for women's enfranchisement in the future as was promised in the past."

January 28th, 1913:—

"For no less than five years has the procedure been contemplated which was now to have been carried out, and which the Speaker's ruling

has made it impossible to carry out. It is a long time to spend in a wild-goose chase, and there was some ground yesterday for abatement on the part of the pundits of procedure and of a Government which has trusted itself to them; much ground also for apology to the women and the advocates of the women's cause and for ample reparation. . . . What is clear is that the offer of a private member's Bill falls far short of such a redemption."

"THE DAILY NEWS AND LEADER," January 27th, 1913:—

"It is tolerably familiar Parliamentary ground that you cannot introduce absolutely large innovating matter into a Bill without running a risk of it becoming alien to its original purpose. Some such rule or precaution is necessary as a check on the autocracy of Governments or the caprice of Parliaments. But this should have been foreseen and provided for. No precaution was taken, and the discredit of the present breakdown belongs to those who devised the tactical situation."

Mr. H. W. MASSINGHAM on "The Women's Claim.")

January 28th, 1913:—

"The subsequent speeches of Mr. F. E. Smith and Mr. Lloyd George—speeches which seemed to be part of a pre-arranged programme—developed the undertaking on quite sensational lines. The outcome is this: that the Woman Suffrage Bill will be prepared by a sort of non-party Cabinet agreed on the issue; that it will have full facilities in the present Parliament; that it will come under the operation of the Parliament Act; and that should it be still in existence, but not on the Statute Book when the present Parliament comes to an end, it will be continued in the next Parliament (whether Liberal or Tory)."

"THE DAILY CITIZEN," January 23rd, 1913:—

"No Suffrage Bill giving more votes to men must be passed unless women are included. The Labour Party have now a duty to make it plain in the terms of the resolution carried at last congress that no Reform Bill will be acceptable if women are left out. We make this our minimum demand, and we shall offer opposition to any proposal which aggravates and embitters the political disabilities of women."

January 25th, 1913:—

"If a hostile ruling should be given by the Speaker, the Government will then be committed by their own pledges to take up Woman Suffrage and make it a Government measure, and accept responsibility for it through all its stages."

January 27th, 1913:—

"That someone has blundered is plain enough, and it is amazing to us that steps were not taken earlier to discover the actual facts of the situation."

"The next step rests with the Government, and they are in honour bound to find a way out of an apparent deadlock, and to find such a way as will fully redeem the pledges of the Prime Minister, and give no set back to the suffrage prospects."

"The women have accomplished big work on the strength of that promise, and they will expect nothing less than its just and complete fulfilment. If there is the slightest hesitation or wavering they will know how to act, and the women's movement will probably be welded together more firmly than it has ever been."

January 28th, 1913:—

"Great weight therefore attaches to the appeal made to the Government by Mr. Arthur Henderson that the right course of the Government is to introduce a Government measure. That is the unanimous view of the Labour members, and it is plainly the only position the Government can take up which is consistent with the theory that the pledge of full and free consideration was genuine."

"The Government's new pledge is to all intents valueless because the real reason for their attitude is the fear of breaking up the Liberal party. That is the true inwardness of these professions and this shilly-shally. The object is to put off and evade the momentum of the suffrage movement at the price of nothing."

"THE DAILY CHRONICLE," January 28th, 1913:—

"Mr. Asquith's statement gave great satisfaction to his supporters, but it did not satisfy the Labour Party. Mr. Arthur Henderson, a strong supporter of Adult Suffrage, insisted that the Government ought to make itself responsible for the private Member's Bill after it has passed the second reading. This is an impossible demand. How can a divided Cabinet undertake any such responsibility? Mr. Henderson's demand involves the break up of the Cabinet. How in the world would the Woman Suffrage cause benefit from such a Ministerial catastrophe? The Chancellor of the Exchequer soundly rated Mr. Henderson for his speech, characterising it as 'truculent, unattractive, and ungrateful.' He claimed that the Government's offer is the best method of obtaining a free and unprejudiced vote."

"THE TIMES," January 27th, 1913:—

"Lady Desart said she did not wish to put any obstacle in the way of any of her workpeople who desired to pay the Insurance Tax. She had been ready to pay her share of the tax, but she refused to be turned into a tax collector for the State to compel payment by those who considered the tax unjust and unnecessary. She refused obedience for conscience sake. The Act insisted upon taking, through compulsion exercised by the wealthier individual, a certain amount of the poor man's income and spending that amount on what it considered ought to be a benefit to him, regardless of the man's own views on the subject, by the most tyrannous and irritating means."

"The magistrates imposed a fine of 2s 6d. with costs in one case, and rd. with costs in the remaining cases, and ordered the arrears to be paid."

"Lady Desart's solicitor refused to give an undertaking that in future she would stamp the cards of her workers."

Notes from Headquarters.

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.
 Hon. Secretaries: MISS I. B. O'MALLEY (Literature), MISS K. D. COURTNEY, MISS EDITH PALLISER (Parliamentary), MISS CATHERINE MARSHALL (Press), MISS EMILY M. LEAF (Press).
 Treasurer: MRS. AUERBACH.
 Secretary: MISS GERALDINE COOKE.
 Offices: Parliament Chambers, 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

The Executive's Decision.

