

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

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SINCE we last addressed our readers a most important practical step in regard to the political rights of women has been made. Although it was distinctly understood at the time of the passing of the Elementary Education Act of last session that it was framed on the principle of perfect equality between men and women, and that the disability of sex which had up to this period been held absolute in regard to all offices of public trust and responsibility, was to be utterly abolished with respect to elections under this Act; yet it was by no means certain that the country would be as liberal as the Education Department, or that the constituencies would be prepared to select women as their representatives in educational affairs. The innovation on established customs and notions was far greater than that which had been accomplished in obtaining the municipal franchise for women, or than that which was proposed in the Women's Disabilities Bill. Accordingly, in the discussions which took place in the newspapers and other exponents of public opinion, as to the character of the School Boards to be formed under the Act, were found recommendations to choose *men* who would do this, that, and the other, but hardly a hint as to the desirability of choosing women to assist in their counsels. And in every instance where religious or political organisations proposed lists of candidates in their respective school districts, these lists were without exception, so far as we know, framed on the principle of excluding women. More than that,—in many instances, not only was the negative principle of exclusion adopted, but positive pressure was brought to bear in order to prevent women from being brought forward, and in one case, that of Birmingham, the head-quarters of the National Education League—the pressure used was so strong that the men succeeded in stamping out the women's candidature altogether, and securing a monopoly on the board for themselves. But in other places women have not been quite so easily stamped out. Nothing daunted at their non-recognition by the electioneering organisations, they

appear in many districts as independent candidates, and fearlessly address their claim to the masses of the people, to be decided on its own merits. What the issue of that appeal may be throughout the country is unknown to us as we write, although it will be decided before this Journal can appear. But we do know the result in the first case that has been tried, and it fills us with hope for the rest.

The great constituency of Manchester has been appealed to on this question, and the response has been in accordance with that which it has ever given when the question has been one of justice to women. It has placed the woman candidate on the School Board by fifteen thousand votes. Among the names both of successful and unsuccessful candidates who stand below her on the poll are those of men who take a leading position in the social, political, and religious circles of the city. The foremost men in the district have competed for the distinction of a seat on the School Board of Manchester, and it is among these that a woman has found an honourable place.

The friends of women's suffrage would have had reason to congratulate themselves on this event even if the woman chosen had not been identified with their movement. They have, therefore, a double reason for rejoicing in the fact that the chosen candidate is one whose name is bound up with their principle, and whose opportunities for becoming known to and gaining the confidence of the electors of Manchester have arisen out of her advocacy of their cause.

Manchester has added another to the voices by which it supports the claim of women to a share in the government of the country. It sends three members to the House of Commons who vote for their admission to the franchise, it petitions for the same by an overwhelming majority in the City Council, and having thus pronounced in its favour by all its accredited authorities, it takes the first opportunity on a direct appeal to the people of confirming the verdict of its parliamentary and municipal

representatives, by electing a woman to a position second only in importance as regards influence on the welfare of the community, to that of a member of Parliament.

We regard the action of the House of Commons, in sanctioning the principle which the electors of Manchester have so speedily put into practice, as the natural sequence of the position taken up in passing the second reading of the Women's Disabilities Bill. We look upon it as evidence that the sense of the House, as regards the justice and expediency of admitting women to a share of public duties, was truly expressed by that division, and that the subsequent refusal to proceed farther with the measure was owing to the sudden pressure of a powerful and adverse influence. For afterwards, when that influence was neutral, we find the House of Commons willing to follow Mr. Forster in his proposal for the enfranchisement of women much farther than Mr. Jacob Bright had asked it to go. Mr. Bright limited his demand, both as to the parliamentary and municipal franchise, to that of elective functions for women. They were to have a voice in choosing representatives in imperial and local parliaments. Mr. Forster boldly asked the House to confer legislative functions on women, and it assented without a word of opposition.

The new legislative bodies established under the Elementary Education Act occupy an intermediate position between town councils and the imperial Parliament. They have power to interfere with personal rights, to impose pecuniary penalties, and to decide politico-religious questions which have been hitherto beyond the scope of any local legislature. For these important functions women have been deliberately made eligible by Parliament, and actually chosen by great constituencies.

If sex is not regarded as a disqualification for the absorbing, responsible, and arduous duties of a member of a School Board in a great city, with what show of reason or consistency can it be maintained that it should disqualify a person for the very humble duty of giving a vote, a duty, which, it has been well observed, is the lightest which a man's country can ask of him?

We shall perhaps be told with respect to the admission of women to the right to sit on School Boards, what we were told in regard to their admission to the municipal franchise, namely, that it must be looked upon as a legislative mistake to be avoided, rather than as a precedent to be followed. Are we then seriously given to understand that the House of Commons pays so little attention to questions concerning women that it votes without taking the trouble

to know what it is about, or to calculate the consequences of its decisions? Was the passing of the Municipal Franchise Act a mistake, the second reading of the Women's Disabilities Bill a mistake, and the third and greatest innovation of all, the admission of women to legislative functions, introduced by the government itself, yet another mistake?

