

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

VOL. XVIII.—No. 211. PUBLISHED MONTHLY.
Yearly Subscription, Post Free, 1s. 6d.

JULY 1, 1887.

PRICE ONE PENNY.
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Leading Articles:—Queen Victoria's Jubilee; Address from Women's Suffrage Societies; Presence of Women at the Jubilee Celebration; Approach of the Day fixed for the Bill; Formation of a Parliamentary Committee; The Triumph of the Ladies at Cambridge; The Debate and Divisions on the Employment of Women at Coal Mines.

Address to the Queen from Women's Suffrage Societies. Formation of a Parliamentary Committee. Parliamentary Intelligence. Drawing Room Meetings:—Stratton Street, Piccadilly. In the Abbey.

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A CONSTRUCTIVE SUMMARY OF THE HYPOTHESIS ARRIVED AT IN "PRESENT RELIGION." By SARA S. HENNELL.—London: Trübner & Co., Ludgate Hill.

HISTORY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE. Vol. III. Edited by ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, SUSAN B. ANTHONY, and MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE. Paris: G. Fischbacher, 33, Rue de Seine.

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CONTENTS FOR JUNE 15TH, 1887.
1. Fifty Years of a Woman's Reign.
2. Municipal Franchise in Denmark.
3. The First Woman Mayor in Kansas.
4. The Real Arbiters of Fashion.

Correspondence:—The Pfundhaus, Freiburg.
Record of Events:—Mathematical Tripos, Cambridge—Royal Irish University—Intermediate Education, Ireland—Political Associations—The Primrose League—Women's Liberal Federation—Liberal League—The Liberal Union—Vestry Elections—Temperance—Women Poor Law Guardians, Annual Meeting of Society, Lecture at Southport—Pit Brow Women—Nurses for the Poor—Miscellaneous.
California, by Mrs. M. E. Parker.
Foreign Notes and News.
Paragraphs.

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the CENTRAL COMMITTEE of the National Society for Women's Suffrage will be held in the Westminster Town Hall (Caxton-street, St. James' Park Station), on Tuesday, July 12th, to receive the report and financial statement, and to elect the Executive Committee for the ensuing year. The Chair will be taken at Three o'clock by WM. WOODALL, Esq., M.P., when the following ladies and gentlemen will take part:—Captain Cotton, M.P., Sir R. Fowler, Bt., M.P., Sir John Pope Hennessey, K.C.M.G., Chas. H. Hopwood, Q.C., W. B. M'Laren, Esq., M.P., James Round, Esq., M.P., Joshua Rowntree, Esq., M.P., Miss I. S. Tod, Miss Becker, and Miss Florence Baggie. The attendance of members and friends is invited. Doors open at 2-30. Admission free.

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PARLIAMENTARY PETITIONS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.
PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) BILL.—*In Favour.*
EIGHTH REPORT, 16—22 March, 1887.

- Brought forward, Petitions 41—
Signatures 1,238
- Mar.
©1118 16 LOUGHBOROUGH and other places, Inhabitants of, in public meeting assembled in the Corn Exchange, Loughborough, on Monday, March 14th, 1887; Benjamin Baldwin, chairman (Mr. de Lisle) ... 1
- *1119 17 SHEERNESS, in the county of Kent, There-undersigned Inhabitants of (Mr. Woodall) ... 132
- ©1120 18 BRISTOL, Members of the West Country League of the Unrepresented, in meeting assembled at, on the 14th March, 1887; Agnes M. Beddoe in the chair (Mr. Lewis Fry) ... 1
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- ©1125 ,, WHITEFIELD, Falfield, Attendants at a Drawing-room Meeting held at, 7th February, 1887; J. P. Harle, chairman; W. M. Collett, M.A., rector (Mr. J. W. Plunkett) ... 2
- *1126 22 HYDE, Inhabitants of, in public meeting assembled on 16th March, 1887; John Cheetham, mayor, chairman (Mr. Sidebotham) ... 1

Total number of Petitions 50—Signatures 1,419

NINTH REPORT, 25 March, 1887.

- Brought forward, Petitions 50—
Signatures 1,419
- Mar.
©2511 25 NORWOOD, Inhabitants of, and others, in public meeting assembled on 2nd March, 1887; James Judd, chairman (Mr. Bristowe) ... 1

Total number of Petitions 51—Signatures 1,420

WOMEN'S JUBILEE OFFERING.

The following contributions have been forwarded to the Editor of this Journal for transmission to the Fund:—

Donations already acknowledged, £12. 8s. 11d. Martha Marsh, 1d.; Mary Ellen Grace, 1d.

The total amount, £12. 9s. 1d., has been forwarded to the Treasurer.

The offering was presented to the Queen by a large deputation of ladies, who attended at Buckingham Palace and presented an address, to which the Queen was pleased to return a gracious reply. The total amount of the offering was £75,000. After the cost of the statue of the Prince Consort in Windsor Park has been defrayed, it is understood that the remainder was to be employed for charitable objects at the discretion of the Queen.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE ADDRESS TO THE QUEEN.

The illumination of the address, which is in book form, has been entrusted to Messrs. Meredith, Ray, and Littler, of 49, King-street, Manchester, and is delicately executed in natural colours in the new floral style lately introduced by them. The first page is very rich in appearance. It is surrounded by an exquisite border, in which the Queen's favourite flower, the rose, is the principal feature, and contains the words "To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty" worked up in delicate blue letters on a ground of embossed gold. The second page has a border of strawberry fruits and leaves, relieved with sprays of maidenhair fern, &c. This page contains the name of the Society by whom it is presented, and the next three are taken up with the body of the address. The third page has a border of white May blossom and clematis, the fourth a border of forget-me-not and other flowers, and the fifth a border of the pink clymen. The sixth is worked out with a border of pink convolvulus and forget-me-nots, and contains the signatures of Miss Becker and others, representing the Manchester society. The seventh page has a border of wild-rose, hawthorn, and blue-bells, and is signed by Mrs. Fawcett and others on behalf of the Central Committee, and by the Countess of Portsmouth and others on behalf of the Bristol and West of England branch. The eighth page is surrounded by a border of moss rose, and is signed by Henry W. Crosskey and others on behalf of the Birmingham society, and E. Rattenbury Hodges and others on behalf of the Nottingham society. The ninth page, which has a border of primula and other flowers, is signed by J. Burkett and others on behalf of the Bradford branch, by Lucy Dowson and others on behalf of the Hyde branch, by Rev. J. Page-Hopps and others on behalf of the Leicester branch. The tenth page, surrounded by a border of wild poppies and other flowers, contains the signatures of Mrs. M'Laren and others on behalf of the Edinburgh branch, of H. E. Murray and others on behalf of the Glasgow branch, and of Miss Duthie on behalf of the Aberdeen branch. The eleventh and last page has a border in which the acorn is prominent, and is signed by H. Wigham on behalf of the Dublin branch, and by Miss Tod and others on behalf of the North of Ireland branch. The address is handsomely bound in blue morocco leather, with raised corners heavily gilt, and the inside lined with white watered silk. It is enclosed in an elegant blue morocco leather box, tastefully gilt and lined with white silk.