The Executive Committee of the National Union met on Friday evening after the probable ruling of the Speaker had been made known and issued the following statement to the Press:—

At a meeting yesterday afternoon of the Executive Committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies the following resolution was passed:—

"That this meeting expresses its conviction that in view of the situation created by the Speaker's reply to Mr. Bonar Law there is now no possibility of the fulfilment of the Prime Minister's promise of a free vote on the women's suffrage amendments to the Franchise Bill. This meeting therefore calls upon the Government to make a declaration as to the way in which they propose to fulfil their pledges to the women's suffrage societies."

The National Union also issued last night the following statement:—

"The executive Committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies has noticed the statement in the evening papers that 'it is understood that the Government have decided to await the result of the division on the Grey amendment.'"

"The Committee desires to point out that such a course would be a distinct violation of the Prime Minister's pledge to Suffragists, since it is obvious that there will be no free vote on the Grey amendment if it is understood by Liberals that the defeat of that amendment will release the Government from the difficult situation in which they are placed by the Speaker's reply to Mr. Bonar Law."

"The Executive Committee of the National Union is asking the suffragist members of the Cabinet to receive a deputation at the earliest possible moment, and it is also sending a request to the Prime Minister to meet a small deputation in order that he may inform them what steps he proposes to take to redeem his pledge."

On Monday, January 27th, the Executive held two meetings, and after the announcement of the withdrawal of the Franchise Bill had been made it issued the following statement:—

"The offer of facilities for a Private Member's Bill next Session cannot be regarded by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies as an equivalent of the opportunity promised by the Prime Minister of proceeding by means of an amendment to the Government Franchise Bill. Such an amendment, once passed, would have received the protection of the Government and the advantage of the Parliament Act. A Private Member's Bill, on the other hand, would be subject to continual risk from the devices of its enemies during the three years which might elapse before it could become law. Procedure by Private Member's Bill would have had an excellent chance in 1910 and 1911, when the Conciliation Bill passed its second reading by large majorities, but the Government would not grant facilities. A promise of facilities was given for 1912, but in the meantime the Bill, in the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was 'torpedoed' by the announcement of the Government Franchise Bill, which we were assured by Sir Edward Grey 'provided a better opportunity than Women's Suffrage had ever yet had of making real progress in the House of Commons.'"

"It is therefore clear that the offer of a Private Member's Bill is wholly inadequate to meet the situation, and that nothing now can fully redeem the Prime Minister's pledges, except the introduction of a Government measure including women."

Press Department.

The Liberal Press is in the exceedingly unenviable position with the history of the Conciliation Bill fresh in our memories, of feeling itself under an obligation to advocate the advantages of a Private Member's Bill dealing with Women's Suffrage.

The *Westminster Gazette* apparently claims that Mr. Asquith's pledges imposed no obligation either on himself or on the members of any Party to pilot the Women's Suffrage amendments safely through the difficult stages preceding an incorporation in the Bill, and the circumstance is taken as an opportunity for enforcing on Suffragists the lesson of obedience to the conditions of the party system. "Without the guidance of Whips and Ministers, the House of Commons becomes a mob of 600 distracted

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Next Week (Feb. 7th): The Hon. Mrs. SPENCER GRAVES, Mr. CHOLMELEY, Mrs. HEITLAND, Miss C. MARSHALL.

individuals. You allow a Bill to be moulded by the free vote of individuals and you discover that it may emerge in a form for which no one will accept responsibility."

This is a poor apology for those whose credit was concerned in giving effect to the pledges of the Government, and for those who were bound to see that the opportunity was not lost for giving effect to their own. The logical conclusion to be drawn from the admonitions of the *Westminster Gazette* is the necessity of pressing for a Government measure.

The *Daily News* and *Leader* and the *Daily Chronicle* accept with unconvincing optimism the promise of full facilities for a Private Member's Bill, but Suffragists need at this juncture a great deal more than the mere general assurance that if the House of Commons is in favour of Women's Suffrage, Mr. Asquith's scheme of procedure guarantees that it must pass. The Conservative Press has taken every advantage of the events of the week to profit by the Suffrage crisis to make a general attack on the methods of the Government, but on the point of the Private Member's Bill it also falls into line on the ground that this is the "only possible course" for the Cabinet to take; the *Times* adds significantly "that it is difficult to regard with much seriousness any projects of legislation next Session which the House of Lords is unlikely to approve."

The *Manchester Guardian*, frank as usual, does not disguise its opinion that the Government owes "apology and ample reparation" to Suffragists, and that a Private Member's Bill is no effective substitute for the promises of the Prime Minister.

The *Daily Citizen* goes further and states emphatically that "the Government's pledge is now to all intents valueless because the real reason for the attitude of Liberals is the fear of breaking up the Government, and that the right course for the Government is to introduce a Government measure. This is the unanimous view of the Labour Members, and it is plainly the only position the Government can take up which is consistent with the theory that the pledge of full and free consideration was genuine."
E. M. LEAF.

Treasurer's Notes.

EMERGENCY FUND.

Last week we spoke of the certainty that, whatever the issue, more work would be laid upon us resulting in more need of money. How little any one then foresaw the startling and momentous change which was to come over the situation, almost as our number was leaving the press!

After a period of unprecedented anxiety and confusion the position is now somewhat clearer and the road we must travel is beginning to be visible. Plans have been made which must shortly be put into action and which, with the power and prestige of our great Union behind them, will surely take us another step forward towards the inevitable and speedy victory of our cause. But, if we are to push on our policy with that sweeping energy which alone can bring success, if we are to seize and turn to the best use every chance that may offer of improving our position, then must we be free from money anxiety. New plans must not be pinched for want of funds. Federations and Societies must not be curtailed in the activity for want of a helping hand. I can only, therefore, open an EMERGENCY FUND and beg all friends to send some contribution as quickly as may be. We need not fear to check the generosity of the richer members by saying to those who are not rich that small gifts will also be welcome.