If this is to be the answer given to women when they come next session and ask the House of Commons to follow out to their legitimate conclusion these three admissions of the claims of women to a share in the government of the country, by removing the disability which excludes them from the parliamentary franchise, they may well turn round upon their opponents and ask whether a Parliament which, on their own showing, has made three huge mistakes in dealing with the interests of women, is altogether fit to be trusted with the irresponsible care of those interests, and whether it might not mend matters if legislators were made to feel in some measure answerable to women outside, for the decisions in regard to them which are arrived at inside the House of Commons.

The Annual General Meeting of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage was held last week under the presidency of the Mayor of Manchester. The gathering was most successful, both as to the number and influential character of the audience and the quality of the speeches delivered. Both the Liberal and Conservative parties were well represented among the speakers. A full report of the proceedings is given in another column.

#### MANCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION.

The first contested election for a School Board under Mr Forster's Act, took place at Manchester, on the 24th of November, 1870. Miss Lydia E. Becker secured one of the seats. The number of electors who exercised the franchise was 26,513, each of whom might give 15 votes, and for Miss Becker 15,249 votes were recorded. An unusually large number of women voted. The city is divided into fifteen wards, of widely different area, and Miss Becker's vote was pretty evenly distributed, having regard to the varying size of the different wards. She obtained in New Cross Ward, 2,024 votes; in St. Michael's, 1,660; All Saints', 1,046; St. Luke's, 1,072; St. George's, 1,294; Medlock-street, 1,357; Ardwick, 2,202; and Cheetham, 1,113. The lowest number polled for her in any ward was 498 in St. James's. No organised canvass or committee was employed, and cabs were not hired to convey voters to the poll. All these powerful agents were busily engaged on behalf of other candidates. Miss Lydia Becker has the distinguished honour of being the first woman in this country, who has been elected to a seat on a legislative council by the suffrages of a great popular constituency, and the Mayor of Manchester, J. Grave, Esq., is the first official whose duty it has been to make such a return.

#### MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

The Annual General Meeting of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage was held in the Mayor's Parlour, at the Town Hall, on the 23rd of November, 1870. The Mayor of Manchester (Mr. J. Grave) occupied the chair. The parlour was completely filled, and the audience was composed, in about equal proportions, of ladies and gentlemen.

The Mayor, in opening the proceedings, said: Since the last annual meeting of the society it cannot be denied that they have gained decided ground, and that the voices of women were winning their way on to platforms, that their faces were oftener seen in serious assemblies, and that their names are now found on registers other than those which are kept at the Cathedral. (Laughter and cheers.) Besides the direct action which was taken by this association for the attainment of its object, there was no doubt that the cause was aided by many indirect influences. The successful efforts which women were making to compete with men in all the higher professional pursuits were perhaps the surest and quickest means towards their political end. In literature, women had lately displayed an astounding activity. In regard to science and art, they have eagerly taken advantage of the lectures by able professors, which the movement for the higher education of women had placed within their reach. But it was in medicine that their achievements had excited most attention, and in spite of every obstacle they have gained the day at Edinburgh and at Paris. To acknowledge publicly all this energy and genuine success was perhaps the best support he could give them. They all knew that when a lady set her heart upon an object, whatever that object might be, sooner or later she was sure to gain it. When therefore, an entire association of ladies set their hearts upon an object, who could doubt what the result would be? (Cheers.)

Miss BECKER stated that she had received letters from several ladies and gentlemen who had been invited to attend, apologising for their inability to do so. Mr. Peter Rylands, M.P., who was prevented from attending by an unexpected engagement, said he looked forward to giving his best support to Mr. Jacob Bright when he brought the question of women's suffrage before the House of Commons next session. Mrs. Fawcett wrote to say that in her opinion the friends of women's suffrage had every reason to congratulate themselves on the progress their cause had made during the past year. The position of the question had immensely advanced in consequence of the divisions which took place in the House of Commons on Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill. The admission of women to the municipal franchise continued to be of great service to the movement, and the candidature of women for School Boards was eminently calculated to further the emancipation of women generally. Mr. James Stuart wrote: "The more I daily see of women's questions, the more I become impressed with the strong conviction that the suffrage question is the most important of all." Letters had also been received from the Solicitor-General, the Earl of Morley, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Charley, M.P., and many others, expressing sympathy with the objects of the association, and regretting that they were not able to be present. Miss Becker then read the annual report, which has been published in another form.

The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL read the statement of accounts, which showed an income of £527. 7s. for the past year, including a balance from last year of £122. 8s. The expenditure was £452. 11s. 7d., leaving a balance of £74. 15s. 5d.; but, added Mr. Steintal, against this balance there were accounts owing which would completely swallow it, and he feared if their creditors were to be very pressing the society would be found insolvent.