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QUEEN VICTORIA has now reigned over the British Empire for full fifty years. The jubilee celebration which began in our hearts with the entrance in June of last year of the fiftieth year of the reign culminated in the thanksgiving services in Westminster Abbey, when the QUEEN, after her truly royal progress through the crowds of her loving subjects assembled to do her honour, took her seat for the second time in her life in the Coronation chair. No Queen has ever reigned for so long a period. No English Queen has at the same time been a Queen and a mother. Brilliant as was the reign of ELIZABETH, it was not crowned with domestic happiness, and she had no son or daughter to soothe her advancing years, and inherit in her right the throne she had made great.

But QUEEN VICTORIA brought to the altar of thanksgiving a crowd of her descendants. Escorted by a troop of Princes and followed by a train of Princesses, her children and children's children, she appeared in the glory of womanhood, as well as of regal state. She is the mother of all our future Kings to be, for it is safe to predict that no Sovereign will ever ascend the British throne as heir of the Royal line who will not be proud to owe his title to his descent from QUEEN VICTORIA.

An Address of congratulation to Her Majesty the QUEEN on the occasion of her Jubilee has been adopted by committees of the National Society for Women's Suffrage. The address, which we give in another column, speaks for itself. It has been signed by representatives of all the leading committees, and was placed in the hands of the HOME SECRETARY for presentation to the QUEEN.

The presence of a few women in Westminster Abbey at the solemn Jubilee celebrations, by right, not of birth or social position, but of actual service to their country, may seem a small matter in itself. Yet there is a deep significance in the incident.

It is eloquent of the fact that in the Victorian era women are doing their country service in other than the

solely domestic province, are turning their powers to use in some of those wider administrative offices and skilled professions which are the modern representatives of the positions of authority which the great religious rulers of the Church and the traditions of hereditary rank recognised as befitting women in the medieval centuries.

H. B.

THE twentieth of July approaches, while it is still uncertain whether the exigencies of public business will allow of the Women's Franchise Bill being brought on for discussion. The Parliamentary friends of the measure are using every effort to preserve the chance. A memorial from members of Parliament of all parties is in course of signature, with the object of inducing the Government to leave the day free for the Bill. It is hoped that a sufficiently large and representative array of signatures will be attached to the memorial as may serve to demonstrate the desire of the House that this question, so long postponed, may be submitted to the verdict of the House.

It is with great satisfaction that we record the formation of a Parliamentary Committee of members interested in the progress of the Women's Franchise Bill. Such an organisation has long been a *desideratum*, for no question, in or out of Parliament, can be effectively pressed without organisation and combination among those who support it. The number of members now in the House of Commons who have either voted for or have promised to support a measure for the enfranchisement of women are an actual majority of the House. There is therefore every reason to hope that if these forces can be efficiently organised and rallied in support of the Bill, the hour of victory may be near at hand.

If there are any objectors remaining who ground their denial of political rights on the alleged inherent inferiority of the mental capacity of women, these must have been deprived of their last stronghold by the publication of this year's class lists of Cambridge. A student of Girton

Miss RAMSAY, stands alone in the First Division of the Classical Tripos, having beaten all the men of her year by a whole division. A similar place of honour in the modern and mediæval languages tripos has been gained by Miss B. M. HARVEY, of Newnham. The University of Cambridge still refuses to grant its degree to these its most distinguished children. But an effort is about to be made to open the degrees to women, and in the face of the great success of the ladies in the examination it will be very hard to maintain their continued exclusion.

ON Thursday, June 23rd, the House of Commons decided by a majority of 188 to 112 not to interfere with the employment of women on pit banks. Clauses prohibiting such employment had been placed on the notice paper as amendments on committee on the Coal Mines Regulation Bill by Mr. BURT and Mr. ATHERLEY JONES. Had the division been taken on either of these amendments, which dealt specifically with the work of adult women, there can be little doubt that the majority would have been considerably larger. But the first amendment which came on for discussion was one by Mr. JOHN ELLIS, which proposed to prohibit the employment on pit banks of girls under sixteen years of age, and it is more than probable that many members voted for this provision who would have voted against interference with the labour of adults. The two questions are, however, practically one, for had the girls been forbidden to work, the supply of adult female labour would have been materially affected. The industrial rights of women would have received a blow as serious for the pit bank industry as a law forbidding the employment of girls in factories would be for women's work in textile industries.

MR. BURT proposed that the division on Mr. ELLIS' amendment should be taken as the test division; it was, therefore, understood that if this were defeated all further amendments for the prohibition of the employment of women would be withdrawn.

A very interesting and suggestive debate ensued, in the course of which it became apparent that an overwhelming pressure had been brought to bear by the Miners' representatives in support of the amendments. Delegations as to the brutalising and degrading effect on women of the occupation of screening coals were urged such assurance and vehemence as might have seriously influenced the opinion of the House, had not the fortunate appearance last month of the deputation of

pit-bank women themselves enabled members to form their own opinions as to the truth of the complaints.

All the speakers who rose on the Government side opposed Mr. ELLIS' amendment. They were Mr. F. S. POWELL, Colonel BLUNDELL, Mr. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK, Mr. MATTHEWS, and Sir HENRY TYLER. On the Liberal side the amendment was opposed by Mr. BRADLAUGH, Mr. W. M'LAREN, Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, and Mr. CONYBEARE. Many members left the House before the division.

IN the division which saved the industrial rights of the pit-brow women the majority of 190, including tellers, consisted of twenty-eight Liberals, two Irish Nationalists, eight Liberal Unionists, and 152 Conservatives. The minority of 114, including tellers, consisted of seventy-eight Liberals, twenty Irish Nationalists, seven Unionist Liberals, and nine Conservatives. The following members connected with the Government voted in the majority:— Mr. ASHMEAD BARTLETT, Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Lord CHARLES BERESFORD, Hon. ST. JOHN BRODRICK, Baron DE WORMS, Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Sir W. HART DYKE, Sir J. FERGUSSON, Viscount FOLKESTONE, Mr. A. B. FORWOOD, Mr. GIBSON, Sir J. GORST, Mr. GOSCHEN, Lord GEO. HAMILTON, Hon. SIDNEY HERBERT, Lord A. HILL, Sir H. HOLLAND, Mr. HOLMES, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. J. MACDONALD, Mr. MATTHEWS, Mr. MARRIOTT, Sir H. MAXWELL, Hon. H. S. NORTHCOTE, Hon. D. R. PLUNKET, Mr. RITCHIE, Mr. W. H. SMITH, Mr. E. STANHOPE, Col. WALROND, Sir R. WEBSTER, and Mr. STUART WORTLEY. Among Liberals who voted on the same side were Mr. ASQUITH, Mr. BRADLAUGH, Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, Dr. CAMERON, Mr. CONYBEARE, Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM, Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Professor STUART, and Mr. WOODALL. Mr. W. M'LAREN and Mr. F. S. POWELL acted as tellers.

