

The Common Cause.

The Organ of the Women's Movement for Reform.

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ONE PENNY.

The News of the Week.

A Non-Party Move.

The news that there is a Conciliation Committee working within the House to secure non-party support for some measure of women's enfranchisement is now public property. Lord Lytton is Chairman of the Committee, and it has adherents from all the political parties. The greatest common measure seems to have been found in the existing municipal qualification, and the Committee seems to be prepared to press for reform on this basis. There are many things to be said about it, but we will make only one suggestion here, which is that the qualification should be made uniform in the country and not, as now, different in London from what it is in the provinces.

As for the support of the Women's Suffrage Societies,—we see no signs of their abandoning the principle of sex equality for which they have always stood, but there seems little doubt that any recognition of women's rights would help, and not hinder, complete recognition, and would, as an instalment of justice, be welcomed by women. In this respect we confess we see in women Suffragists a far wider humanity than among professed adult Suffragists, who, for party purposes, are endeavouring to make much more "limited" the franchise to which their main objection has been that it was what they called "limited." Our experience with the petition showed us very plainly, however, that the average male elector was ready to give women householders the vote, and we are confident that any such measure would be popular in the country, which is heartily sick of the disingenuous *non possumus* attitude of politicians.

A Great Step.

In France the Parliamentary Commission for Petitions, having received a requisition for the granting of the Parliamentary and Municipal vote to women, on April 5th passed the following resolution:—

"With respect to the request of the petitioners for complete suffrage to be given to women in order to effect

the complete representation of the nation, the Commission has thought it necessary to pronounce officially that it has unanimously accepted the justice of the principle of the petitioners' request, and has recognized the essential importance which its realization would have for the country."

With so logical a nation as the French this is a great step. Who knows whether we may not yet be beaten in justice and humanity by them?

Eastbourne Doubles Its Women Guardians.

In the St. Mary's Ward at Eastbourne there were six candidates for two places on the Board of Guardians, and the two successful ones were Mr. W. H. Lucas and Miss Susan Gatlif. The latter, who is also Secretary of the local branch of the National Union, inherits from her father a tradition of social service. There are now four women representatives on the Eastbourne Board of Guardians, as against two previously, and the women now form one-eighth of the whole.

More Suffragists as Guardians.

On April 4th Miss N. O'Shea was elected Rural District Councillor for the Parish of Cosham, and is the first woman to sit as a Rural District Councillor on the Fareham Union. Miss O'Shea is well known to Suffragists for her energetic work in the

organization of Surrey, Sussex, and Hants.

Miss Hodgkinson, another keen Suffragist, and one of the vice-presidents of the Portsmouth Suffrage Society, has again been returned as P. L. G. for Havant, and, like Miss O'Shea, she was head of the poll. In Portsmouth ten women were returned and one rejected.

Women in Local Government.

The report of the Women's Local Government Society is full of interest, and well repays study. An account is given of the negotiations for amending the municipal franchise as applying to women, and this is interesting at the present time when there are proposals being made for extending the Parliamentary vote to women on this very basis. Reference is made to the appointment of



MR. GEORGE BERRY, an octogenarian Suffragist.

Photo. by Mr. Heasman, Church Street, Ampthill.

Miss O'Driscoll as collector of Township Rates in Queens- town. Miss O'Driscoll succeeded her father.

The curious anomalies of the municipal franchise are again exhibited by reference to the applications success- fully made by Mrs. C. W. Dixon, of Birmingham, and Mrs. McIlquham, of Staverton; these decisions were based on the Act of 1907, which has been very variously interpreted all over the country.

There are now fourteen women town councillors in England and Scotland; nine women on Metropolitan Borough Councils; and three women on County Councils. A number of interesting appointments are also chronicled, most of which have been from time to time mentioned in our columns, but there is one to which we should like to draw special attention, because it is new, and that is Miss Beattie to be "Children's Visitor," appointed by the Public Trustee. Further steps in the right direction are the appointments as Assistant Reliev- ing Officers of Miss Taylor (Norwich) and Miss J. Peacock (Islington). Much of the work of relief can only be well done by a woman.

The New Bishop of Lincoln.

Canon Hicks, who has just succeeded to the See of Lincoln, is a firm believer in the enfranchisement of women. He is President of the Manchester Branch of the Men's League, and he walked in the great Man- chester procession of October, 1908, afterwards speaking for Women's Suffrage from the Temperance platform in Alexandra Park. In fact, it is Canon Hicks' work for temperance and purity which has brought him into the Suffrage ranks, and he himself attributes the impulse to join the movement to the influence of Mrs. Lyttleton.

Mothers' Benefit.

The firm of Kelsall and Kemp (of which Sir George Kemp, M.P., is one of the principals) has initiated a scheme for the benefit of married women operatives in their employ. Expectant mothers are to draw 12s. a week for twenty weeks, and the women are to decide when the twenty weeks are to begin. We know how much Sir George and Lady Beatrice Kemp have the welfare and liberty of women at heart, and this is only another instance of their wide humanity.

A New Studentship for Men and Women.

A sum of £3,000 has been invested as a memorial to Mr. Benn W. Levy, for the purpose of endowing a post- graduate studentship in bio-chemistry in the University of Cambridge. The studentship is open not only to men graduates, but to members of Girton and Newnham who have certificates showing that they deserved (but were, on account of their sex, not given) honours in degree examinations. This is, we believe, the first post- graduate studentship of the kind.

Taxation without Representation.