I will not recall infant memories painful to those who learned with tears the verse beginning, "Little drops of water, little grains of sand," for we all know the value of the vital co-operation of a great mass of people united by a common enthusiasm and all willing, in their degree, to make equal sacrifices for a common cause.

Anticipating our need, several friends have already sent gifts with which to open the list of the EMERGENCY FUND; pray let it be a long one next week.

F. M. STERLING.
(Treasurer pro tem.)

Contributions to the General Fund.

Already acknowledged since November 1st, 1912 ... £ s. d.
Received January 18th to 25th:— ... 515 12 0

Subscriptions.	
Mrs. L. Matheson	0 10 6
Miss M. H. Davies	0 5 0
Miss Evelyn Lamport	5 0 0
Miss R. Smith	0 2 6
Miss G. Hutchinson	0 1 0
Miss F. Bidmead	0 10 0
Dr. Estelle Cole	0 5 0
Mrs. George Sim	0 5 0
Miss Julia M. Marett	0 5 0
Miss E. M. Greg	5 5 0
Miss K. B. Brereton	0 10 6
Miss M. Martin	0 5 0
Mrs. W. A. Hodson	0 2 0
Miss Mary N. Walker	0 1 0
Mrs. Wilberforce	0 5 0

Donations.	
Godalming W.S.S.	5 0 0
Miss R. Smith	0 1 0
The Misses Bidmead	1 0 0
Southend W.S.S. (half collection at meeting)	0 7 6
West Riding Federation (2nd instalment towards Organiser's salary)	15 0 0
Miss Clare Woolner (placing COMMON CAUSE in Canning Town Library)	0 6 6
Miss M. L. Huckwell	5 0 0
Miss F. M. Sterling (towards cost of stamping machine)	2 0 0
West of England Federation (Organiser's salary)	30 0 0
Mrs. H. B. Taylor	1 1 0
Mrs. Percy Thompson, instalment (in memory of Sidney Gilchrist Thomas)	20 0 0

Affiliation Fees.	
Hockwold W.S.S.	0 5 0
Lancaster W.S.S.	0 17 6
Ross W.S.S.	0 12 3
Worthing W.S.S.	2 3 3
Camberley W.S.S.	1 5 0
Bournemouth W.S.S.	3 15 0
Brechin W.S.S.	0 11 9
Heathfield W.S.S.	0 12 6
Scarborough W.S.S.	2 7 3
Croydon W.S.S.	2 12 6
Clevedon W.S.S.	0 11 0
Eastleigh W.S.S. (1st instalment)	0 6 0
Gloucester W.S.S.	1 3 0
Hunts W.S.S.	0 13 9
W. Cambs. W.S.S.	0 13 6
Matlock W.S.S.	0 5 6
East Cambs. W.S.S.	0 12 9
Upper Rhondda W.S.S.	0 5 0
Dornoch W.S.S.	0 8 9

Emergency Fund.	
A Putney Member (per Miss Eve)	0 10 0
Miss E. M. Macnaghten	2 0 0
	£631 11 9

The Trade Boards.

A particularly interesting article by Miss Dorothy M. Zimmern upon the scope and wage-rates of existing Trade Boards appears in the January number of *The Women's Industrial News*. She points out that rates have been fixed "about twice as high for men as for women, apparently on the ground of sex alone, a precedent which it will be difficult to reverse"; and notes with regret that "there has been a reduction in the rate originally proposed for the women in the tailoring trade, and that it has now been fixed at 3½d. an hour, instead of 3¼d., as was hoped."

The trades at present scheduled under the Act are chain-making; the finishing of machine-made laces and fancy nets; making boxes of paper, cardboard, chip or similar materials; and tailoring—ready made or wholesale bespoke—of men's garments; and the extreme variety of the regulations for these different occupations as set forth in Miss Zimmern's tabulation ought to reassure those persons who feared that legislation must inevitably be too rigid to adapt itself to the necessarily varying conditions.

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News from the Societies and Federations.

London Society.

CLAPHAM.—On January 12th at Grafton Square Congregational Chapel, Mrs. Stanbury was highly received when she gave a most convincing address to the Men's Meeting.

ISLINGTON (EAST).—By the request of the Liberal Christian League, a special meeting was held on Jan. 23rd at 11, Lorraine Road. Miss Wallis-Chapman gave an account of "The Rise and Progress of Women's Suffrage."

ISLINGTON (SOUTH).—The last of the series of debates arranged for the Islington Branch of the London Society was held on January 14th at St. Peter's Institute, Vincent Terrace, and was opened by Miss M. Fielden.

SOUTHWARK (WEST).—On January 20th at the Metropolitan Debating Society, Borough Polytechnic, Mrs. Stanbury opened an interesting debate in which many of the members took part, on the proposition "That it would be unjust to give votes to more men without enfranchising women."

WALWORTH.—On January 26th at St. Stephen's Parish Hall, Mr. C. Jesson, L.C.C., took the chair at a public meeting of electors and others addressed by Miss Helen Ward and Mrs. Richardson, when the following resolution was passed by a large majority.

The Federations.

East Midland.