ALTHOUGH the main question as to the employment of women was held to be decided by the division on Mr. ELLIS' amendment, a second issue was raised on a point in connection with their work, which, if decided adversely, would have seriously interfered with them in pursuing it. One of the clauses of the Government Bill, to which we have on a former occasion taken exception, provides that no woman shall be allowed to move railway waggons. Mr. BURT proposed to extend this prohibition to "pit tubs, trams, or skips." The effect of this restriction would have been analogous to that of a rule which after permitting a servant of all work to fill the coal scuttle in

the cellar would forbid her to carry it upstairs. In point of fact, the physical exertion of moving a pit tub along a smooth tramway is much less arduous than that common incident of domestic service, carrying a heavy coal scuttle up several flights of stairs. The House took the common sense view of the matter and defeated Mr. BURT's proposal by 124 votes to 71. Many members interested in the question of the employment of women had left the House in the belief that no second division relating to the subject would be taken.

ADDRESS TO THE QUEEN FROM WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

Madam,

May it please Your Majesty, we, the undersigned, being official representatives of Committees of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, desire humbly to approach Your Majesty with the expression of our affection and loyalty to Your Majesty's person and government, and our heartfelt congratulations on the completion of the fiftieth year of Your Majesty's happy reign.

We desire humbly to thank Your Majesty for having been graciously pleased to accord Your Royal Assent to many measures for the amelioration of the condition of the women of these realms.

During the period of Your Majesty's reign the law has been amended as to the property and maintenance of married women; as to the custody and guardianship of infants; as to the admission of women to the benefits of university training and degrees, and to the practice of the medical profession, the last named privilege being fraught with incalculable blessings to many millions of women subjects of Your Majesty's Indian Empire. Other advances in law and custom have been made whereby the labour of women, which has been displaced from many great domestic industries by the introduction of machinery and the spread of the factory system, has found profitable occupation in other directions.

Your Majesty has at various times given Your Royal Assent to measures relating to Local Government whereby the ancient rights of women in Local Elections, which have from time immemorial been equal and similar to those of men, have been carefully preserved and extended coeval with the extension of local voting among the people.

Your Majesty has also been graciously pleased to assent to Acts which have restored and confirmed to women ratepayers the exercise of the Municipal Franchise in England and Scotland, and to the Elementary Education Acts, which extend the benefits of education to girls equally with boys, and secure the rights of women both as electors and members of School Boards.

Your Majesty has given Your Royal Assent to an Act of Tynwald whereby the full Parliamentary suffrage in the elec-

tion of the House of Keys, the representative branch of the Legislature of the Isle of Man, has been extended to women who are owners of qualifying property.

During Your Majesty's reign two measures have been passed relating to the Representation of the People, whereby the controlling power in the election of the House of Commons has been transferred from a comparatively small class to the masses of the people; but in these measures the precedent of the co-equal electoral rights of men and women when similarly qualified, which is the rule in every other form of representative government in Great Britain, has not been followed, and Your Majesty's subjects of Your Majesty's own sex are still denied the rights of citizenship and the privileges of free and constitutional government.

In the Royal House political power is exercised without restriction of sex, and we recognise with joy and gratitude the principle exemplified in the person of Your Majesty, that a Princess who stands in the legal order of Succession to the Throne is not passed over or disabled by reason of being a woman, but ascends the Throne and exercises the full powers of Sovereignty.

The bright example of Your Majesty in the discharge of the highest political function known to the State is an irrefragable proof that the most arduous political functions are not incompatible with the happiness of domestic life and the highest graces of womanly character. The constant presentation by Your Majesty of the union of political and domestic duties has been a potent factor in the growth of public feeling in favour of the admission of the women of the people, as well as the women of the Royal family, to share the political rights and duties of the men of the class to which they belong.

We pray that Your Majesty may long be spared to reign in prosperity and happiness over the great Empire which owns Your beneficent sway, and that in all the cares incident to this exalted position Your Majesty may be sustained and comforted by the consciousness of the loyalty and love of Your people.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage,
ROBERT ADAMSON, Chairman of Executive Committee.
LYDIA E. BECKER, Hon. Secretary.

Signed on behalf of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage,

MILLICENT GARRETT FAWCETT.
MARGARET LANDELL PENNINGTON.
LAURA M'LAREN.
FLORENCE BALGARNIE, Secretary.

Signed on behalf of the Bristol and West of England Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage,

EVELINE PORTSMOUTH, President.
LILIAS ASHWORTH HALLETT, } Hon. Secs.
EMILY STURGE,
HELEN BLACKBURN, Secretary.

Signed on behalf of the Birmingham Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage,

HENRY W. CROSSKEY, LL.D., President.
CATHERINE C. OSLER, Hon. Sec.

Signed on behalf of the Committee of the Notts. Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage,
E. RATTENBURY HODGES, SARAH GUILFORD,
ELIZABETH SUNTER, ANN COWEN, Hon. Sec.

Signed on behalf of the Bradford Women's Suffrage Society,
J. BURKITT, President.
EDITH LUPTON, } Hon. Secretaries.
EDWARD WAGSTAFFE, }

Signed on behalf of the Hyde Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage,
LUCY DOWSON, Vice-President.
ELIZABETH SMITH, Hon. Secretary.

Signed on behalf of the Leicester Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage,
JOHN PAGE HOPPS, Chairman.
A. CHRYSOGON BEALE, Hon. Sec.

Signed on behalf of the Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage,
PRISCILLA BRIGHT M'LAREN, President.
ELIZABETH PEASE NICHOL, Vice-President.
ELIZA WIGHAM, } Secretaries.
ELIZA KIRKLAND, }

Signed on behalf of the Glasgow Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage,
HELEN ERSKINE MURRAY, }
LEONORA YOUNG, } Vice-Presidents.
JOHN YOUNG, M.D., }
THOMAS M. LINDSAY, D.D., }
ANNE BARTON, Secretary.

Signed on behalf of the Aberdeen Women's Suffrage Committee,
MATILDA DUTHIE, ALEX. WALKER.
ELLA HILL BURTON RODGERS, GEORGE GERRIE.

Signed on behalf of the Dublin Women's Suffrage Association,
HENRY WIGHAM, Chairman of Committee.
ANNA MARIA HASLAM, } Hon. Secs.
ROSE M'DOWELL, }

Signed on behalf of the North of Ireland Committee for Women's Suffrage,
ISABELLA M. S. TOD, GERTRUDE ANDREWS.
ABBY P. BLACKWOOD, M. A. CALDER.
MARGARET BYERS, SARA K. MULLIGAN.
JANE LINDSAY, JANE T. GREEN.
SUSANNA BLACK, MADGE CRAWFORD.
TERESA M'GLADE, EMMA HARDY.

FORMATION OF A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE.

A meeting of members of Parliament connected with the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage was held in one of the committee rooms of the House of Commons on June 15th, Mr. Woodall presiding. At that meeting it was resolved that it was desirable to form a general Parliamentary committee of friends of the Bill, and a meeting of such members was directed to be convened. At this meeting, which was held on June 27th, under the presidency of Mr. Woodall, the committee was formally organised. Mr. Walter M'Laren was appointed secretary. It was further resolved to promote a Memorial to the First Lord of the Treasury, expressing the desire that the 20th of July should be left free for the discussion of the Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, which stands as first order of the day.

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, June 17th.

Sir J. LUBBOCK asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that the present reign has been especially characterised by the large share which women have taken in the intellectual and industrial life of the nation, to the distinguished career of many women, and to the important part now played by women in educational work and in skilled industries, he would in issuing the invitations for Westminster Abbey next week take these facts into special consideration.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: If the hon. baronet will indicate the distinguished ladies not in receipt already of tickets of admission to Westminster Abbey to whom his question refers, I shall be ready to use any influence I may possess with the Lord Chamberlain on their behalf. (Hear, hear.)