A league has been started called the Women's Tax Resistance League, and those who wish to hear more about it are invited to communicate with Mrs. Kineton Parkes, International Franchise Club, 66, Russell Square, W.C. The following is an extract from a mani- festo issued by the League:—

"Women, being excluded from representation on account of their sex, are therefore the subjects of a Tyranny and not of a Representative Government. Women in their unrepresented condition are subject to laws affecting their interests made exclusively by men, and they are taxed by the same irresponsible authority. Women then, as moral and intelligent human beings, who should be fellow-workers with men in the making of Society, demand their emancipation from their present intolerable position, in a word they demand their Free- dom. John Hampden refused to pay a tax imposed by an irresponsible Sovereign. Women must, for the same reason, whilst representation is refused them, evade and

resist the payment of taxes imposed upon them by a Government, which in relation to unrepresented women is as irresponsible and tyrannical as the authority resisted by Hampden. All women, married and single, from whom Imperial taxation is demanded, are invited to join this League for the Nonpayment of Taxes, in order when the right moment comes, to make one large and effective protest, and in the name of John Hampden, to resist payment to the Government's exchequer."

Unfortunately no one can resist indirect taxation, and one of the chief direct taxes, the income-tax, is often deducted before the income is paid. Married women have special difficulties, since their income-tax is levied on the joint income of them and their husbands.

Why Men Should Vote.

The following amusing conversation is reported as having taken place at a dinner party in Ceylon: The con- versation turned on the Women's Suffrage question. The usual arguments on both sides were brought forward. A gentleman who had returned from a lengthened tour in the Colonies sat silent till the subject was well thrashed out, then lifted up his voice and said: "Men only should have votes because they pay more taxes than women." "What taxes?" said the Suffragist. "On whisky and tobacco," was the answer, spoken in all seriousness. Could there be a more convincing argument of man's superiority?

English as She is Writ.

An amusing instance of the beauties of the English language, as revealed in the drafting of Bills is given as follows. The extract is from the Prevention of Des- titution Bill, talked out last Friday; one almost wonders whether one might not say it was "written out." But judge for yourselves:—

"There shall be paid out of the Exchequer Contribu- tion (Mentally Defective Grants) Account to the council of every county and county borough and to the councils of such other cities and boroughs as may continue to act as local lunacy authorities under the Acts mentioned in the fifth schedule to this Act such a grant in aid of their expenditure under section 43 of this Act (to be termed the Mentally Defectives Grant) as may be deter- mined by a Secretary of State, the amount of the grant in each case being made equal to such a rate per head of the aggregate number of certified persons provided for in the institutions by all the councils of counties and county boroughs and the councils of such other cities and boroughs as may continue to act as authorities under the Acts mentioned in the fifth schedule to this Act as can be met from the Exchequer Contributions (Mentally Defective Grants) Account for the current year."

Of course, if such a clause were passed, it would make plenty of employment, and that is, perhaps, one of the desired by-products of legislation.

The Abolitionist Federation and Wages.

One of the subjects set down for discussion at the next congress of the Abolitionist Federation (1911) is: "Do the wages and conditions of women's work conduce to prostitution?" We hope the inquiry will be productive of much good. Those who have experience and know- ledge bearing on this inquiry should write for a form of questions to the Secretary of the British Committee, 17, Tothill Street, S.W.

An Octogenarian Suffragist.

Our portrait this week is of an old gentleman who signed a Women's Suffrage petition nearly fifty years ago in Birmingham, when he was working for Messrs. Clayton, and he says many of his fellow-workers signed at the same time. When the Misses Barton took the voters' petition to him at Ampthill this year, he signed it with pleasure. He will be 87 on May 24th, and is proud that his birthday should be on that day.

ALL BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS should be addressed to The Manager, 64, Deansgate Arcade, Manchester. ADVERTISEMENTS should reach the office by first post on Tuesday. THE PAPER WILL BE POSTED to any address in England or abroad for the following prepaid payments:—

Table with 2 columns: Duration (3 MONTHS, 6 MONTHS, 12 MONTHS) and Price (1 9, 3 3, 6 6).

LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS should be addressed to The Editor, 64, Deansgate Arcade, Manchester, accompanied by a stamped envelope addressed if it is desired that they should be returned. The Editor accepts no responsibility, however, for matter which is offered unsolicited.

CORRESPONDENTS ARE REQUESTED TO NOTE that this paper goes to press on Tuesday. The latest news, notices, and reports should, therefore, reach the Editor by first post on Monday. The Editor reminds correspondents, however, that the work is made much easier if news is sent in as long before- hand as possible. Monday is only mentioned as the last possible day, not as the one upon which all news should arrive.

NOTICE.—This paper should be obtainable at newsagents and bookstalls by mid-day on Thursday. If people have any difficulty in getting it locally, they should write to the Manager, 64, Deansgate Arcade, Manchester, giving the name and address of the newsagent or bookstall from which they wish to be supplied.

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Our Birthday.

A year ago "The Common Cause" began. We look back upon the hopes and intentions with which it was started, we survey the difficulties which had to be sur- mounted, and we are divided between satisfaction at the progress made and an impatient longing for much better things in the year to come.