Mr. W. ROMAINE CALLENDER, jun., in moving the adoption of the report, said that after the very able report to which they had had the pleasure of listening, and the thorough discussion which this question had received throughout the country, he thought that there was very little left for him to do but to congratulate them on those symptoms of coming, and he ventured to think not far distant, success which the report contained. The majority on the second reading of the Bill, the adhesion of 170 members of Parliament, the increased support which it had received on both sides of the House, were conclusive, not only that their cause was just, but that its justice was acknowledged even by those who would do all they could to postpone the claims which the society made. (Hear, hear.) He could not regard this question as a political one in the ordinary acceptation of the term. The Bill of last session was backed by Conservative and Liberal members of Parliament, and the majority by which it was defeated was composed of members of both sides of the House. He was sure the question was not intended, and he thought it could not succeed in altering the present balance of political parties. Our own municipal elections showed that, and he hoped that the very large number of respectable persons who were accustomed to look at all public questions through the distorted medium of scarlet or blue spectacles would lay them aside and discuss this question upon its own merits. (Hear, hear.) The claim of that society, so far as he understood it, was simply this, that every woman who occupied a house or owned property, paid taxes and obeyed the same laws as a man, should have an equal right with him to determine what those laws should be and how those taxes should be levied. (Hear, hear.) As by the recent Reform Bill parliamentary privileges were given to every man who was not either a lunatic or a pauper, how could they possibly deny to women that which they gave, it might be, to idle drunken fellows who might not happen to be criminals? (Hear, hear.) There were only three arguments to be brought forward against the enfranchisement of women. One was that they had quite enough to do at home to occupy their time, but that was simply the adoption of an old savage principle; secondly, that women could not understand political questions, and that surely seemed to be a modified form of the Mahomedan belief that women had no souls—(laughter)—and the third and most plausible argument was that by taking part in political life women would lose that modesty which was their natural characteristic and perhaps their greatest charm. These objections, he contended, were indefensible. The third objection seemed plausible, and perhaps deserved some respect, but he confessed he could not see its force. (Hear, hear.) The progress the society had made, the position which women had achieved for themselves, the partial success which they had gained and which they were using so well—all this he thought showed that the object of that society could not be long delayed; and in moving the adoption of the report, he expressed the hope that under the guidance of the member for Manchester, the Women's Disabilities Bill might soon become the law of the land. (Applause.)

Dr. PANKHURST: I have very much pleasure in seconding the resolution which has been so ably moved by Mr. Callender. The report itself contains a clear and valuable summary of the work of the past year, and it presents the programme of the future in plain and unmistakeable terms. It is obvious that those who oppose this movement have either gone too far, or they ought not to stay where they are. Undoubtedly, the present position of the question is full of logical and practical inconsistency. A Parliament that grants the municipal franchise to women can with no consistency whatever refuse to concede the parliamentary suffrage. Many of the practical argu-

ments in support of this movement, have already been so fully stated that I, with your leave, will address myself to the matter from the point of view of theory. And, first, I would say there never was a question of so great magnitude as this which, in so short a time had achieved such solid and substantial success. The movement itself in point of principle rests upon three principal propositions. The first proposition is this—that those inequalities, and those only, should exist in the status and relation of men and women which are created and prescribed by nature and the facts and necessities of human life. The second proposition is—that those inequalities which on this principle are found actually to exist, should not be converted by the force of law or the action of opinion, where they are advantages, into supremacy and privilege, and where they are disadvantages into dependence and disability. And the third proposition is, consequential from those two, and it is this—that therefore the action of law and opinion upon the relations of men and women ought to be perfectly equal and impartial. Equality of legislation is the root principle of the entire movement. What Horace says of the equal and inexorable stroke of death, which “*Æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas, regumque turres*”—ought to be true of the action of human law, whose fall and incidence upon the relation of human beings ought to be in the same manner equal and inexorable. Upon the basis of these three propositions, the practical movement presents itself—that men and women should be invested with and should possess equal political, legal, civil and social rights; that they should have an equally free access to all the advantages of education and mental culture; that they should have the same free opening to callings, and offices, and careers. If this is our position, both in principle and practice, what prevents it from being conceded? What is it that stops the way? Why the existing system of unequal legislation stops the way. And then, I ask, upon what is this existing system based? It is based upon three principal points. The first point is—the influence of the old system of force. The second point is the unequal system of laws; and the third is active, practical prejudice, which is produced by the former two causes. Now, just consider for one moment each of these three points. First, the influence of the old system of force. At the very beginning of the establishment of human society, as a matter of fact, men were found ruling by force, both over women and over all persons weaker than themselves. At the moment when law came into existence to regulate society, the law found this state of things in existence, and what it did was simply to sanction it. Therefore under the law the old state of things existed, with this difference, that while authority was formerly based on force alone, now it rested on force, together with the sanction of the law. The third thing arose out of those two. It is in the very nature of any institution to create an opinion in its favour; the opinion works upon the institution and the institution upon the opinion, and they mutually aggravate and intensify one another. And so to-day, though the old system of force has disappeared, though the law in many of its most gross inequalities is reformed, that state of opinion and prejudice produced by the old system of things exists still. And that is the principal object of our attack. The prejudice which has no reasonable foundation in the existing state of things, still remains, and invisibly but powerfully opposes any change in the law. Now what is to be substituted for these three things which I have named? Why, simply these—for the influence of force, the principle of justice; for the action of unequal laws, the doctrine of universal equal legislation; and for the existing prejudice we must substitute the state of feeling which justice and equality naturally produce in the human mind. So that here that grand principle