June 20th.

WOMEN'S WORK AT COAL PITS.

In the debate on going into Committee on this Bill, Mr. BURT said with regard to the employment of girls and women the Government did not in principle make any alteration. He wished they had done so. (Cheers.) He thought the time had come when this relic of barbarism should be abolished. (Cheers.) The Home Secretary was too shrewd a man to imagine that he acquired an exhaustive knowledge of the subject by the interesting interview he had with a carefully selected sample of the women of the pits. ("Hear, hear," and "Oh.") He must be aware that in order to have a full and satisfactory knowledge on this subject, he should see for himself the sort of work these women had to perform and also know something of the arrangements or want of arrangements for attending to the conveniences and decencies of life in connection with them. He would earnestly appeal to members of the House not to hastily commit themselves to a defence of the existing system unless they knew exactly what were the sort of results that they produced.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said that it would be impossible to find in our agricultural districts a better conducted class of women than the pit-brow women. (Hear, hear.) He asked the House to be very careful before they took away from these women the power of earning their livelihood. (Hear.)

Mr. F. S. POWELL said with regard to the pit women that, in their conduct, manners, and morals, they were at least equal to other women of the working classes in Lancashire; indeed, if there was any difference it was rather in favour of the pit-brow women. He denied that the women who had formed a deputation to the Home Office had been in any way specially selected, and affirmed on the other hand that they were average specimens of the class to which they belonged. What they contended for was freedom to labour, and work for women was not so abundant that cynical critics should laugh at them for pursuing an honest industry. (Hear, hear.) The policy of Parliament was rather to enlarge opportunities of work than to restrict them; and any action of Parliament in favour of restriction would be retrogressive and not in harmony with the tendency of the times.

Mr. BROADHURST said he should have to support the views of the hon. member for Morpeth rather than those embodied in the Bill of last year as well as in the present Bill.

Mr. FENWICK said one point of great importance was the employment of boys, and another the employment of women. He asked the Home Secretary whether he had fairly considered the arduous work imposed on women in moving, for eight and in many cases ten hours a day on the pit bank, tubs weighing when laden with minerals from 15cwt. to 17cwt. each. (An hon. Member: "Nothing of the sort.") He was speaking from personal experience. Some of those tubs would carry from 10cwt. to 12cwt. of coal, and when that was taken in conjunction with the weight of the tub it was safe to say that the women were compelled to move about the pit bank weights varying from 15cwt. to 17cwt. It was said that no special care had been taken in the selection of the pit-brow women who formed the deputation to the Home Secretary. Now he had information to the effect that very great care was exercised in selecting those women, and also that very great attention was paid to the attire in which they were to appear before that right hon. gentleman, by individuals who were personally interested in

the employment of the women. It had been urged that women ought to be allowed to labour at the pit brow in order to maintain themselves and their families in decency and respectability. But why were those women compelled to work in that way? It was because in many cases the capitalists were interested in putting down the wages of the labourer, and in compelling him and his wife and daughters to go and work there in order to maintain themselves in decency and respectability.

Mr. TOMLINSON said that, with regard to the employment of women, employers and employed in Lancashire were all on one side. He totally denied that either the deputation or the agitation had been in any respects pressed forward by the employers. The movement was spontaneous on the part of those who felt that their employment might perhaps be taken from them.

Mr. ATHERLEY JONES said one point was the employment of women at collieries. This was work undoubtedly degrading to women, and as such, following the undoubted tenour of modern legislation, it was right should be stopped in the one quarter of England where it survived.

Mr. PICKARD said the work of the pit-brow women was not all that could be desired. Some of them had to push eight-ton trucks about the pits, and he considered that this was too laborious work for women to perform. This work unsexed them, and he wanted them to feel that they belonged to womankind and were not exactly like the men by whom they were surrounded. The present system often induced a husband to get the woman and the girls to work while he himself idled away his time on several days in the week. It was the duty of the Government to prevent anything like that, and he hoped the Home Secretary would reconsider this subject.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY said, with regard to the question of the women, it was to be remarked that the opposition to their employment came chiefly from that part of the country where women were very little employed in mines. The Government believed that they had the support of the great body of those engaged in this work and of those among whom they lived, and they would resist any attempt to prevent such employment of women.

June 22nd.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

The House then went into Committee upon this Bill, resuming the discussion of the amendment to Clause 8, which had been moved on Wednesday by Mr. J. Ellis. The object of the amendment was to exclude girls from the operation of the clause, and so to prevent them from being employed.

Mr. F. S. POWELL, in opposing the amendment, declared that he had the best authority for stating that the deputation of pit-brow women who waited on the Home Secretary not long ago really represented the class for whom they appeared. They had not been specially selected, but had been chosen by ballot. Their action in coming to London was entirely voluntary, and in no way the result of their masters' dictation. They had themselves defrayed every penny of the cost of their journey to the metropolis. He was satisfied that against their character no charge could be justly brought. Pit-brow women were respectable and well behaved, and in many cases members of Sunday schools and various religious organisations, and there was no valid reason why any restriction should be placed on their labour, especially in these days, when employment, and particularly for women, was so scarce. (Hear, hear.) Women were allowed to work in factories, and those who preferred to work at the pit bank ought to be allowed to do so. (Hear, hear.) There was nothing in the work at the pit's brow which conducted to immorality, and many women resorted to this occupation because their health would not bear constant labour in the confined atmosphere of factories. It was said that women were best at home. No doubt this was so, but in some cases it was necessary for the support of the home that the women should work in this way. He appealed to the Committee not to deprive these women of their only means of livelihood, who, by honest labour, were in many cases supporting themselves and families and resorting to the only means of avoiding starvation or the workhouse.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES said that as he had an amendment on the paper that raised the same point as that now under discussion, he would make such observations as he desired to make upon this amendment. He denied that it had a tendency to interfere with the labour generally of women. This was quite a delusion. In England and Wales there were probably about 2,000,000 women

employed at present in factories and in various work but only 6,000 were engaged in work connected with mines. (Hear, hear.) It had been the tendency in recent years to deprive women of work which required hard manual and physical exertion, and in a previous Act dealing with this matter women were prohibited from being employed in the pushing of trucks at the pit's brow, and the justification given by the Home Secretary for this provision was that the inspector had reported to him that the work was unsuitable for women. As a matter of fact, such work as this, and the work that they were still permitted to do, degraded them. (Hear, hear.) It was said that Parliament had no right to interfere with the labour of women, but the arguments in support of that proposition would equally apply against all the legislation that had been passed for the purpose of protecting women and children in factories. (Hear, hear.) The deputation that had waited on the Home Secretary, and which had elicited some amount of public sympathy, was a very carefully-prepared one. ("No, no.") It was a deputation got up by the coalowners of Cumberland and Lancashire. ("No, no.") The miners in Lancashire were opposed to the continuation of the employment of women. Did any one suppose that the Home Secretary in opposing that amendment was properly influenced by a deputation promoted in the manner he had described? From the nature of their occupation these women were after their day's work in such a condition as to be hardly recognizable as human beings. He did not propose to enter upon the delicate question of morality. ("Oh, oh.") The kind of employment, at any rate, was not calculated to promote or maintain a high standard of morality among them. Their work was of so laborious a character that on their return home they were utterly incapable of performing their ordinary domestic duties. That amendment in no way aimed at depriving women of their legitimate share in employment; it simply followed the lines of previous legislation which had been passed to prevent women following occupations inimical to their own health. He asked that the Home Secretary should reconsider his somewhat hasty decision.