It was started as an independent venture and inde- pendent it still remains. But, when it had been in existence for a few months, it was adopted by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies as its official organ. That is to say, official news of the Execu- tive, the Organizers and the Societies is communicated and the policy of the paper, as far as Women's Suffrage is concerned, is the policy of the National Union. But it was considered that the work of the enfranchisement of women could be furthered best, not by a mere reiteration of the demand for the vote, but by publishing articles and news which should show the many sides upon which life touches women and the many ways in which the subjection of women reacts upon life, and therefore the paper is also "the Organ of the Women's Movement for Reform." The first of these reforms is electoral reform, and upon this everyone in the National Union is agreed; but when we come to other reforms it is evident that points of view must greatly diverge, and therefore in all matters outside the franchise agitation we take a line for which the management of the paper is alone respon- sible. We hope and believe that we voice the opinions of many Suffragists, but it is manifestly impossible to voice them all, since all are agreed on one point only.

The whole paper has, however, this in common with the National Union, that it is non-party, and it is this non- party position which is so difficult to make people under- stand. We get a large number of letters beginning: "The Common Cause" professes to be non-party, but . . . and when we get so far it becomes an entertaining game to lay down the letter and speculate whether this particular correspondent will accuse us of having a "con- sistent Radical tone" or of being "bitterly opposed to the Government"; of "maintaining the privileges of property as against the working woman" or of being

"merely Socialistic." The truth being, of course, that none of these statements are true, but that all our politics at present are summed up in the question, what action, what policy, what man will remove the iniquitous and inequitable sex disability under which we groan and which is the last and worst of the great monopolies? We are not hit by the taunt that we are selfish because we ask for votes for women first. We are convinced that the women will use their votes not only for the protection of their own interests but in the interests of the whole of humanity. We have not found women the more selfish and tyrannical half of mankind, and we don't think the vote will change their nature in these respects. We advocate the simple removal of the sex disability because we think it ought not to have been imposed; when people tell us we ought to work for a great extension of the basis of the franchise, we say that opinion among women (as among men) is greatly divided about this, and when the sex disability has been removed, men and women together can proceed to tackle the question of a great Reform Bill.

There is another difficulty with which we were faced at the outset, and which we have met with a deep sense of responsibility and the simple intention to help truth to prevail. It is impossible to show the depth and moral passion of the women's liberation movement without showing the root at once of woman's weakness and woman's strength. Her sex is the ground of her dis- ability. How can one deal effectively with the one unless one speaks truly and candidly of the other? Men who oppose the enfranchisement of women do so because "women are women," and all the questions of women's economic, legal and political subjection, the future of the race, the hope of humanity, are involved in the question whether the rival trades of prostitution and of marriage are those alone which shall be open to women. According to this view of society, men may do anything they can do; women are to exist merely for the propagation of the race and for the enjoyment of man. Fortunately, for the happiness and the self-respect of women, it is gradually appearing plainly for all to see that, whatever may be the case with regard to the second of these, the first cannot be well performed until women are happy and self-respecting, and this they will never be until they are free; free to marry or not; free to bear children or not; free to work, and free to determine the laws under which they must live and the taxes which they must pay. So long as women are in the degrading stultifying servitude of sex, you cannot work for their liberation if you never name their sex and all it implies. So when our good friends complain, as some do, that we touch and uncover hideous social sores, we reply that they can only be cleansed if they are seen and known; that this cleansing is not the work of specialists, but of every one of us, and that it is not enough to publish their effects in blue books or special reports which are only read by a very few; they must be published in books and papers which are read by the many. Reform has been so difficult because the sheltered women don't know: we must inform them; because foolish selfish men have not realized the results of their folly and selfishness: we must instruct them. You cannot create horror of evil by merely calling it evil: you must show its horrors. This is not a paper for immature persons, but we believe that any boy or girl who sees it will get no harm from knowing the truth about the world in which he and she will have to live.

The third great difficulty we have is one which ulti- mately can only be met by increased circulation. We would like the paper to meet the needs and wishes of many sorts of people. There is the old, convinced Suffragist, who is sick and tired of "arguments" and who wants to have news and to be kept abreast of the movement. There is the new convert, who is hungering for fresh reasons wherewith she may defeat the enemy in dialectics. There is the educated man or woman who wants special articles, and there is the illiterate, for whom we would like to cater. There is the secretary of the small local Society who wants the names of the local people and their speeches recorded, and there is the large body of the frivolous or the tired, who want "something

readable." In order to meet these and other requirements there is only one way: to enlarge the paper, and this can only be done if the circulation goes up. Since the paper was started we have added a picture and four pages. We would very much like to add four more pages and any amount of pictures, but this cannot be done yet.

The membership of the National Union is something a little under 20,000. If every member took "The Common Cause" and secured one other subscriber, we should do well. Is this too much to hope for? We should like to point out to our fellow-Suffragists that, owing to the indifference of the daily Press, which is financed and edited by men, it is literally impossible for anyone who does not regularly see this paper to keep in touch with the Union. At the Council meeting one delegate suggested that canvassing gave young and new Societies or members scope for their yet untried activities, and we should like to suggest that one most deserving object for canvassing would be this paper. Further, if all secretaries would see that the paper is advertised on their handbills and posters, and would recommend it at meetings by selling it in the hall and mentioning it from the platform, and would put up posters in the hall and in all shops and committee-rooms which they use, a great deal would be done to connect the paper with the constitutional Suffrage movement. We know some Societies which give a free copy of the paper to every new member upon joining and accompany the gift with a subscription form.

Codes of Honour.