of the mutual action and reaction of opinion and institutions will still remain, but it shall be in favour of justice and equality. There is a practical form of the objection to which I have been referring which ought to be noticed, as revealing the very seat of the difficulty of our progress. You hear people say, “O, it is all very well, I have heard your arguments, and I have no answer to make to them; they are perfectly invincible in reason and in thought, but you know I cannot make up my mind to the idea of a woman doing this, and that, and the other.” Very likely he cannot make up his mind; but I ask you whether that is not, in short, the summary and substance of the principle of the objection to all great reforms and truths. There used to be people who could not make up their minds to the idea of the earth moving the sun. There used to be people who could not make up their minds to surrender the doctrine of the “divine right” of kings, in favour of constitutional and liberal principles. There used to be people who could not make up their minds to the idea of the emancipation of the negro, and the emancipation of all enslaved peoples, to the idea of the doctrine of free-trade or of non-intervention. There are in truth in the world two types of character and two principles of conduct. On the one hand, there are those who will insist on conforming the facts of nature and society, and the truths of human life, to their own prepossessions and opinions; on the other hand, there are those who insist that it is not our business to do anything but ascertain and obey the facts; and if in that process of discovery and obedience some disagreeable shock be given to our feelings and impressions, yet it is still our duty to find out what the truth is, to conform our opinions to the truth, and not adopt the contrary process of obliging truth to conform to our prepossessions. Therefore it is that the principal object of our attack and the principal source of our difficulty is the existence of a prejudice and a predisposition which is founded in unreality and in untruth, and our business is to substitute for these prejudices and prepossessions a state of feeling and an order of sentiment founded upon the facts and the realities of human nature. It may be asked—what do we expect to gain from such a movement? We have these things to gain; first of all, we are putting a great human relation on the basis of truth; secondly, we are increasing the material good of the world in the opening up careers of activity and energy; and we increase the quantity of moral good in the world by giving to all human beings a larger view of destiny and duty in giving them a free development of their nature. And I say, further, that we shall immensely add to the sum of human happiness in the removal of those repressive influences which keep down character, and prevent it being developed and formed into noble, excellent and useful types and adaptations. Taken as a whole, then, this is a movement in the direction of human progress and liberty. That is a sublime conception which presents the totality of mankind under the idea of one grand colossal personality—always living, always growing, always learning. This is a conception of humanity most true and most useful in results. If we look upon that figure in the course of history, we see how its life and energy have been thwarted and harassed and kept down by an infinite series of exclusions, of privileges and dependencies, we have also seen how that figure, in its march down the line of history, at every point when some fetter of privilege and exclusion has been struck off its limbs, has given a new burst of life and energy, and has presented itself with new hope and vigour. This movement is another of these contributions to the freedom of humanity; and when we join in breaking off from society the heaving chain of legal, political, and social inequality, we are helping to give to

humanity a time when, absolutely free emancipated from every inequality, it shall make a mighty bound forward into the future, stronger, and more ardent to do, everywhere and always, whatever works contribute to the progress of truth, of justice, and of charity. (Applause.)

The resolution was unanimously adopted. Miss WOLSTENHOLME moved, “That this meeting hereby expresses its earnest thanks to Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir C. W. Dilke, Mr. E. B. Eastwick, Colonel Sykes, Dr. Lyon Playfair, Sir George Jenkinson, and Mr. Muntz, for introducing and supporting the Women's Disabilities Bill, also to the 162 members of the House of Commons who voted or paired in its favour in the two divisions on the measure, and respectfully requests Mr. Jacob Bright and his coadjutors to take steps for the re-introduction of the Bill at an early period of the forthcoming session.” She felt that the committee had done her exceeding honour in permitting her to be the medium of expressing its gratitude to those gentlemen who, as members of the House of Commons, had fought women's battles in a field where women were not permitted to fight, and who had pleaded their cause where their voice could not be heard. They found men everywhere kind, generous, and self-sacrificing in regard to women, but seldom indeed did they find them just. Such were the circumstances of the education of men, the surroundings of their life, and so seldom was it that they were enabled to see the facts of life from women's point of view, that it needed on their part a rare power of large generosity, wide experience, sympathy, and deep insight to be thoroughly just towards women. But she regarded this action on the part of the gentlemen named in the resolution as proof that whether or not they had yet attained the idea of this perfect justice towards women they were desirous to do so. They were desirous to hear the voice of women on these questions, which most closely related to women themselves, to the society of which they were a part, and to the world at large. It was perhaps the more remarkable that they should find so many gentlemen acting as their champions in the class of society in which they found the smallest number of women taking the part of their sister women. For she asked them to remember that this was not a ladies' question, but a woman's question in the most emphatic sense. Again and again rich ladies said to them: “I am very comfortable and happy, I have nothing to desire, why should women make all this disturbance?” When she heard ladies say so she sometimes thought if they but knew how limited an experience of life they displayed in these words, how shallow and poor a sympathy—she was going to say how hard and cruel a heart—if they could but know the lives and circumstances of thousands of their fellow-women, born in poverty, left ignorant, uncared for, deprived of the means of industry, shut out from intellectual training, so far from saying they had nothing to do in this matter, they would tremble to be at ease, they would feel that they were their sisters' keepers, and that it was their duty to make their voices heard on their behalf. It was sometimes said that this country was the paradise of rich men. She did not think it was too strong language to use when she said that it was a fool's paradise to many rich women. It was important that the grievances of women should be expressed by women themselves, and that the claims on behalf of women should be preferred by women themselves. Those grievances were many, but they might be summed up in a few words. Women complained that they suffered severely from inferior and neglected education, both industrial and intellectual; from restrictions upon industry, caused by masculine monopolies; from unjust laws, both of inheritance and property; and, she might venture to add, that they felt deeply and bitterly the unrighteousness of the present law of marriage.