REPORT.—A meeting of the Bazaar Committee, followed by a meeting of the Federation Committee, was held at the office of the Nottingham Society on Jan. 15th. The Hon. Treasurer of the Bazaar (Mr. W. R. Hamilton) reported that the gross receipts of the Federation Bazaar held at Nottingham on Nov. 28th and 29th had been £281, and the net profit £296.

MRS. COWMEADOW'S REPORT.—Since resuming after the Christmas holidays I have continued work amongst Trade Unionists, etc., in the Chesterfield, North-East and Mid. Divisions of Derbyshire. On Jan. 5th a very successful meeting of the No. 2 Alfreton Branch of the A.S.R.S. was held, and the Resolution passed with only one dissenter, who explained later that he believed in household suffrage, but thought we (the N.U.) ought to control the militants.

Meetings have also been held by the Chesterfield Women's Liberal Association and New Whittington Branch of the Manchester and District Branch of United Pattern-Makers were unable to arrange a meeting, but their Secretary collected signatures for

postcards; the Chesterfield I.L.P. passed a Resolution on Jan. 4th. The men of Whittington Moor Adult School also signed postcards, and the Chesterfield Branch of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives arranged a special meeting on Jan. 21st in order that a Resolution might be passed before the Franchise Bill was introduced.

BURTON ON TRENT.—The Burton W.S.S. held their Annual Meeting on Jan. 21st, the President, Mrs. Bubb, in the Chair. An admirable report of the year's work was brought forward by the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. P. H. Major, and a very satisfactory balance-sheet was presented by the Hon. Treasurer, Miss McGregor.

DERBY.—The Derby Society was "at home" to members and friends in St. Wiburgh's Hall, Stafford Street, on Jan. 17th: Lady Onslow presided, and Mrs. Cowan gave an address on the working of the woman's vote in the Australian States.

NOTTINGHAM.—A debate on Women's Suffrage was held at Bulwell by the West Nottingham W.L.A., the League of Young Liberals, and the N.U.W.S.S. The speakers were Mrs. W. E. Dowson and Mr. Wilkinson. A Resolution in favour of Women's Suffrage was carried unanimously, the Conciliation Amendment being preferred to the Dickinson Amendment by a majority of three.

Manchester and District.

ALTRINCHAM.—During November Mrs. Darlington acted as Organiser in the Altrincham division. The principal work done was the preparing of a Memorial to Mr. T. H. Kebby Fletcher, M.P., for the Division. This Memorial was sent to him on January 15th with an accompanying letter urging him, at least, to support the Grey Amendment to the Franchise Bill.

ANALYSIS OF MEMORIAL.

Table with 2 columns: Category and Count. Includes Altrincham (11 out of 15), Hale (10 " 12), Sale (7 " 17), Magistrates (8 " 8), Clergy (17 out of 20), Education Committee (10 " 19), Various (12 " 12), Total (75).

BACUP.—A public meeting was held in the Town Hall, Bacup, on January 10th, when the speakers were Mr. Philip Snowden and Mrs. Swanwick. There was a very good attendance, and the resolution calling upon the Government to include women in the Franchise Bill was carried with only one dissenter.

BLACKBURN.—The local Branch of the Independent Labour Party and the Suffrage Society of Blackburn organised a week's suffrage campaign, from Sunday, January 19th to Sunday, January 26th, in that town. On the first Sunday of the campaign, Miss Margaret Robertson addressed a large meeting in the Palace Theatre, which unanimously passed a Resolution calling upon the House of Commons to pass a Women's Suffrage Amendment on broad and democratic lines to the Reform Bill and calling upon the Labour Party to vote against the third reading if women were not included.

held in the shop and resulted in the enrolment of new members to the Society. Both Members for Blackburn, Sir Henry Norman and Mr. Philip Snowden, are suffragists. In his advocacy of the political freedom of women, Mr. Snowden has behind him the backing of the men and women of his constituency; the large number of postcards thanking the Members for Blackburn for past services to the Cause and asking them to do their best at the present time that were signed at all the meetings was witness to this fact.

DARWEN.—A public meeting was held on January 20th. The Mayor of Darwen took the Chair and the principal speaker was Miss Margaret Robertson. The Resolution urging the Members of the House of Commons to include women in the Franchise Bill was carried with one dissenter.

ECLES.—A shop has been opened the week (Jan. 18-25) at 41, Liverpool Road, about half way between Eccles and Patricroft. Much good propaganda work has been done in a practically fresh neighbourhood, and many new members have been secured.

Among those who spoke at the shop were, Mr. J. H. Hudson, M.A., Prospective Labour Candidate, Eccles Division; Miss Shiraz Potts, Mrs. Mr. G. Senon, the Mayor of Darwen; E.A. Miss Janet Heyes, Miss Theopold, Mr. H. A. Johnson, A.R.S.I., and others.

KNITSFORD.—A very well attended meeting was held on January 9th, at the King's Coffee House. Mrs. Swanwick moved the Resolution "That Parliament enfranchise women this year." She was seconded by Mr. W. Eller, and the Chair was taken by Mr. J. B. Tomlinson.

MANCHESTER.—During the past month, the number of meetings organised by the Manchester Society has been smaller than usual, owing to the Christmas holidays; but much political work has been done in the constituency where many associations have been formed.