It is often said that women have no sense of honour such as men have. The question is interesting, because there is, or has been in the past, some justice in the accusation. Happily public schools and colleges for girls are making the reproach an obsolete one. Now there seems to be some natural reason for the difference between the state of affairs in the past and in the present. It seems to be this: That just as honourable people, who would not think of cheating their fellow-creatures individually, seem to consider the cheating of a company or a society a venial offence—(I quote as an example the calmness with which otherwise honest people travel second or first in a train on a third-class ticket)—so there seems to be a general though undefined feeling abroad that honour is only necessary in dealing with equals. Hence in the past there has been honour in the mutual dealings of men, at least of the aristocratic class, little in the dealings of the same class of men with their inferiors. And as inferiors and dependents have very naturally moulded their conduct on that of superiors, and as that of their superiors has been seen at a disadvantage by inferiors who knew nothing of the mutual relations of those superiors, so it has come about that there has not been in the past so much honour in the lower classes as in the upper. Democracy is altering this state of affairs to a great extent.

Now just as men of the upper classes treated those of the lower classes with little honour, so men have almost universally treated women, who have been regarded practically always as inferiors, and who have generally been dependents as well. It may safely be assumed that men's honour, such as it was, was largely, though perhaps unconsciously, a tacit arrangement for mutual protection. A man's code of honour has generally not benefited, or at all events not adequately benefited, women, where women alone could benefit. For instance, it is not considered "dishonest" for a man to "dishonour" a woman. It seems to be considered rather of the nature of an achievement than otherwise, to commit the most cowardly of all cowardly sins—the sin for which a woman must pay the penalty. It does not brand a man for ever as stealing a £5 note from a fellow-man would do. Yet there can be no comparison from a woman's point of view between the gravity of the two offences.

Again, a man, in marrying, does not consider himself bound, or is only just beginning to consider himself bound, (things are in such a transitional state at present that one hardly knows whether to use the past or present tense), to confess to his future wife that his past life has been hardly all that it should be. This point is

brought out plainly enough in a novel of Sir Conan Doyle's, called, if I remember rightly, "The Duet." The hero, after consorting with bad women, marries, and it is evident that, from the author's point of view, it is only natural that the man should not tell his wife about his previous life. He dreads her knowing. He thinks it would wreck his life if she did. And yet, in spite of man's boast of honour, he is content to live and be happy on a lie. If Sir Conan Doyle had wished to make his story a true picture of life instead of something artistically pleasing, he would not have dropped the curtain fairly soon after the marriage. He would have described the sordid results of the badness of the bad woman in the background and the badness of the agreeable "hero" in the foreground. They would probably be these: A wife branded with disease or children branded with disease, perhaps both. And now comes a noteworthy point. Man has not considered it incompatible with his honour in the past to allow women (exclusive of his victims) to remain ignorant of the badness of men and of its ghastly results. Though he would consider it dishonourable to induce a man to enter into any undertaking with him without explaining the risks connected with it, yet he has been content to let women enter blindly upon matrimony without knowing the possible results—matters that may make all the difference between life-long misery and happiness. Women have been wilfully blindfolded, agonised for men's badness, without being allowed to suspect the why and the wherefore of it. Hence the howl of opposition that greeted the demands of the first women who wished to be doctors. Chiefly through the agency of women doctors, women now know the truth, and this knowledge will probably cause more of a revolution in England than any scientific discovery of the age. It is a significant fact that there are over 500 medical women who are Suffragists, against fifteen who are not.

The lack of honour in men in their dealings with women has had an inevitable and melancholy effect. Women see more of men in their relations to themselves than to each other, and consequently they have not an exalted opinion of their honour. They see the seamy side of it. If men could only have the "giftie" of seeing themselves as some women see them, they might be considerably edified. They would understand how superficial their honour necessarily appears. The morals of women have naturally been moulded by men (how could it be otherwise seeing their dependent position?), and if women have reflected the little honour that men have shown them, they are hardly to blame. The imitation may be sincerely unflattering, but men would do well to reflect that it is largely a matter of imitation.

Happily things are changing. Women are being brought together in schools and colleges. Honour thrives amongst those who meet on equal terms, and they are learning from each other what they failed to learn from men, the possibility of treating each other honourably. They have formed a code of honour as from woman to woman, resembling that which exists as from man to man. This code could hardly have been evolved at a time when women were isolated from each other under the control of individual men, who neither treated them with honour nor expected honour, as they understood it, from them. This honour among women and their growing *esprit de sexe* is a result of their emancipation. The effect upon man is admirable. Only those who hate superiority of any kind cavil at it. It is resulting in honour as between man and woman, a tendency which equality between them will consolidate. A man is beginning to see that woman is worthy to be treated honourably (he never realised that she was dishonourable because treated dishonourably), and there is a growing class of men who refuse to marry a woman with a lie in their hearts if not on their lips. The time of transition is a hard one, hard for the men as well as the women, but it ought to end in the stamping out of a great deal of immorality. It is as though many men and women had seen a vision of truth, and though that vision demands the wrecking of their own lives in the present, they are willing for the sacrifice for the sake of "the gleam."

LILY F. WARING.

When Is a Person Not a Person.

Mr. John Whitford is fully justified in thinking that it is far more difficult for women to give the rein to their ambition than it is for men. So much is this the case, that a writer in "T. P.'s Weekly" recently, reviewing the "Fingerpost" (which is a guide to the professions for educated women, every article being from the pen of an experienced pioneer woman) remarks that, after reading this book, he is forced to the conclusion that the successful woman has to possess *four* times as much brains and energy as the successful man. This may perhaps account for women, as a rule, showing themselves so loth to follow in the wake of the pioneer. In the course of the last two or three weeks I have met a chartered accountant and a surveyor of taxes, men who were both in a most favourable position for judging the prospects of women in my own profession; each had a daughter whom he was keenly desirous of articling to a woman accountant, and he was willing to pay a substantial premium for the privilege of doing so; yet neither one of these young women, though offered the opportunity of entering a new and promising field under the most favourable auspices, could be induced to hear of it, or to give it even a moment's consideration.