It would not be supposed that the gentlemen who voted on their behalf in the House of Commons last session would agree on all points of detail as to the means of remedying these acknowledged evils. Many of them differed materially upon such points, but all recognised the fact that women had a right to be heard, and that both for the sake of women themselves, and for the sake of society and of its most vital interests. Some of these evils called most urgently for immediate remedial legislative measures; others would never be remedied directly by legislation, but by those sweeter manners growing out of the purer laws which women were endeavouring to make possible. She had said that the men named in the resolution desired that women's voices should be heard not only for the sake of their own grievances, but for the sake of the reaction which would follow the abolition of these grievances upon the world at large. Society must gain where women gained. There were every year an increasing number of problems, half social, half political, in their character, in which the point of view of women was necessary to be considered as well as the point of view of men, or we must have unequal, arbitrary, unjust, impracticable legislation. At the present moment how important was it that women's voice should be heard. The voice of women everywhere ought to be the voice of peace, and to their influence it must be due if ever in the future we should arrive at that period of time when they should hear the “war-drum throb no longer,” when the battle-flag should be furled, and when

The common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

Women desired to hasten this time, and they chose first this medium of advancement because they found that political advancement was the most direct and sure way to social, educational, and all other advancement. They did not desire the rights they claimed for selfish reasons, but in order that through their exercise they might better serve mankind than they now could. To those ladies who were present she would suggest that their vote of thanks to members of the House of Commons who supported their movement was also capable of expression in a very practical form. Chiefly through the instrumentality of those members, and more particularly through the agency of Mr. Jacob Bright, women now possessed the municipal vote. It was their duty to see that that vote was steadily applied for the return of men who cared directly for the social welfare of the people; whose voice was not uncertain on any question of progress, or on any question either of liberty or justice. It was their duty also to make use of every advantage which through that municipal right they had obtained in voting for the election of members of the School Board. It was their duty to see that women should be returned to these boards, for without women such boards must be incomplete machines. The boards were supposed to take charge of the education of girls, but it was not possible that men should remember the girls in the absence of their natural representatives so fully as in their presence. It was not possible that men by themselves could arrange those matters of detail, both as to legislation and administration, which would be required from the managers of girls' schools. Lastly, they must pledge themselves to still further work in the next session of Parliament, and in asking their friends to take steps to introduce again the Women's Disabilities Bill they must be prepared to support them without as well as within Parliament. They must be ready with their petitions. They must make themselves heard by much pleading. If they could not induce the House to perform a simple act of justice, they must weary it into activity. (Applause.)

Miss ALICE WILSON seconded the resolution, which was unanimously adopted.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, M.P., who was cheered on rising, moved the appointment of the executive committee. He said that he had never before been asked to address so crowded and so earnest a meeting on this question as that which was now assembled. After the very admirable address which had just been given he would only say a few words. The report had told them that the Women's Disabilities Bill passed the second reading in the House of Commons—after a full and fair debate—by a considerable majority. He remembered that the next morning the London papers were not particularly startled at that event. They wrote with a good degree of fairness about it, and seemed prepared to reconcile themselves to that considerable change which the final adoption of the measure would have effected. Elsewhere, however, as they had heard, a very great fight by a very great power was made upon this question, and he, its humble advocate, was defeated. But when they say that, including the tellers, 96 members of Parliament registered their votes in favour of this question at two o'clock in the morning—after perhaps, one of the strongest whips of the session made by a government which appeared to be the strongest government which England had had during the past 30 years—it was a vote which might have been envied by any public movement which had taken place in the country for one or two generations back. If they were to ask how many persons on the first appeal supported the repeal of the corn laws, or the repeal of the taxes on knowledge, or how many even at the present day supported the Alliance movement, in spite of its great backing out of doors, he thought that everybody would admit that the success of the women's suffrage movement had been remarkable. They counted the numbers of their supporters, of course, and were always glad to have large numbers on their side, but they sometimes also looked at the character of the men who supported their movement. He undertook to say that the division, judged by such a test, was most influential. A few days after the defeat of the Bill, he was talking, in the lobby of the House, to a gentleman who had large parliamentary experience, and he (Mr. Bright) asked him, "How does this question stand, after what has taken place? How much better are we?" At that moment, Sir J. D. Coleridge was walking through the lobby, and his friend pointed to him, and said, "The very fact that you have got that man in the lobby with you, is a proof that this question stands in a very high position." They had the Solicitor-General of England; they had another man who deserved to be as much honoured in Manchester and Lancashire as any man who ever sat in the House of Commons—he meant Mr. Charles Pelham Villiers. And on the other side of the house he would only mention the names of two men—Mr. Russell Gurney and Mr. Liddell—whom he had often noted for their independent action. Setting party motives aside, they defended or attacked a bill simply upon its merits or demerits. Again, what were the constituencies which supported this measure? Manchester gave a unanimous vote in favour of the Bill. The three members for Birmingham had all voted in its favour, the two members for Brighton supported it, Bristol, Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Edinburgh, Glasgow, all gave. He did not say an entire vote in favour of the measure, but they gave it very considerable support. The history of political movements in this country showed that whatever these great centres of population had consistently supported, in the course of a few years—it might sometimes even take a generation—but before any very long period of time, inevitably become the law of the land. But when he referred to the members of the House of Commons who had supported this measure, there was one consideration which should not be entirely passed over. It was not remarkable to get a considerable support for a measure in the House