The Hackney Trades Council and Labour Representation Association unanimously adopted the following resolution:—"That the Hackney Trades Council and Labour Representation Association, believing that the political representation of women is urgently necessary for the protection of the industrial interests of women, strongly supports the amendments to the Franchise Bill to be moved by Sir Edward Grey and Mr. A. Henderson, M.P., having in view the extension of the Franchise to Women on broad and democratic lines, and we request our local Members of Parliament to vote in favour of these amendments."

Deputation to Mr. Raymond Asquith.

A deputation of women, arranged by the Derby Branch of the N.U.W.S.S., waited upon Mr. Raymond Asquith, the prospective Liberal candidate, at the Temperance Hall, Derby, on January 10th. The deputation consisted of twenty-nine representatives of different bodies which have passed resolutions in favour of Women's Suffrage.

The deputation was introduced by Lady Onslow, President of the Derby Branch of the N.U.W.S.S., and representatives of the following Societies also spoke:—The British Women's Temperance Association, the National Union of Women Workers, the Railway Women's Guild, the Co-operative Women's Guild, the Derby Board of Guardians, and the Women's Liberal Association.

Mr. Asquith, in his reply, stated that if he were returned to Parliament, he would give his vote against all three of the suffrage amendments to the Reform Bill. He courteously explained his reasons for opposing Women's Suffrage, and said that for their object the better to show his colours as a frank opponent than to pretend to a false friendliness.

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Resolution by Hackney Trades Council.

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Teachers' Franchise Union.

Miss H. M. Townsend, the Hon. Secretary of the Teachers' Franchise Union, writes:—"The London Teachers' Association met in the large Hall of the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, on January 25th, to consider the following motion, moved by Mr. Hicks Bolton, M.A., and seconded by Mr. E. T. Lee, B.A.—"That this Association support the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women teachers of the same professional status."

Activity at Tayside.

A meeting, organised by Miss Duncan and Miss Maxwell, was held in Wornit Public Hall on January 2nd. Mr. J. G. Belford presided and other gentlemen on the platform were the Rev. C. Halliday (Tayport), Mr. George Scrymgeour (Newport), Mr. R. B. Morrison and Mr. Carslaw (Wornit).

Frau Said-Ruete's Concert.

A brilliant audience assembled at the house of Frau Said-Ruete (who, it will be remembered, has done so much to forward the woman's movement both here and in Germany) to attend a concert given in order to finance a kindergarten in connection with the Deutsche St. Marienschule. The Duchess of Albany has for some years been patroness of these schools and was present on this occasion.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Correspondents are requested to send their names and addresses, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith. The Editor is not responsible for any statement made in the correspondence column.

Correspondents are requested to write ON ONE SIDE OF THE PAPER ONLY.

THE N.U. MEMORIAL.

As one of those who signed the recent Memorial to Parliament of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, may I be allowed to state that I did this under strong protest and owing to my own carelessness, without noticing the precise wording of the manifesto?

I unwittingly perjured myself when I signed that. For I have by no means "always disapproved of and condemned" militant tactics. I only began to disapprove after the firing of the Dublin Theatre, the hatchet affair—if there was an affair—and the recent Post Office outrages.

I repeat that I signed that Memorial under protest, and had I realised the full force of the phrasing I would never have signed it at all.

WANTED: REPLIES TO MR. HARCOURT.

With reference to the stinging insults thrown out by Mr. Harcourt re the supposed intellectual inferiority of women, their lower intelligence, etc., I sincerely hope there may appear some sensible replies to same in the daily papers. Surely it is a serious thing for the youths and young men of this country to harbour the idea of intellectual inferiority being natural to the female sex, and that "no amount of culture can remove the same."

Ruskin in his "Sesame and Lilies," shows the error and injustice of such a system. Women have done marvels during the short time in which a higher education has been made possible.

Mr. Harcourt inferred that any uncouth and ignorant youth has greater brain power than an intelligent educated woman. I am writing this in the earnest hope that a suitable letter will be forwarded to different morning papers.

A SIXPENNY DINNER CLUB FOR STUDENTS.

A lady who runs a small restaurant in Chelsea has at length been persuaded that there is a crying need for sixpenny meals for poor art students and struggling professional folk whose incomes range from £60 per annum, to the famous Insurance Act limit, and she has agreed to meet that need on certain conditions provided that at least a dozen people come forward now with a promise of membership as soon as the dinners are started.

These conditions are that her restaurant shall not be turned into a common Coffee House, and that well-to-do people shall not take unfair advantage of a scheme set on foot to help working folk and students with microscopic incomes. In order to prevent both of these difficulties from materialising, it is suggested that the sixpenny meals shall only be obtainable by ticket, and that tickets can only be supplied to members of the "Dinner Club."

There would be no entrance fee and no subscription but single tickets would not be sold, and in no circumstances would Club dinners be served without production of a ticket. Tickets would be sold in sets of half a dozen, and would be available at any time.

The dinners would be served in a separate room, which the restaurant Proprietress proposes to furnish in a very simple manner, following, as far as possible, the model of an old-fashioned inn parlour. Members would be asked to wait on themselves, and smoking would be permitted.

As regards the dinners themselves, they would be served on weekdays from 7 to 8.30 p.m. They would be exceedingly simple, but nourishing and appetising, vegetable bouillon, spaghetti, rice, cheese, etc., taking a prominent place in the bill of fare, which would be enriched occasionally by dishes remaining over from the ordinary restaurant dinner, and by various foreign

recipes which would probably be a revelation to British palates. The sixpenny meal, in short, would provide the sort of dinner which the handiest of bachelor women and men make for themselves, at much pains and trouble, for about fourpence, but cooked by an expert and served in a restaurant. The ordinary menu would always be displayed, and the members could always order extras if they wished for them.