This sort of thing is far from encouraging, and we really cannot wonder if men are inclined to laugh at our pretensions; although, to be quite fair, I must say I know girls (unhappily not rejoicing in generous fathers), who would be overjoyed if they could command opportunities which their more fortunate sisters despise.

Can any of your readers tell me whether any woman has ever taken the degrees of Bachelor of Commerce or Master of Commerce of the Birmingham, Manchester, and other Universities, which are open to both sexes alike? I hear that women cannot be got to display any interest in these degrees, and hope it is not true.

I can assure Mr. Whitford that it is quite true that women are heavily handicapped in that they cannot place the magic words "chartered accountant" after their names, as this title seems to carry great weight with the public; though it is really very difficult to know why it does, seeing that the legal definition of an accountant is "one who has been admitted as a member of an (*i.e.*, any) incorporated society of accountants," *vide* the Revenue Act of 1903. A woman, therefore, may be a legal accountant, but cannot be a chartered accountant, which is absurd; yet, despite of this drawback, we still manage to get along somehow, and slowly but surely to pulverise prejudice. I have had reliable counsel to the effect that if two women were to apply to the King in Council, otherwise the Privy Council, for a Royal Charter for women accountants, so that they may be on exactly the same footing as men in the profession, it would probably be granted to them, as it is such a perfectly reasonable request, and the chartered accountants have unduly strained the spirit of their Royal Charter by making it stand for a male monopoly when such was never intended. I am fully prepared to take the bull by the horns in this way if I could command any support.

In reply to Mr. Whitford's question *re* women lawyers, the Law Society of Scotland has got it established that a woman is not a "person," and therefore cannot be admitted (*vide* Hall v. Scottish Law Agents), and the English Society takes up the same ground—*viz.*, that the Law Acts only refer to "persons." This being so, it is somewhat curious to note that everyone overlooks the fact that the penalties and punishments consequent on infringing any of these Acts, likewise attach only to "persons." Ergo, can a woman, not being a "person" within the meaning of the Acts, be proceeded against for infringing Acts which only relate to the doings of "persons"? It is the *reductio ad absurdum*, but being extremely desirous to ascertain what might befall the woman who should set up practice as a lawyer, I called at the offices of the Law Society in London recently, and after much difficulty succeeded in penetrating to the august presence of the secretary, to whom I offered the above conundrum for solution. I may say that the waving of a red rag in front of a bull was as nothing in comparison, and I was hurriedly shown out. (Also, I fear me, the hall porter got a severe reprimand for having suffered a mere woman to enter that sacred edifice.)

If I was more than satisfied. The superior person was completely floored, and he couldn't give any answer to my simple query, neither, I venture to think, can his Society furnish any answer. It is too hard, and they prefer to give it up, as the children say.

It would seem then, that a woman lawyer, being no "person," is immune from consequences, for I believe the Law Societies would perceive the wisdom of not raising any question on an issue where they could so easily be made to appear utterly ridiculous. Dread of ridicule is a very potent factor in determining action, and they, in common with the rest of us, have probably heard of that historic personage, who, with a fine feeling for effect, exclaimed, "Gentlemen, let us die, but do not let us appear ridiculous!"

It therefore remains for some enterprising and ambitious LL.D. or LL.B. to set up in practice amongst women as a "consulting" women's lawyer (for she could not, of course, eat dinners or appear in court for her clients), and to beard the Law Society; to impale it upon the horns of a very awkward dilemma, and delight us with the spectacle of seeing it "hoist with its own petard."

I have found that, because I advise women in regard to "commercial" law, which is an obligatory subject in the accountancy examinations, I get women coming to me at the rate of about one per week, for advice in regard to the marriage laws, (*especially international*), the guardianship of children, the making of their wills, or the question of separations, or other solutions of their matrimonial difficulties; all of which, even with the best will in the world, are quite foreign to my province; but a woman lawyer, well versed in all these matters, might reasonably hope to earn her bread thereby, and even, with luck, secure a little butter as well to spread upon it.

As a further illustration of how the ridiculous contention that women are not "persons" works both ways, I may mention that the male members of my Society (Certified Accountants) cannot abbreviate their title to C.A., as the only "persons" who are allowed to use these initials are the chartered accountants; but these latter gentlemen have elected to interpret the word "person" in their Royal Charter as not including women; therefore, if I, who am no "person," choose to put C.A. after my name instead of Certified Accountant, the Institute of Chartered Accountants, on its own showing, can have no grievance or ground of action against me.

E. AYRES PURDIE, C.A.
(Associate of the London Association of Accountants).

Why Women Need the Vote.

IV.—The Struggle for Existence.

The extent to which women have entered, and are entering, the labour market is very inadequately realized. Whether the fact is to be approved or regretted, it must be first recognized and understood. Statistics compiled by the Right Hon. Charles Booth show that in 1841 there were employed in a certain comprehensive group of trades 1,030,600 males, and 463,000 females; fifty years later (1891) the numbers were 1,576,100 males, and 1,447,500 females. Whilst the increase of men was 53 per cent., that of the women was 221 per cent. This increase is still going on. In 1901, in the same trades, the numbers were 1,652,422 males, and 1,762,445 females.