of Commons, if they had outside very powerful organisations agitating in favour of it who could affect elections and bring pressure to bear upon members of Parliament to vote this way or that. He did not suppose that there was an election in the United Kingdom that could be turned upon this question. Women had not votes, and therefore could not exercise much influence of this kind. The men who voted in favour of the Bill in the House of Commons did so because they held its principle to be so just that they could not vote otherwise. The society must of course work this question outside Parliament if they expected to have any success. During the last session there were 130,000 persons who petitioned Parliament in favour of this Bill. Next session that number ought to be considerably increased. This measure must mainly be carried, if it were to be carried at all, by the interest which women had in it. Did they feel perfectly safe, and in a perfectly satisfactory condition, being unrepresented? He had been told that some legislation which had recently taken place in this country—which had filled women with grief and dismay, and which, in fact, as he believed for the first time in our history, had made the women of this country positively hate its Government—had given women in every part of the country an interest in this question of the suffrage which they had never had before. At Plymouth the other day, as he had read in the newspapers, Sir Robert Collier, on being asked his opinion about that legislation, had replied that he knew nothing of the Bill, and had never seen it. It was the custom for the law officers of the Crown to be made acquainted with the acts which were brought into Parliament, and to offer their opinion and advice upon them; and if it were true that enactments so important to women and affecting their safety and happiness in so intense a degree could pass the House of Commons without the knowledge of the Attorney-General, he ventured to say it was time that women had votes, and that they exercised at least some moderate control over that assembly. (Cheers.) In the meantime, he regarded the agitation itself as of the greatest importance as affecting the political education of women. They had in every large town throughout the United Kingdom intelligent committees of women keeping watch upon political movements, noticing what took place in Parliament, and interesting themselves in regard to the education of women, and in everything which concerned their interests. He ventured to say, then, even if it should be possible—which nobody could believe—that the association should fail in the end to achieve its objects, the indirect results of the agitation would fully repay all the efforts which had been made. (Cheers.)

The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL seconded the resolution. He said the speeches had, to a very large extent, dealt with the subject as a woman's question specially; and that speech which he should certainly look upon as the most eloquent of the day—Miss Wolstenholme's—had also dealt to a large extent, with this part of the question. But Miss Wolstenholme had put forward one great point which it was well should be borne in mind. She had called attention to the great reaction the admission of women to the franchise would have upon society at large, and he believed her statement could well be borne out from the experience of all history. No class was benefited by promoting injustice against another, and the whole community would be benefited, as raised to a higher position, as soon as men learned to be just to women, and practised what they had learnt. Mr. Steintal concluded by making an earnest appeal to the friends of the association and all interested in the movement to disseminate information respecting its true objects, and to contribute as far as they were able towards its finances, in order that the agitation, the necessity for which Mr. Bright had pointed out, could be carried out effectually.

The resolution was unanimously carried.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, M.P., having taken the chair, Miss LYDIA BECKER moved a vote of thanks to the Mayor for allowing the society the use of his parlour and for presiding. She wished to acknowledge personally the Mayor's great kindness to her whenever she had had occasion, as a representative of the women of Manchester, to appeal to him. She would like to include in the vote of thanks the whole of the City Council, as she considered that they had done great service by the manner in which they had entertained this question of women's suffrage. She hoped they would be again willing to press the claims of women upon the consideration of the House of Commons; and that next year the resolution to do so would be passed even without opposition. The Council now had in their constituency something like 9,000 women electors. But for the exertions of the society every one of these women would have been disfranchised in the election of the School Board to-morrow. She hoped that the women would feel that they owed something in this matter to those who had taken so much pains to procure the privilege of voting for them, and would show their sense of the value of the privilege in a practical way by appearing to register their votes.

Mr. W. R. CALLENDER, jun., seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

The MAYOR, in reply, said he was much obliged to them for the way in which the motion had been received. He thanked them cordially on behalf of the City Council for the compliment paid to them. In trying to obtain for ladies the parliamentary franchise, they were only endeavouring to extend the power now possessed by women in regard to municipal elections, which extension he felt confident the public would have no cause to regret.