In conclusion, Chelsea is within a penny omnibus ride of Victoria station, and is easily reached from Knightsbridge, Hammersmith, Earl's Court, and High Street, Kensington.

VERA C. C. COLLEMAN.

RESOLUTIONS FROM WAKEFIELD.

Miss B. B. Rogers, the Secretary of the sub-Committee of the Wakefield W.S.S., appointed to deal with Trade Union Resolutions, sends us the following interesting report of this work:—

On November 26th, Miss Allen, the West Riding Organiser, addressed the Wakefield Trades and Labour Council; they passed unanimously a resolution in support of Women's Suffrage. On November 28th, Miss Isabella Ford addressed the Wakefield Committee on the importance of getting into touch with Labour organisations in every town and explained the election fighting policy. A sub-committee was formed to carry forward this work.

Resolutions have been passed by the following bodies meeting at the Trades and Labour Club:—Wakefield and District Trades and Labour Council. Trades and Labour Club Committee. Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (Branch 1). Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (Branch 2). Shop Assistants' Union. The Workers' Union. Operative Bricklayers' Union. Corporation Employers' Union. National Asylum Workers' Union. United Kingdom Postal Clerks' Union. Postmen's Federation. Railway Women's Guild.

Besides meetings, at which the above resolutions were passed, a large and very enthusiastic meeting of railway servants was addressed by Mr. Renton on January 19th. On January 24th, at a largely attended meeting of the National Asylum Workers' Union, the resolution was passed and was warmly supported, which, during the afternoon, had been passed in London by the National Union.

Our correspondent in Wakefield writes:—Mrs. Renton paid us a visit from January 13th to 18th, and addressed a few of our members on January 13th; on January 15th she spoke to an interested audience at Horbury, with Mrs. Lucan Davies in the Chair. A Suffrage resolution was passed nem. con. and copies sent to the Prime Minister, Mr. Fred Hall, M.P., and Mr. Redmond. Very successful work has been done by Miss Rogers, Mrs. Renton, and the sub-committee in getting resolutions from the Wakefield Trade Unions, which will plainly show our M.P. that the Labour vote is pro-Suffrage.

Memorial to Colonel Yate, M.P.

Miss St. John has just spent a few days in Leicester organising a Memorial to Colonel Yate, M.P., from that part of the borough of Leicester which is included for Parliamentary purposes in the Milton Division of Leicestershire. Colonel Yate has never yet taken a definite attitude on the Suffrage question, though he has expressed a certain amount of sympathy with the women's claims. The persons whose signatures the workers tried to obtain, most of whom were seen personally, were 34 members of the Executive Committees of the Conservative Association resident in the Milton Division, 9 members of the Leicester Town Council, 4 members of the Leicester Board of Guardians, 4 Church of England clergymen, 8 Nonconformist ministers, 11 doctors, and 3 chemists on the panel.

An immense number of visits were paid, requiring very hard work from Miss St. John and those members of the Leicester Society who helped her; but they felt themselves well rewarded by finding such widespread good will to the cause, amongst a set of influential people, most of whom had not been previously approached on behalf of Women's Suffrage.

A Shining Example.

A correspondent, who has known and worked with Mrs. Mullineux, a zealous upholder of the Cause, sends the following lines in her memory:—
 "One of the rank and file has just passed away, suddenly, and the quiet Wharfedale village where she lived and laboured for the Cause, will know her no more.
 "Mrs. Mullineux was a lonely widow, handicapped by ill-different health and limited means, but her soul was on fire, and she devoted her strength and resources to working for Women's Suffrage. 'I cannot subscribe much, but I shall be glad to entertain people,' she once said,—and how nobly this was carried out by speakers and workers who have enjoyed her hospitality can testify. Mrs. Mullineux was a member of the Bradford Society, but had latterly resided at Burnsall, in Craven, where she had the joy of organising the first suffrage meeting held in the village.
 "May the memory of her self-sacrificing zeal and enthusiasm be an inspiration to others to go and do likewise!"

The Advance of Aberdeen.

Mrs. Foggo, returning to her organising work in Aberdeen after some months' absence, writes that she finds many signs of rapid advance there. People say to her that of course the weight of women's influence was evident in pressing forward the White Slave Traffic Bill, and show themselves impressed by the Rev. P. P. Williamson's address on "The Woman's Movement from the Religious Point of View." Moreover, a Suffrage Shop, in a prominent position, 459, Union Street, has been opened, and offers a warm welcome, both to suffragists and anti-suffragists. The latest free leaflets and penny pamphlets are obtainable, Women's Suffrage teas are served, and there is an attractive "odds and ends" stall (contributions to which are asked). The whole air of Aberdeen is described as electric with Women's Suffrage, and Mrs. Foggo concludes by asking, "Are there any anti-Suffragists to-day? Surely not."

West Dorset's Plans.