In the textile industries the comparison is much more striking. Taking the whole of the figures for 1904—*i.e.*, men, women and children employed in cotton spinning, weaving, and other processes—we get 326,609 females, and 195,422 males.

From time to time restrictive proposals are made which strike arbitrarily at the livelihood of thousands of women. Many years ago an attempt was made to stop women sorting coal at the pit-brow in the Northern mining districts, such work, it was declared, being "unsuitable" for women. The workers themselves, alarmed for their livelihood, sent a deputation to London to interview the promoters of the Bill in Parliament.

The robust, healthy appearance of the demonstrators and their spirited resistance to their own crushing out produced such an effect on the politicians that their attempt was abandoned. A similar crusade was started more recently against the nail and chain making industry, which was represented in a sensational paper as "degrading" and "unwomanly." Investigation showed the women engaged in the trade to be on the whole healthy, athletic, and contented, preferring their independent work at little forges in their own backyards to confinement in factories; the bars of metal used were reported to be rather thicker than lead pencils, and the labour not harder than washing or scrubbing, while the women pleaded that they were thus enabled to keep their homes and families under supervision. Again, there are philanthropists who are anxious to abolish the employment of barnmaids, seeing clearly the degrading and injurious conditions undeniably attendant on the trade, but less troubled by the injustice of depriving 100,000 fellow-creatures of a means of livelihood.

The above attempts may at any rate be ascribed to benevolent motives. Others, however, are still less justifiable. The flower trade would be generally conceded to be one specially suitable for women, a large number of whom are engaged in it. The better-paid and more skilled are employed in decorating houses for balls and receptions, between the hours of 8 and 10 p.m. It was recently decided to bring this trade under the Factory Acts, and as these Acts forbid women to work overtime, this artistic and better-paid designing work must, by this edict, be thrown more and more into the hands of men (foreigners, moreover, as Englishmen, for some reason, seem to have neither taste nor aptitude for the trade).

One more illustration—at present prospective—must suffice. The Rt. Hon. John Burns, in the enthusiasm of his crusade against unemployment (for men), has publicly declared that the labour of women, especially of married women, must be enormously curtailed; and not a few organizations of men—keenly alive to the benefit to themselves of lessening the competition of women—are clamouring for legislation in this direction.

The foregoing instances are cited, not primarily as grievances, but to illustrate the precariousness incidental to the livelihood of any class whose liberties and actions

are absolutely at the mercy of others. The extent to which it is justifiable to handicap the labour of adult women by "protective" legislation is a question on which women themselves are divided in opinion; but assuredly it is one on which they have a claim to a voice. Until this claim is recognised, women must be for ever on the alert, ready at any moment to initiate costly and laborious public agitation in defence of the livelihood of themselves and their families. C. C. OSLER.

In Parliament.

The Veto.

In the House of Commons last week the first of the Veto resolutions was passed, and the House proceeded to debate the second. The general tendency of the prophets is to say that the probability of an early General Election is receding, and some people are even found to suggest that this Parliament may live till 1911.

Prevention of Destitution Bill.

This Bill, introduced by Sir Robert Price, and consisting of 95 clauses and 7 schedules, was debated on Friday last, and not unnaturally "talked out." The debate was marked by a complete absence of that quarrelsome and spiteful feeling which is so largely shown on all occasions where parties have something to lose. Evidently all parties think they have something to gain by treating poor-law reform rationally, and the new electors—women—will certainly be likely to remember kindly those who made a serious attempt to grapple with poverty.

Mr. Belloc and Despotism.

In one of the interesting lectures with which Mr. Belloc delights the House, he said (Monday): "Wherever there was authority in the State, that authority must be checked somehow for fear it should get too widely divergent from the people it had to rule. In the mere despotisms of the world there was a check in the tardy violence of the ruled if ruled too unjustly." Fortunately there is yet another check in the tardy recognition by some of those with power, of the equal rights of the powerless, and this we hope to prove to Mr. Belloc.

NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

OBJECT: To obtain the Parliamentary franchise for women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men.
METHODS: (a) The promotion of the claim of women to the Parliamentary vote by united action in Parliament and by all constitutional methods of agitation in the country. (b) The organisation of Women's Suffrage Societies on a non-party basis.

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MISS BERTHA MASON (Parliamentary).

President:

MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

Hon. Treasurer:

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The Executive Committee.

If the Council's resolutions are to be carried into effect with efficiency, the work before us is indeed arduous, and will tax all our resources of mind, body, and money to the utmost; and not only those of the Executive Committee, but of all our Societies also.

One of the first items of machinery to get into order should be the Federations of Societies. The Societies should at once be getting into touch with their neighbours and arranging which Federation it will be best for them to join for purposes of organizing the work, and should then send up their proposals as soon as possible for the approval of the Executive Committee. No doubt in formulating these proposals many unforeseen contingencies will arise, where consultation with the Executive will be necessary and helpful.

The Executive Committee will as quickly as possible map out what it thinks will be convenient "defined areas" as a rough suggestion to the Societies for grouping. We presume that probably the Yorkshire group,

the North of England Society's groups, the Surrey, Sussex, and Hants combination, and the Birmingham and Midlands collection of Societies will arrange to form Federations in accordance with their present areas of work. We have also received a request on behalf of the Scottish Societies to approve of their forming one Federation, to which the Committee agreed at its meeting on April 7th.