Sir J. PEASE asked whether it was in order for hon. members to discuss the general question of the employment of women at coal mines, the amendment being merely to exclude the word "girls" from the clause.

The CHAIRMAN thought it was competent for hon. members to discuss the general question.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said he intended to oppose the views urged by the hon. and learned member for North-West Durham. The question was one of great difficulty, and really involved the deciding of a question which he hoped Committees of that House would always decide with great clearness—the question how far the Legislature intended to interfere between individuals in this country. (Hear, hear.) There was a considerable tendency among advocates of the democracy to redress all grievances and make all people moral by means of the Legislature. He thought that a most dangerous tendency. (Cheers.) So far as he was concerned he would always do his best to oppose it. If that amendment was carried, that and other Committees of that House would have to be prepared to say that, whenever in their judgment any kind of employment was destructive to the health of the grown individuals engaged in it, they would prevent it without regard to the feelings of those individuals. (Hear, hear.) He did not know whether hon. members had considered where that would land them. He declined to consider the incidental question of whether the deputation was arranged or voluntary; that was so small a feature that he did not think the Committee would condescend to discuss it. He was prepared to admit that wherever there was hard, coarse, dirty employment, either for men or women, in which it was difficult for one or the other to cleanse him or herself after the day's work, then there was considerable difficulty in keeping the home decent and comfortable. But if they were to legislate upon that ground, how many classes of employment would they have to touch? (Hear, hear.) And if for the grown women, why not for the grown men? They said the men could take care of themselves. ("Hear, hear," from the Opposition.) But the women were not represented in that House. (Ministerial cheers.) Did hon. members know better than the women themselves? Were they going to make their legislation entirely of a socialistic character, or were they going to affirm the principle that it was the duty of the Legislature to interfere as little as possible between grown individuals? (Cheers.) Short of that,

it was neither their duty nor their right to constitute themselves the guardians of those individuals. (Hear, hear.) The proper way was to create a good and self-reliant feeling among the men and women themselves. He admitted that where women were engaged in hard manual labour, even in the fields, though there it was to a less extent, there was a lower level of morality. He was speaking from knowledge, for he had mixed with every class of those workers intimately, and he thought it his duty to put to the Committee what he conceived to be the right position to take in that matter. (Hear, hear.) If it was suggested that the husbands took advantage of the earnings of the wives, the proper course was to teach sobriety, thrift, and industry to the husbands, and not to make in Parliament legislation which was utterly destructive of all kinds of self-reliance in the people to whom it was applied. (Ministerial cheers.) He was surprised to hear the hon. and learned member say that this legislation was only following the precedent established by the legislation for protecting women and children. Children, unfortunately, they must protect, although every step the Legislature took when the child had begun to approach an age at which it could judge for itself and had received education enabling it to judge was dangerous to the Legislature and to the child alike. (Ministerial cheers.) The only way in which this country could maintain itself and escape was by throwing on the population the responsibility of making their own morality and their own lives and not letting them think that that House had either the ability or the duty to do it for them. (Ministerial cheers.)

Mr. FENWICK gave it as his opinion that the hon. member (Mr. Bradlaugh) had not sufficiently considered how far his doctrine of individuality was capable of carrying him. If hon. members like the hon. member for Wigan claimed for women the right to choose what employment they liked, why did they not carry the principle so far as to say they ought to be permitted to go down into the pit and dig the coal. (Hear, hear.) No man would go into a mining constituency and advocate such absolute freedom in the choice of employment for women. He submitted that no question had had more full and complete consideration than this one. Full and complete consideration had been given to it by the fathers of the daughters and the husbands of the wives who were engaged in this employment. (Cheers.) They had held conference after conference, representatives of the whole mining community throughout the United Kingdom, and when the resolution had been submitted, not a single dissentient voice had been heard. It was contended that they ought to increase the facilities for female labour rather than to seek to curtail them. Yes; but why did they seek to exclude women from the Government offices, where the work to be done was more fit and suitable for females, being the wielding of the pen, not of the pick and shovel? (Hear, hear.) The work done on the pit-brow was unwomanly, and the verdict of the country was against it, and public opinion would, undoubtedly, soon show itself in favour of the complete abolition of such employment for women. There could be no comfort in the home where the mother and the daughter were compelled all the day long in order sufficiently to keep life in to be out on the pit-brow, and he appealed to the Home Secretary to accept the amendment.

Colonel BLUNDELL was sure that if, as was averred, public opinion was setting strongly in the direction indicated, the employment of women about the pits would be gradually given up without hardship to the women. He was not at all surprised at the view taken by the hon. member who had brought forward this amendment or the hon. gentleman opposite who had supported it. When he first saw this occupation he took precisely the same view himself. But it was quite an error to suppose that it was very hard work. He admitted that there were sentimental objections to the costume, but the work was not hard. It was, according to one intimately acquainted with the subject, quite as healthy as that done by the class of girls who carried heavy babies or pushed them along in rickety perambulators. ("Oh.") He failed to see why any man should object to those pit women exercising their muscles in order to gain their daily bread. They would do a great hardship if they destroyed this labour, for all that was necessary was that it should be properly regulated.

Mr. MUNDELLA said the speech of the junior member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) would have been an admirable speech if the House had under consideration the question of the hours of labour and the rate of wages of men. (Hear, hear.) But it seemed entirely out of place with reference to the amendment now before

the House. Either this was so or the House had gone a long way back in its views on this question in the last few years. (Cheers.) The question immediately before the House was whether girls should be employed on the pit-brow pushing heavy loads quite beyond their strength. So far back as 1872 when a Mines Bill was before the House they came near to the point of excluding women altogether from such work; and now it was at least time that girls between thirteen and sixteen years of age should be excluded from it. In 1871 the late Earl of Shaftesbury moved in the other House an address to the Crown in regard to the employment of girls in brickfields on account of the heavy weights they had to deal with; and Lord Morley, then Under-Secretary for the Home Department, in responding on the part of the Government, said that no one who had listened to the description which the noble earl had given could deny that he had made out a case for the interference of the Legislature, and he gave his approval to the provision contained in a Bill which he (Mr. Mundella) had introduced that no female under the age of sixteen should be employed in brickfields, on the ground that it was impossible for girls of that age to perform such work without injury to their health. The hon. member for Wigan had given a rosy picture of the morality of the women employed at the pit brow. Now, he himself had been at Wigan and had seen what went on at the pit brow some sixteen years ago. He had seen the women leave the pit brow and go into the public houses; he had seen what went on in those public houses; and he said that the whole tendency of that employment was to degrade the women. That, however, might be an open question; but when appeals were made to the Committee about freedom of choice in regard to the labour of children of ten and thirteen years of age, he might observe that there was only one other country in Europe where girls of that age could be employed in mines—viz., Belgium; and what had happened there? We might well thank God that we in England had regulated work in mines long ago, otherwise we should have had the same anarchy and discontent as were witnessed in Belgium. In conclusion he congratulated the Home Secretary on having raised the age of boys employed in mines, and he trusted that the right hon. gentleman would not resist that reasonable amendment for excluding girls from thirteen to sixteen years of age from that unsuitable occupation.