The Annual General Meeting of the West Dorset Suffrage Society was held on January 23rd. The President (Mrs. Duncan) gave a short resume of the rise and growth of the Society. The Report for the past year and the balance-sheet were presented, the latter showing the need for increased subscriptions on the part of members; and the former showing that the Society had made progress in the year, having taken a room (No. 2, Barrack Street, Bridport) for the use of the Committee, and to house the library of books and papers on women's questions. Members and sympathisers were exhorted to make full use of these privileges. The Committee are arranging short lessons on "Procedure," on the lines of Miss Ransom's invaluable "Chairman's and Debaters' Handbook"; and following the first desideratum of the aims of the "Qui Vive" Society. The office-bearers were re-elected as follows:—President: Mrs. Duncan; Hon. Secretary: Mrs. J. Suttill; Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. Wilson. Miss Fenwick, Wreath Cottage, Eype, was elected on the committee.

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Forthcoming Meetings.

(ARRANGED BY THE NATIONAL UNION.)

JANUARY 31.	Watford—Kingham Memorial Hall—Public meeting—Chair, Mr. Nathaniel Micklem, K.C., J.P.—Mr. Malcolm Mitchell, Miss Dora Mason	8.0
	Sevenoaks—Club Hall—"At Home"—Chair, Canon Beaulands—Lady Betty Balfour	3.30
	Newcastle-on-Tyne—27, Ridley Place—Debate: "The New Labour Policy of the N.U. will hasten the granting of the Franchise to Women"—Chair, Miss Newbourn: For, Misses Paterson and Eriksen; Against, Dr. Campbell, Miss Herz	
	Grimsby—Hainton Avenue Schoolroom—Chair, The Rev. W. Bott, M.A.—Mrs. Corbett Ashby	
	Wakefield—Institute, Wood Street—Miss Royden—Chair, Canon Welch	8.0
FEBRUARY 1.	Carlisle—Richmond Hall—Mrs. Bardsley "At Home"—Miss Helen Fraser.	
FEBRUARY 3.	Llandudno—Mrs. Eakin, Boddonells—"At Home"—Miss A. Maude Royden	3.30
	Workington—Lister's Hall—Public meeting—Chair, The Rev. S. P. L. Curwen—Miss Helen Fraser	8.0
	Manchester—York Street Temperance Hall—Hulme Suffrage Club—Mrs. Miter Wilson	8.0
	Cottenham—Schoolroom—Mrs. Rackham—Chair, The Rev. R. P. Moline	7.0
	Much Hadham—Public Hall—The Lady Frances Balfour	8.0
	West Auckland—Mrs. Abbott, Mrs. Dring, and others	7.0
FEBRUARY 4.	High Wycombe—Guildhall—Address on "The White Slave Traffic"—Chair, Mrs. F. C. J. Cross—Miss Abadam	8.15
	Manchester—Suffrage office, 16, Deansgate—Lecture by Miss Leaf (Hon. Press Sec. N.U.W.S.S.), "Press Work in the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies"	7.30
	Solihull, Foresters' Hotel, Dorrige—Lecture—Jewellery, gold, and silverwork—Mr. Sidney Wilson	3.0
	Bristol—Victoria Rooms—Lecture by Canon Talbot, "Machbeth"	5.0
	Birmingham—Town Hall—Joint meeting with the Conservative and Unionist W.F.A.—Lady Selborne, Mr. H. Baillie Weaver, Miss Maude Royden, Dr. Stanton Coit	8.0
	Camberley—High Street, Darracott's Tea Rooms—Speaker, Mrs. Dempster; Chair, Mrs. Basset	
FEBRUARY 5.	Leeds—9, Park Lane—"At Home"—Mrs. Renton (West Riding Organiser)	3.30
	Gateshead—Suffrage office, 115, High West Street—Social meeting for women—Mrs. Temperley, on "Frances Willard, Pioneer of W.S. and F. Temperance"	2.30
	Hetton-le-Hole—Miners' Hall—Dr. Ethel Williams, Miss C. M. Gordon	7.30
FEBRUARY 6.	West Bromwich—Public Library Lecture Room—Papers by members on Mary Wolstonecraft, Elizabeth Fry, Lydia Becker, Florence Nightingale—Chair, Mrs. Pearce	8.0
	Manchester—Oakholme, Alexandra Park—Whist Drive—Hostess, Mrs. Hiller	7.30
	Leamington—Birch's Music Rooms, Parade—Meeting Franchise Club	3.0
	Gateshead—St. James' School—Social meeting—Miss Sheard	7.30
	Sibford—Public meeting—Chair, Dr. Routh—Mrs. Rackham, Mr. A. Gillett	8.0
FEBRUARY 7.	Bristol—Whitley Hall, Clifton—Annual meeting—Miss Cistley Corbett	8.0
	Swansea—Minor Albert Hall—Annual meeting—Chair, Miss Dillwyn. Speaker, Miss Baretti	3.0
	Chalbury—Meeting—Miss Dora Mason	

LONDON.

JANUARY 31.	West London Reception—Westminster Palace Hotel—Chair, The Hon. Mrs. Spencer Graves—Mr. R. F. Cholmeley, Mrs. Heitland, Miss C. Marshall	3.30-6.15
FEBRUARY 1.	Walthamstow—The Pioneer Cafe, 182, Hoe Street—meeting—Miss Helen Ward	3.30
FEBRUARY 3.	Wimbledon—Ashford House, High Street—Drawing-room meeting—Hostess, Mrs. Beckett—Chair, Mrs. Hughes—Miss R. Smith	3.30
FEBRUARY 4.	Ealing and Acton—Acton Women's Adult School, 23, Avenue Road—Miss Marjorie Strachey	8.0
	Ealing and Acton—Priory Schools, Acton Lane—Acton Branch of Young Liberals—Miss J. H. Thompson, M.A.	8.15
FEBRUARY 6.	Westminster—Horticultural Hall, Westminster—Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association—Lord Selborne	8.0

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LONDON (continued.)