It must be borne in mind with regard to these Federations that, under the new rules passed by the Council, Federations can be formed only of affiliated Societies—that is to say, that each Society belonging to a Federation of Societies must be directly affiliated to the National Union. It will be much easier now for small Societies to affiliate to the Union, because they need no longer cover a particular area of ground; but need be merely a collection of members signifying their adherence to the object, methods, policy, and constitution of the Union.

In a few days from this as possible copies of the new rules shall be in the hands of all the Secretaries of

Societies, and will, I hope, be passed on by them as quickly as possible to individual members of the Union. It was not possible to print them until the Executive Committee had passed the draft as being a correct transcript of the Council's decisions; but I am asking the Editor to find room for them if she can in this week's "Common Cause."

As I have already taken up so much space, I will not touch this week upon the vast and responsible work laid upon the shoulders of these Federations by the Council, nor upon the special work entailed by its resolutions passed on election policy.

We have no time to lose in getting into marching order. In July our half-yearly Council meeting will be upon us, when we shall want to report that all is in working order and hard at work. In October will come our first "Provincial Council," which, as you know, will be a conference composed of the Executive Committee and two members sent from each Federation. And who knows what may not have to be attempted between now and then!

Miss Whitehead has been appointed Secretary, and will begin work at Parliament Chambers as soon as she is free of her engagement to the London Society.

The new Executive Committee met for the first time on April 7th, and elected Mrs. Broadley Reid chairman; Miss Ashton and Mrs. Rackham were elected vice-chairmen; and sub-committees were appointed for Organization, Finance, Literature, and Press. Besides the officers, the following members of the Committee consented to serve on these Sub-Committees:—

Organization: Dr. E. Bentham, Miss Bryan, Miss M. Corbett, Miss C. Macmillan, Mrs. Broadley Reid, and Miss F. E. Rendel.

Finance: Mrs. Auerbach, Miss M. Corbett, Miss F. E. Rendel, and Mrs. Stanbury.

Literature: Dr. E. Bentham, Miss Palliser, Miss I. O. Ford, Mrs. Heitland, Miss Royden, and Mrs. Snowden.

Press: Miss R. Costelloe, Mrs. Heitland, Miss Palliser, and Mrs. Swanwick.

Miss Rendel has lately been acting as secretary, and the Committee expressed its obligations to her, as well as to Miss Dimock and Miss Ashton, who spent part of the Easter holidays in bringing order into the office.

This was very necessary work. The move from the old office in Victoria Street had to be made just before the General Election at a time of great pressure. After the election was over, the time of the Secretary and the other members of the staff was again fully occupied with preparing for the Council Meeting. The inevitable result was that the arrangement and furnishing of our new office had been somewhat neglected.

Miss Dimock and Miss Ashton seized the opportunity of having the rooms to themselves, and spent Friday, Saturday, and Tuesday of Easter week cleaning, sorting, packing, dusting, and putting everything in its place. Miss Ashton very generously presented the office with a chest for storing banners, and a cupboard. The result was a great improvement in the appearance of the rooms.

But a splendid opportunity remains for friends who wish to help to furnish the office. Another cupboard is wanted, and a good rug for the Committee Room, and two, or even three, clocks would be most valuable presents.

EDITH DIMOCK.

NOTE.—We regret that we have had to omit the rules for lack of space. We hope to find room for them shortly.—Ed. "C.C."]

The Council Meeting.

A local secretary writes complaining of the compression into one day's meeting of an agenda of such length and containing so much contentious matter. We believe that this objection was very widely felt and was completely justified. The Executive is aware of this, and it is hoped that in future more time may be given for discussion; but of course this will necessitate the Council sitting for more than one day.

A Pressing Necessity.

"It must be noted that the income has again been mainly derived from donations given in response to special appeals, of which there have been two during the year. The Subscription List is still under £500, a sum obviously inadequate to meet even the ordinary working expenses of the Union."

The above is an extract from the Hon. Treasurer's Financial Statement for the year ending October 31st, 1909, presented at the Annual Meeting, March 19th, 1910.

To raise the list to a level worthy of the Union, generous subscriptions are needed at once.

Already 10 friends have come forward with promises of £25 per annum for longer or shorter periods. It ought not to be difficult to find at least 90 others to follow this example without delay. If the policy and work of the Union are to be maintained and extended, it is essential that these promises should be secured, and the money paid into the bank before the end of June.

Who will help?

The Treasurer's statement also draws attention to *The Million Shilling Fund* recently opened, and an Appeal is now made to the affiliated Societies to do their utmost during the summer months to augment, and, if possible, complete, this fund before the close of the financial year in October next.

The Council, at their annual meeting on March 19th, passed a resolution calling upon its Executive and the affiliated Societies immediately to consider the possibility of running Women's Suffrage candidates in suitable constituencies, and to prepare the ground.

The Executive Committee have taken this as an instruction to be acted upon without delay, and they have set to work to break up and "prepare ground."

What are the Societies doing, and what are they prepared to do? It is a fair question. The Council has laid down a policy which implies expense. However willing the Executive may be—and they are willing—to carry out the instructions and wishes of the Council, they cannot succeed unless they have the hearty co-operation and the financial support of the affiliated Societies, who dictate and lay down the policy.

We can find the workers, the enthusiasm, and the zeal. Behind these we require, and must have at once, the funds necessary to the success of the policy.

In thus writing I am not unmindful of the splendid "special efforts" which have again and again been made in response to my special appeals. But work crowds upon us, and we know not how soon we may be confronted with another general election.

This is not the moment to stay our hand, to limit our work, or to close our pockets.