Mr. McLAREN thought the hon. member for North Durham had failed to make out a strong case in support of that amendment. That hon. member had not one word to say against the morality of the pit-brow women, and the hon. member for Morpeth, although he had characterised their work as unwomanly, had described the women themselves as honest and virtuous. The right hon. member for Sheffield told them he had seen the Wigan pit-brow women go into the public-house; but in the manufacturing towns he might also see the women leaving the cotton and worsted mills and going into the public-houses. The hon. member for the Wansbeck Division assured them that the fathers and husbands of the women were unanimously against their employment in that way; but if so one would expect them to put on some domestic pressure to keep their wives and daughters at home. (Hear, hear.) Was no regard to be paid to the feelings of the women themselves in that matter? In the constituencies of those hon. members who supported the amendment there were no women working at the pit brow; but in the constituencies of the opponents of the amendment there were such women. There were only some 300 children between thirteen and sixteen years of age working in connection with coal mines, and about the same number working in connection with metalliferous mines. As the number had rapidly decreased in the last few years, it might fairly be assumed that those who remained were working there owing to some special necessity, perhaps to support a widowed mother or to keep a home over their heads; and it was surely far better that girls between thirteen and sixteen years of age should even work in that way than be driven to the workhouses or to worse places. The clergymen of the districts where the pit-brow women worked stated that the women were well-behaved, moral, decent, and religious, and that their work, though hard, was not degrading or such as Parliament ought to interfere with. Many more women in proportion were ruined in health and in morals by acting as barmaids than by working at the pit bank; and the work of the women employed as chain makers and nail makers was harder than theirs. The seamstresses in their miserable attics toiling for lower wages than the pit-brow women were also much worse off. Moreover the employment

of women at the pit bank was gradually dying out; and if it was found to be an unsuitable occupation it would die a natural death. He quoted a case on the authority of Mrs. Josephine Butler showing that the tendency of this legislation was to drive the women into worse employment. Parliament not long ago interfered in order to stop the employment of women in certain work. The result, however, was that the women, instead of getting better employment, became coal heavers at the docks. Many went into the workhouses to pick oakum, and many went on the streets. He trusted that the Committee would reject the amendment on the ground that it would inflict great injury on the women.

Mr. A. S. HILL expressed surprise at hearing the remarks made by the right hon. gentleman the member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield regarding Lord Shaftesbury. This question was discussed in 1872. Lord Shaftesbury took great interest in the subject, as it affected the age of boys and girls, but would have nothing to do with the limitation of the clause as it affected the employment of women. When discussing this matter in the House the right hon. gentleman quoted Lord Shaftesbury on a particular point, stating that under the Act of the previous session girls under eighteen were prohibited from working in brickfields. Mr. Bruce replied by saying that this was so, because they carried heavy weights; but in the House of Lords Lord Shaftesbury declined to impose a limitation upon the proper employment of women.

Mr. MUNDELLA said that he referred to Lord Shaftesbury's speech in 1872 on the brickfields question and not on the coal mines question. Lord Shaftesbury said he had no chance of carrying the provision in regard to women in the House of Lords.

Mr. G. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK referred to the statements which had been made that this kind of employment of women was a relic of barbarism, that the work was arduous, entailing the dragging of tubs weighing from 15cwt. to 17cwt., and that the Home Secretary should not be deceived by a carefully selected sample of pit-brow women. He had represented his constituency for twenty-two years, and was intimately acquainted with the methods of coal working in the district. He said, without the slightest hesitation, that the statements made regarding the facts of the case, as far as Cumberland was concerned, were without foundation. The hon. member for North-West Durham spoke disparagingly of the deputation which waited on his right hon. friend, remarking that it had been organised by the coal owners. He denied that this was so. The deputation was the result of a public meeting, and the women who had appeared on the deputation were freely chosen from among themselves. A good deal had also been said as to the character of the labour these women performed. In Whitehaven, at all events, the women were never employed more than six hours a day. It was altogether erroneous to say that the labour was unfitted for the women. In the portion of Cumberland with which he was familiar no woman who had a husband was permitted to be employed at the pit work. Neither was there any foundation for the allegation that women moved tubs weighing 12cwt. or 15cwt. This was only a statement made by persons who were desirous of depriving the pit women of their honest means of livelihood. He expressed surprise at the extraordinary speech of the right hon. gentleman the member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield, and contrasted his present attitude denouncing the employment of women with his attitude in favour of the women when he occupied a seat on the front Treasury Bench. He trusted that the Home Secretary would stand fast by the text of his Bill, and would accept no amendments moved in the direction of the one the Committee was now discussing. (Hear.)

Mr. A. L. BROWN wished to remind the Committee that the only question before it was whether women between the ages of thirteen and sixteen should be employed as pit-brow women. In analogous industries, such as brickfields, the labour of girls under sixteen was prohibited by the Brickfields Act, and the principle was subsequently embodied in the Factories Act. He thought that they might fairly ask for the same principle to be applied now, and he regretted that the question of the employment of women altogether had been mixed up with this point.

Mr. BROADHURST observed that with regard to the question whether this labour interfered with or encouraged in any way immorality among women engaged in pit-brow work, his own opinion was that there were many customs and habits of society far more conducive to immorality than work at the pit-brow. They might, he thought, dismiss considerations of that kind, and inquire whether from a national point of view this class of labour should

be encouraged. The hon. member for Northampton was far too late in his protest against interference with the employment of women, as the House by its sanction of the Factories Act had established such interference. The wise course taken by the Home Secretary with regard to the employment of boys under twelve had been universally approved in the country, and he trusted they would now agree to this amendment prohibiting the employment of girls under sixteen. He was sure that if they could have evidence showing how critical a time for girls was the period when they were between twelve and sixteen the Committee would agree that this change ought to be made. Nothing would so conduce to make the homes of the people happy as doing the utmost to train up the young women in habits of domestic labour and economy. Between the ages of twelve and sixteen young women ought to be acquiring valuable experience and training to fit them for the position of wives. He trusted Her Majesty's Government would come to the wise decision of protecting the lives of girls under sixteen.