The following paragraph has been going the round of the papers, and furnishes another instance of the confiscation of the property of an heiress under the existing marriage law. This would have been entirely prevented had Mr. Russell Gurney's Bill obtained the sanction of the Legislature:—

CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE OF A WEALTHY LIVERPOOL LADY TO AN IRISH COACHMAN.—The *Dublin Express* narrates the following extraordinary story: "A young lady of great personal attractions and immense wealth, whose father is described as one of the richest merchants in Liverpool, we are informed, arrived in Dublin on Thursday for the purpose of getting married to a coachman in the employ of a clergyman, resident in county Carlow. The bridegroom met the young lady on the quay, and conducted her at once to St. Thomas's Church, where they were duly married. It is stated that the young lady is mistress of the enormous sum of three millions sterling. It need scarcely be added that the marriage was a clandestine one. The bridegroom has since gone back to his horses, and the lovely heiress left on Friday morning for Liverpool. The marriage will no doubt be divulged at the proper moment."

#### MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY.

##### SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED DURING NOVEMBER.

A Friend.....	£50 0 0
Mrs. Lloyd.....	0 5 0
Miss Gough.....	0 2 6
Mrs. Daniels.....	0 2 6
Mrs. Carroll.....	1 1 0
Miss Egerton Smith.....	2 2 0
Miss Rose Hall.....	1 0 0
Miss E. M. Fraed.....	2 0 0
	£56 13 0

LYDIA E. BECKER, TREASURER.

28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

#### DISABILITIES OF WOMEN FARMERS.

The farmers of England include a very considerable proportion of women among their numbers. These not only labour under the disadvantages which are inseparable from their sex, but are most unjustly, not to say ungallantly, deprived of certain advantages which are enjoyed by their masculine competitors. The Royal Agricultural Society of England confers on its members certain valuable privileges. They can have their superphosphates and purchased fertilisers analysed at a nominal rate by the agricultural chemist to the society. They are protected from imposition in the purchase of oilcake. Their soils can be carefully examined. They can exhibit at the annual meeting under more favourable conditions than strangers. These advantages, strange to say, are denied to those women who are farmers, and hence the letter which appears in our Farm columns of this week. But it may be said, "What business have women with farming? It is nonsense to suppose a woman can farm successfully. In answer to this query, the report of the competition for the 100 guineas prize for the best-managed farm in the central districts of England may be referred to. It is published in the last number of the *Royal Agricultural Society's Journal*. Twenty-one farms competed for the honour. It was awarded to the tenant of Ash Grove Farm, Ardley, near Bicester, as showing the best example of good general management, productiveness, suitability of live stock, and general cultivation with a view to profit. The farm is one of 890 acres, 820 being arable and 70 pasture. 1000 sheep and 70 cattle are wintered annually. Cattle to the amount of £1200 is purchased yearly. The labourers work by piece work as much as possible, and no beer is given. The judges said the farm was an exceedingly good example of a well-managed one. But, though the Royal Agricultural Society have awarded the tenant the first prize, they refuse to second the honour by the advantages of membership, for the simple reason that—she is only a woman.—*The Field*.

#### THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

SIR,—You make an appeal in last week's *Field* for the Royal Agricultural Society, and ask, why do not farmers more generally support it? I ask why does the society reject women farmers as members? No woman takes to farming unless she has a vocation for it; whereas the dolt (man) of the family is generally considered good enough for a farmer. Therefore I believe that, although women farmers may be few in number, they bring in proportion more education and intelligence to the work than men. Yet, because they are women, they must not participate in the advantages of the "Royal." Why, merely because I am a woman, should I be debarred from sending my "bones" or my guano to Professor Voelcker to be analysed? I may get prizes at shows; no one refuses to buy my corn; no society, except the "Royal," refuses my subscription. Perhaps it is considered indelicate for a woman to be a "Fellow." If so, then let us be "Fellowes." Let us have "Fellows" and "Fellowes"—any way please to get us admitted, and we will cheerfully pay our subscriptions.

ONE WHO DOES NOT ADVOCATE THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN.

—*Field*.

During the past year there have been 299 petitions from Scotland, with 24,805 signatures, presented to the House of Commons in favour of the Women's Disabilities Bill, including petitions from the Edinburgh Town Council, other public bodies, and also from 20 public meetings.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS, &amp;c.

## ABERDEEN.

A society has been formed at Aberdeen in furtherance of all the movements connected with the amelioration of the condition of women. The following are the names of the committee:—

Mrs. CRUICKSHANK.	Miss MACDONNELL.
Mrs. GARDEN.	Miss RODGER.
Miss M'COMBIE.	Mrs. SPALDING.

Secretary: Mrs. BAIN, Ferry Hill Lodge.