There is, I am convinced, money to be had, if only we set to work to get it. Let us during the next three months show what we can do.

(1) Will 100 friends come forward without delay with promises of annual subscriptions of £25 each? This will be good as the basis of our fresh effort.

(2) Will 100 friends who may not be in a position to guarantee £25 per annum promise £10?

(3) Will each of our Societies make it their "concern" now and at once to induce each of their members to promise in addition to what they already give—1s. per month to the National Union *Million Shilling Fund*? If it is quite impossible for a member to give a shilling, will she beg it from some friends?

I read somewhere that £100,000 of the Million Guinea scheme set on foot by the Wesleyan Church was simply collected on one day by every member doing something.

If all members of the Union will do something according to their means beyond and in addition to what they are already doing, the funds required will be raised.

May I again press for immediate action. "He gives twice who gives quickly." The need of the hour is funds, and for these I now plead.

Contributions should be sent to the Treasurer, National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies' Office, Parliament Chambers, Great Smith Street, London, S.W.
BERTHA MASON, Treasurer.

married women to work for payment should not be restricted by law... Miss Hooper dealt chiefly with the case of women teachers and women working in the factory...

The discussion was very keen and the resolution was carried, and Miss Newbiggin's point—that any attempt to legislate on this subject before the enfranchisement of women was not to be tolerated—was loudly cheered.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

On April 6th, by the kind invitation of Sir William and Miss Power, we had an afternoon drawing-room meeting and tea, for members, at Kilmore, Broadwater Down.

Mrs. Upton Davis and Mrs. Mackintosh, our delegates to the recent Council meeting in London, both gave us interesting and graphic accounts of it.

Madame Grand moved a vote of sympathy with the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Tattershall Dodd, on her long convalescence, which was cordially endorsed.

YORKSHIRE ORGANIZATION—WAKEFIELD.

A very successful and well-attended public meeting has been held in the Music Saloon on Friday, the 8th. Mrs. Grosvenor Talbot, who had promised to preside, was at the last moment prevented by illness from coming to help us...

Forthcoming Meetings.

Table with columns for date (e.g., APRIL 14, APRIL 15) and meeting details (location, speaker, time). Includes entries for West Bromwich, Cardiff, Leeds, Wallasey, and various other locations.

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Reigate—Public Hall—At Home to Signatories of Voters' Petition—Sir John Cockburn. 8.30 Collington—Public Meeting. 8.0

APRIL 21. London (Blackheath)—Jobbin's Tea Rooms—Miss Sheepshanks. 5.0 Dublin—35, Molesworth Street—Miss Mason's Lantern Lecture. 8.0 Birmingham—Mothers' Meeting—Miss Gardner. 8.0

APRIL 22. Paisley—Small George Clark Hall—Lady Frances Balfour. 4.0 Uxbridge—Brookfield Restaurant, High Street—Miss Estelle Ross. 7.45 Edinburgh—40, Shandwick Place. 4 and 8

APRIL 23. London (Stoke Newington)—Library Hall, Church Street—Miss Palliser. 8.0 Birmingham—Bull Ring. 8.0

APRIL 24. London (Stoke Newington)—59, Springdale Road—Miss Cockle. 8.0 Aspley Guise—Public Meeting—Rev. Hugh Chapman. 8.0

APRIL 25. Edinburgh—40, Shandwick Place. 4 and 8

APRIL 26. London (Stoke Newington)—Library Hall, Church Street—Miss Palliser. 8.0 Birmingham—Bull Ring. 8.0

APRIL 27. London (Stoke Newington)—59, Springdale Road—Miss Cockle. 8.0 Aspley Guise—Public Meeting—Rev. Hugh Chapman. 8.0

APRIL 28. London (Stoke Newington)—Library Hall, Church Street—Miss Palliser. 8.0 Birmingham—Bull Ring. 8.0

APRIL 29. Letchworth—Pismore Institute—Mr. Baillie-Weaver. 8.0 Dublin—35, Molesworth Street—Miss McNaull. 8.0

APRIL 30. Harborne—The Institute—At Home—Miss Fraser. 8.0

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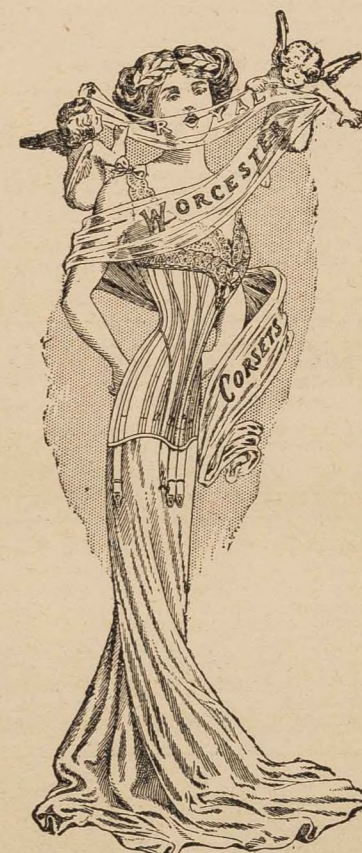
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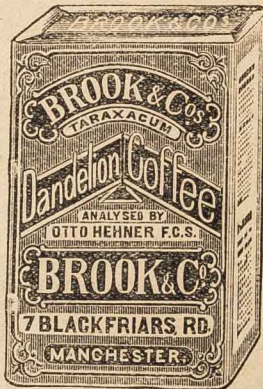
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