Mr. MATTHEWS said he felt that questions of this sort were better left to the judgment of the House without interference on his part. He had listened with some surprise to the speech of the hon. member who had just sat down with regard to this work interfering with the domestic duties of young women, and he would like to ask the hon. member whether he would propose to exclude girls from working in factories for similar reasons. He could not help asking himself what had happened to make the hon. member for Nottingham think differently on this question. Last year the hon. gentleman laid a Coal Mines Regulation Bill on the table of the House in which the question of the employment of girls was left exactly as it stood in the present Bill. (Hear, hear.) He hoped it would not be supposed that he was adopting the attitude of a doctrinaire on this question. If they were dealing with the case of the children of an Italian organ grinder withdrawn from parental control and hired by foreign taskmasters, or the case of chimney-sweeping boys, then he agreed they might legitimately interfere. But what facts were there before the Committee from which they could conclude that these pit-brow girls would not have their best interests looked to by their parents better than by gentlemen in that House? (Hear, hear.) He had heard no facts adduced to show that any one of these girls was not an inmate of a happy home and the child of loving and affectionate parents. Nor had he heard the slightest proof that any of these girls were coerced into a course of life that was unfitting for them. So far as their physical condition was concerned they were healthier and stronger, and in every way better fitted to grow into strong and healthy women than any girls employed in factories and shops. As to the ground of morality, that was a delicate ground which he thought had been practically abandoned. The hon. member for North-West Durham had had the courage to refer to the almost forgotten report of 1866, and asked him whether his attention had been drawn to it. He would, however, only read two lines from that report—namely, "your Committee have come to the following resolution, which they have agreed to report to the House, that the employment of women on pit banks does not require legislative prohibition or interference." (Cheers.) He thought they would be going on a false track if they constituted themselves the *parentes patrie*. They could not know what was best suited to the health and interests of the working classes of this country so well as they knew themselves, and he would rather trust these girls to their parents than meddle with the question of their employment. He admitted that there was a difference between the case of girls between the ages of thirteen and sixteen and the case of women, but he was very much afraid that if they interfered with them they would prevent them from entering into the only employment open to them, and might very possibly doom them to other consequences detrimental to their chances of happiness in life. (Cheers.) With regard to the deputation, he would only say that his mind was made up before he saw them. He had tried to form an opinion on the subject upon the best evidence he could get. He had referred to the reports of Committees and had made the best inquiries he could from the inspectors who were in daily communication with these girls, and the conclusion he came to was that there was nothing to justify the House in interfering with an honest and healthy industry, which had been adopted by the deliberate preference of those engaged in it, to the universal satisfaction of their families and to the clergy who ministered to them. (Hear, hear.) He had, however, always

desired to keep a perfectly open mind on the subject, and he hoped the division would be taken as between the hon. member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham and his hon. friend the member for Wigan. (Hear, hear.) He hoped that this might not be treated as a party question, but that all would vote as they thought best for that interesting though small class of the population whose interests demanded the attention of Parliament as much as those of any one else. (Cheers.)

Mr. CHILDERS said that no mention was made by the deputation that waited on him in reference to the Bill of last year of the employment of women and girls, and it was not until he put the question to them whether the changes in the law they proposed ought to include their employment that they made any allusion whatever to the subject. Under these circumstances he listened with great care to what the right hon. gentleman had said, and he was much struck by the fact that the right hon. gentleman, in alluding to these two clauses, especially clause eight, most carefully referred to girls between the ages of thirteen and fifteen. That clause referred to all girls above the age of ten, and he assumed that the right hon. gentleman was prepared to alter the clause and leave out altogether sub-section 1, and turn sub-section 2 into a prohibition of the employment of all girls under the age of thirteen. To his mind that was a very fair compromise.

Sir J. PEASE said that in some of the best conducted mines in the country no women or girls were employed. He thought they ought to prohibit any girls under 16 years of age from working at the pit brink. Therefore, he hoped the House would support the hon. member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottinghamshire.

Mr. CREMER supported the amendment.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT disliked nothing so much as an attempt to pass an Act of Parliament in order to take away the employment of the people. (Hear, hear.) He had listened to the whole of this debate, and he was bound to say that he had not heard anything in the shape of a good argument in favour of taking away the employment of these women. Before he would help to pass a clause to do that he would require arguments fifty times stronger than any which had yet been adduced.

Mr. CONYBEARE said there were 1,300 women employed in Cornwall on similar work to that of the pit-brow women of Lancashire, but the women always seemed to prefer it to domestic service.

Mr. WALLACE sympathised heartily with the sentiments of the hon. member for Manchester. There was always a presumption against legislative interference with labour; but this was a question which ought to be decided by the representatives of the persons affected, and the representatives of 600,000 of those persons had pronounced against the employment of women.

Mr. PICKARD was opposed to female labour in mines. There were eighty mining associations in Lancashire, and only one of them was in favour of this part of the Bill; but unfortunately Lancashire had no labour representative in that House. It was not a wage question, but one affecting the family life and the dignity of women. He should like to know who had paid the expenses of the women's deputation in favour of this form of labour, and why had the women put themselves under the protection of a stranger rather than that of their own friends and relatives?

Mr. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK said their expenses had been paid by themselves.

Mr. GRAHAM, on behalf of the Scotch miners, was opposed to the continuance of women's labour at mines.

Mr. BURT said he was struck with the fact that the arguments used in support of the existing system bore a similarity to the arguments used in 1842 in favour of the maintenance of female labour underground. The working of women at the pit-bank seemed to be a survival of the barbarism of that time, and it was precisely in the districts in which women were extensively employed underground that they were now employed at the pit-bank. In reply to the hon. member for Whitehaven, he would state that the conferences of miners were convened to deal with other questions than wages questions. So far as wages were concerned they had never, as representing the miners, considered that point in the slightest degree. It would be better if there were fewer imputations of motives on both sides. (Hear, hear.) He for one did not believe that those who supported the clause cared nothing for the moral condition of the women and that their object was simply to get cheap labour. On both sides, he believed, they were influenced by higher considerations. (Hear, hear.) Nor did he believe that

useful labour was degrading. (Cheers.) It was idleness that was degrading. But there was something in connection with this labour that made it very unfit for girls and women. (Hear, hear.) A portion of the labour was very hard, such as the moving of trucks and the pushing of tubs. To make some discrimination the cleaning of coal was less difficult. But regard must be had to the effect of the whole occupation on the domestic condition of the mining population, and especially on the women. (Hear, hear.) He had come to the conclusion that it was very desirable that the whole system should be abolished. The pit-bank woman who told the Home Secretary that she had tried domestic service and could not stand its monotony was a typical illustration of the effect of this work in spoiling women for domestic life. If that woman were unfortunate enough to marry she would with difficulty adapt herself to the restraints of domestic life, and she would be anything but a model wife. There was another point it was difficult to make clear to the Committee, but in most cases at the pit-bank the absence of sanitary arrangements involved the violation of common decency, and this alone made the employment an unfit one for women and girls. If the Committee would not assent to the amendment, at least let them see to it that arrangements were enforced to insure the observance of the common decencies of life. (Cheers.) He should be glad to take the division as a test division on the question of the employment of girls under sixteen, and to forego his claim to move an amendment.

Mr. ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire) said he was proud to inform the hon. member for Whitehaven that he was sent to the House by the miners of his district, who paid him for being there. (Cheers.) Those who sent him were distinctly against the employment of women and girls above the mine. The work was far too hard for girls, and in many places it was positively degrading and immoral. It would be interesting to know who paid for the photographs which had been sent to hon. members. These photographs were incomplete pictures of a pit bank; the tram was not there, nor were the oil can, the grease pot, and the coal dust. It was only a question of time; this degrading employment for women and girls would have to be abandoned. In twelve years the number of women and girls employed had been reduced from 6,899 to 4,131. This showed that public opinion was against the system, and it would have to go.