FEBRUARY 7.	West London Reception—Westminster Palace Hotel—Chair, The Hon. Mrs. Spencer Graves—Mr. R. F. Cholmeley, Mrs. Heitland, Miss C. Marshall	3.30-6.15
	Muswell Hill—The Athenaeum—Annual meeting—Reception—Public meeting—Miss Abadam	7-8
FEBRUARY 8.	Clerkenwell—Exmouth Street—Open-air meeting—Miss Buckton	8.0
SCOTLAND.		
JANUARY 31.	Edinburgh—40, Shandwick Place—"At Home"—Dr. Winifred Muirhead on "The Mentally Defective"	4.30
FEBRUARY 4.	Hawick—Drawing-room meeting—Mrs. Abbott evening	
FEBRUARY 6.	Edinburgh—Great Junction Street and Hall—Women's meeting—Speaker, Miss Pressley-Smith	3.15
	Selkirk—Public Meeting—Mrs. Abbott	
FEBRUARY 7.	Glasgow—Office, 202, Hope Street—Hostess, Miss Agnes M. Tannahill—Miss Maude May, M.A.	4.0
	Edinburgh—40, Shandwick Place—"At Home"—Mrs. G. F. Abbott	4.30
FEBRUARY 8.	Haddington—Afternoon and evening meetings—Hostesses, Mrs. Sterling, Miss Sharp—Speaker, Mrs. Abbott	

MEETING ADDRESSED BY MEMBER OF THE UNION

JANUARY 31.	Chesterfield—Clay Cross Co-operative Women's Guild—Mrs. Cowmeadow	7.0
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Memorial to Brighton M.P's.

The following Memorial was presented last Monday to Captain Tryon, M.P. and to the Hon. John Gordon, M.P., the Members for Brighton:—
 "We, the undersigned, being your constituents, or residents in your constituency, do earnestly beg you to do all in your power to secure the Enfranchisement of Women in 1913, by voting for: (1) An Amendment to the Government Reform Bill enfranchising Women Householders with the addition of Wives of Householders; and, failing that (2) An Amendment enfranchising Women Householders only."
 Our Brighton correspondent sends us an analysis of the signatures of all those persons seen, and states that owing to the necessity of collecting the signatures in little over a week, very few persons outside the Executive of the Conservative and Unionist Association could be approached.

ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS.	
Total seen	17
Signed	17
For (2) only	3
For (1) only	1
For both (1) and (2) ..	13
No refusals	—
CLERGY.	
Total seen	17
Signed	13
For (2) only	2
For both (1) and (2) ..	11
Refused*	4
	17
* Of these 3 were distinctly in sympathy.	
PROMINENT CITIZENS.	
Total seen	8
Signed	7
All for both (1) & (2) ..	1
Refused	1
	8
Total of persons seen ..	125
Total of signatories	94
Total of sympathisers ..	103
	Being 75.2 per cent.
	82.4 "

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SUFFRAGE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LEEDS WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY. Annual Meeting, Thursday, February 13th at 8 p.m. at 9, Park Lane. Nominations for Committee for ensuing year should be sent to Mrs. Thornton, Women's Suffrage Office, 9, Park Lane, before February 8th.

GOD'S WORD TO WOMEN has never been a word of disapproval and suppression. The Bible encourages the development of woman and stands for her perfect equality with man, in spite of the teachings to the contrary. Do you wish to equip yourself for meeting the arguments of those who attempt, with sacrilegious hands, to throw the Bible in the way of woman's progress? Do you wish to know WHERE and HOW they misrepresent and misrepresent it? Send 7d. (15 cents in stamps from America, for "101 Questions Answered," a Woman's Catechism, prepared purposely to solve your perplexities.—Katharine Bushnell, 10a, Drayton Park, Highbury, London, N.

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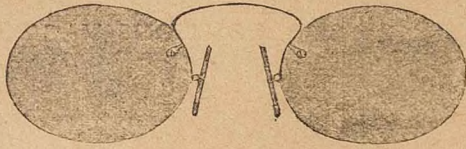
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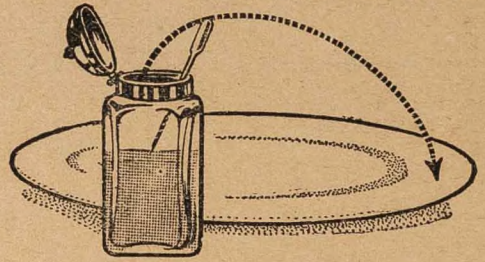
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CONSTANT LECTURES ARRANGED.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

(1, ROBERT STREET, ADELPHI, W.C.).

PUBLIC MEETING,

CAXTON HALL,

WESTMINSTER,

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, at 3.30 p.m.

Speakers—Mrs. ACKROYD

(On the Poor Law—How it Affects Women),

Mr. GEORGE LANSBURY

(On Why the Working Women must be Organised).

Chairman - - - - Miss ANNA MUNRO.
Admission Free.

THE NATIONAL UNION

is the great Non-Party, Non-Militant Women's Suffrage Society. If you approve of our methods and objects, please fill in the accompanying Form and send it to the Secretary.

I approve of the objects and methods of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and desire to be enrolled as a member of the affiliated Society in my district.

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To the Secretary _____ Society for Women's Suffrage

Or the Secretary National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

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