## CHATHAM.

A large and influential meeting was held at the Lecture-hall, Chatham, on November 14th, to advocate the granting of the suffrage to women householders. The body of the hall was well filled by ladies and gentlemen, and among them were several of the working men in these towns who take an interest in all political movements. Mr. W. Knighton, LL.D., M.R.A.S., presided, supported by Mr. Moncure Conway, Mr. J. E. Howard, B.L.; Rev. T. Arthur, Major Evans, Mr. F. F. Belsey, B. J. Buckhurst, &c. In the body of the hall we noticed Dr. Steele, H. Newcombe, G. S. Mullinger, W. S. Mullinger, &c. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Moncure Conway, Howard, Belsey, the Rev. T. Arthur, and Mr. Buckhurst. The first named gentleman remarked that were women fairly represented we should seldom witness such tragedies as that now enacting on the Continent. Resolutions in support of the objects of the meeting were put and carried enthusiastically. A committee, consisting of the following persons, with power to add to their number, was appointed to take measures to support the Women's Disabilities Bill:—

Rev. T. ARTHUR.	Mr. C. R. FOORD.
Rev. T. ASHWORTH.	Dr. KNIGHTON.
Mr. F. F. BELSEY.	Miss A. YOUNG.

## DUMFRIES.

Miss Taylour delivered a lecture on Woman Suffrage, in the Mechanics' Hall, on November 24th. There was a good attendance. Miss Taylour was accompanied to the platform by Provost HARKNESS, who presided, Dr. M'Culloch, Mrs. M'Culloch, and Miss Burton, of Edinburgh. The lecture was warmly applauded. At its close,

Dr. M'CULLOCH said he had read a good deal upon this subject, and he had heard a great many arguments for and against. He went into Edinburgh to vote for the right of women to study medicine, and he heard two so-called learned Professors talk for two mortal hours against all the privileges that women claimed. One of them made an observation that he had often heard in these disquisitions, viz., that the female sex were inferior mentally to the male; but he was sure if those present had heard those two prosy twaddling learned Professors, and then listened to the silvery eloquence and strict logic of Miss Taylour beside them, they would have formed a very different opinion from theirs. (Applause.) He begged to move, "That the Chairman be requested to sign a petition on behalf of this meeting in favour of the Bill, to be brought into Parliament by Mr. Jacob Bright, for conferring the franchise on women who are householders and ratepayers, and to transmit the same at the proper time to the Member for this Burgh for presentation."

Mr. M'DOWALL seconded the motion.

The PROVOST asked if there was any counter-resolution, and none being proposed, he declared the motion carried.

The PROVOST then, amid cheers, conveyed the thanks of the meeting to Miss Taylour for her lecture.

On the motion of Dr. M'CULLOCH, a vote of thanks was passed to the Provost for presiding, after which the proceedings terminated.

## BAZAAR AND EXHIBITION IN AID OF THE FUNDS OF THE MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

It is proposed to hold a Bazaar and Exhibition for the above purpose at Manchester in October, 1871. The expenses of the agitation for the Women's Disabilities Bill during the coming session will be necessarily great, and whether it pass into law or not, a large expenditure of funds by the Society will be requisite. To meet this demand the Executive Committee have decided on holding a Bazaar, and earnestly request the aid of their friends in all parts of the country and all parts of the world to render the undertaking successful. The following ladies and gentlemen have already promised to become patrons:—Sir Thomas Bazley, Bart., M.P.; Lady Bazley; Jacob Bright, Esq., M.P.; Mrs. Jacob Bright; Alfred Illingworth, Esq., M.P.; The Hon. Mrs. Thomas Liddell; E. Miall, Esq., M.P.; Peter Rylands, Esq., M.P.; Mrs. Rylands, and others whose names will appear in future announcements.

We hope to publish in a future number of this Journal a list of ladies in different towns willing to receive contributions. Those ladies desirous of so doing are requested to communicate with the Editor of this Journal.

It is proposed that the contributions shall consist of two sections. 1. Articles for sale, the proceeds to be devoted to the funds of this Society. 2. Articles on loan, for exhibition merely.

Contributions of the following nature will be gratefully received:—Articles of plain and fancy work of all descriptions, for sale. Photographs, paintings, engravings, and other works of art, on loan or for sale. Curiosities, antiquities, and articles of *virtu*, on loan or for sale. Ornaments and articles of jewellery, for sale. Banners and decorations of all sorts, on loan. Ornamental plants, on loan. Perishable articles, such as fruit, flowers, and refreshments, for sale. Volunteer services in musical performances, and other entertainments. Laces, needlework, fans, and other products of women's artistic and industrial skill, on loan for exhibition, &c., &c., &c. Persons willing to contribute these, or similar things, are requested to notify such willingness to the Secretary, and articles not of a perishable nature may be at once forwarded to Miss Becker, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER, 1870.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH.

Mrs. Butler.....	£2 10 0
Miss Barton.....	0 10 0
Mrs. Skerry.....	1 0 0
Mr. Thos. Thommason.....	100 0 0
Mrs. Embleton.....	0 2 6
Mrs. L. Behrens.....	2 2 0
Miss Jones.....	0 1 0
Mr. Carryer.....	0 5 0
Mr. Geo. Nutt.....	1 0 0
Mrs. Buckton.....	0 5 0
Miss H. Lupton.....	0 5 0
Mr. R. D. Rusden.....	1 0 0
Mrs. Haddock.....	0 5 0
Miss Rose Hall.....	1 0 0

£110 5 6

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.

107, Upper Brook-street, Manchester.

Communications for the Editor and orders for the Journal may be addressed to 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester. Price post free for one year, one copy, One Shilling and Sixpence; two copies, Two Shillings and Sixpence.

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