Sir H. TYLER, who spoke amid loud calls of "Divide," was understood to contend that there was no ground for interfering with the employment of women and girls at the pit bank.

The Committee divided, and the numbers were—

For the amendment	112
Against	188
Majority	—76

Mr. BURT moved to extend the prohibition which provides that no boy, girl, or woman shall be employed in moving railway wagons, to the moving by women of "pit tubs, trams, or skips."

Mr. MATTHEWS thought the hon. member must feel that it was impossible for the Government to accept the amendment, which would absolutely prohibit women, however strong, from moving a pit-tub or skip, however light and easy to move.

Mr. FENWICK and Mr. PICKARD supported the amendment, and Mr. TOMLINSON opposed it.

Colonel BLUNDELL observed that the work of pushing trams along a perfectly smooth and level surface could scarcely be described as hard labour.

The Committee divided, when the numbers were—

For the amendment	71
Against	124
Majority	—53

DRAWING-ROOM MEETINGS.

STRATTON STREET, PICCADILLY.

On June 16th, a drawing-room meeting in support of the Women's Franchise Bill was held, by invitation of Mrs. Cotton, at 13, Stratton-street, Piccadilly. The chair was taken by Captain Cotton, M.P., who, in opening the meeting, said the giving of the vote to women was but the natural and logical outcome of the large extension of the franchise that took place some two or three years ago. He believed that women would, when this claim of theirs was granted, help to return men to Parliament not only for their political, but for their moral worth; and they might take it

for granted that purity in politics could only be accompanied by purity in private life.—Mrs. Fawcett moved, Col. Duncan seconded, and Miss Becker supported a resolution, "That in the opinion of this meeting the rule of electoral equality between men and women which now exists in local government should be extended to the Parliamentary franchise, and that the jubilee year of the reign of a woman sovereign would be fitly commemorated by the passing of an Act which should establish on a sure and lasting foundation the political liberty of the women of the people." Carried unanimously.—Miss Tod moved and Mr. McLaren, M.P., supported "That a petition in favour of the objects of the meeting be drawn up, agreed to, and signed by the chairman, and forwarded to both Houses of Parliament." The resolution was carried unanimously.—A vote of thanks to Captain and Mrs. Cotton was moved by Mr. Rankin, M.P., seconded by Captain Heathcote, M.P., and carried. After partaking of tea and coffee the party separated.

IN THE ABBEY.

(From our own Correspondent.)

An early hour of the morning found our party assembled in the cool shade of the south-east cloister of Westminster Abbey awaiting the signal that the doors were opened. The interval was by no means tedious, for an assemblage resplendent with the gorgeous robes of official personages and the bright dresses of the ladies kept gathering in numbers as the hour advanced. The sun shone brightly outside on the venerable buildings around, a cool refreshing breeze whispered through the emerald green foliage now in its pristine glory. At nine o'clock the doors were opened, and the ticket holders proceeded without difficulty or crowding to their appointed places. The seats assigned to the body which we represented commanded an excellent view of the central aisle where the Royal procession was to pass. We looked down from a moderate elevation first on the rows of official personages immediately below, next on the central passage. Facing us on the opposite side were other rows of official guests, chiefly mayors in their robes and chains, men in richly laced uniforms, and many ladies. The attire of these being mainly in the subdued colours now affected by fashion, it seemed as if for the nonce the ladies had yielded to the usually more sombre sex the privilege of appearing as the gay butterflies of the throng.

The first sign of preparation for the reception of the procession was the appearance of the corps of Beefeaters. These were stationed with halbert in hand on each side of the nave. Then groups of officers in scarlet and gold passed by. The first sign of Royalty was the rising of the assemblage to receive a bevy of child-princesses, with streaming golden hair; these were soon recognised as the great-grandchildren of the Queen. Then came the Duchess of Teck, the Princess Frederica of Hanover, and others, who were conducted, as they appeared, to their appointed seats. The first of the set processions was that of the Indian and other Asiatic princes, in resplendent array. One of the most interesting features of this procession was the appearance of the Maharani of Cuch Behar; she walked beside her husband, and in so doing took the first step in a pathway which may, at some future day, lead to the opening out of the seclusion in which her countrywomen now pass an existence unrelieved by any glimpses of public interest or higher life. One of the other Indian princes was also accompanied by a lady. Prince Komatsu of Japan, the

uncle of the Mikado, and the Princes of Siam and of Persia were in the procession. The Queen of Hawaii, of tall and commanding figure, wore a dark or black silk gown with a broad scarlet ribbon worn across the breast. The Princess, the heir to the throne of the Sandwich Islands, was similarly attired. After the procession had passed there was a long pause, then the organ again sounded; again the congregation rose, this time to receive the European Royalties too numerous to mention here. The kings and princes were in full military uniform, the queens and princesses were richly robed in silks and satins. All wore bonnets. Among the more striking figures were the Infanta Eulalie of Spain, who wore a mantilla of rich cream lace arranged in the national fashion of inimitable grace, and the Crown Princess of Portugal, whose bonnet was mainly composed of diamonds, and whose corsage was covered with brilliants. All too quickly this vision of splendour vanished as the procession passed beneath the organ screen. All this time the very last idea that seemed present in the mind of anyone was that of being in a church for the purpose of attending a religious service. Conversation was general, and all seemed alive with gaiety and expectation. But as the climax neared the excitement was stilled into strained expectancy. At last a fanfare of trumpets from the organ loft heralded the arrival of the Queen. The congregation rose as one man, and as the strains of Handel's processional march filled the air the head of the Queen's procession appeared at the west door of the nave. With slow and stately march the procession advanced. The Archbishop and other dignitaries wore gorgeously embroidered copes. The Archbishop of Canterbury bore the service book in his hands. The strains of the National Anthem pealed through the air. The body guard of princes appeared, and then the Royal Lady herself, the cynosure of all eyes, the centre on which were at that moment concentrated the thoughts and hearts of millions of the subjects of her world-wide empire and the sympathies of all the nations of the earth. On she came, slowly advancing, with self-possession and dignified bearing acknowledging with bows on either hand the homage offered to her in reverent and dignified silence by those among whom she passed. The Queen's face and mien seemed to reveal the full consciousness of the unparalleled solemnity of the occasion and at the same time a perfectly self-contained mastery of the situation. To be the ruler of a magnificent empire may be said to be owing to the accident of birth; to be mistress of herself in a moment of supreme emotion is due to personal qualities of a truly regal kind. The Queen passed from our sight under the organ screen carrying with her our eyes and heart so that we could hardly note the train of Royal daughters and daughters-in-law who followed their Royal mother. The scene within the choir, when the Sovereign for the second time in her life sat in the Coronation chair, on the mystical Stone of Destiny, we beheld with the eyes of the spirit alone, hidden as she was from bodily vision. But the service was heard by all; as the choir discoursed the beautiful music, even the faintest tones and words were distinctly audible, and the prayers could be followed from the book provided, so that nothing was lost. The service lasted about an hour; at the close the Queen re-appeared with the same surroundings as before. Proceeding down the nave, she passed from our view to continue her progress among her people.

[Owing to the length of the debate on the pit-brow women, we are compelled to postpone several notices of meetings, &c.]

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