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Notes.

IN response to an appeal to men in *The Christian Commonwealth* of March 7th, to protest against the treatment of Mrs. Despard and the other ladies for a purely technical offence, an indignation meeting is being arranged, by a number of gentlemen. Speakers and other details will be shortly announced. Contributions may be sent to Mr. Dabs, 129, Clapton Common, N.E.

DURING the exhibition organized by the Women's Social and Political Union, which is to be held at Princes' Skating Rink, from May 13th to 26th, the bookstall will be undertaken by the Women Writers' Suffrage League. It is confidently expected that all writers of both sexes who sympathize with Women's Suffrage will contribute books, or money with which to purchase books, to the stall. In the case of well-known literary men and women, the books will naturally be of more value if autographed. Signed photographs of celebrated authors and authoresses will also be exceedingly welcome. Miss Bessie Hatton, the Hon. Secretary of the W.W.S.L., appeals for offers of help in the direction mentioned above. She also wishes especially to point out that no books or photographs must be sent at present; but she will be grateful to receive promises of contributions as soon as possible. All communications to be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, 15, Sandringham Court, Maida Vale, W.

THE Kensington Branch of the N.W.S.P.U. has launched—upon a most successful enterprise—that of shopkeeping. One window displays literature, "food for the mind," another adornment for the person—scarves, hat-pins, belts, and many other dainty things—all made in the colours of the Union.

THE N.W.S.P.U. are laying plans for a special summer holiday campaign which will cover all the holiday resorts.

Notice to Subscribers and Contributors.

Weekly Numbers, 1½d. a week post free. Quarterly Subscriptions, 1s. 8d.; half-yearly, 3s. 3d.; yearly, 6s. 6d. All Subscriptions must be paid in advance. Back Numbers can still be obtained at the Office.

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

The General Editor gives the widest possible latitude to each of the Societies represented in this Paper, and is only responsible for unsigned matter occurring in the pages devoted to general items.

'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE,'  
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80, Middle Abbey Street, Dublin.

**THE HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS SUFFRAGE SOCIETY** held a crowded meeting in the Small Ball Room, Royal Concert Hall, on March 13th. Dr. Flora Murray, the principal speaker, and Mrs. Strickland, who occupied the chair, both met with a most hearty reception. A petition to Parliament, proposed by Dr. Murray and seconded by Miss Lettice MacMunn, was carried with only three dissentients. The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to Dr. Murray for her able and stimulating address, and a warm appeal by Mrs. Burnier to every one present to come forward as workers. The response was all that could be desired. Most significant, perhaps, was a declaration by Mr. Charles Davidson that he would write at once to the Home Secretary urging the immediate release of two personal friends of his own at present in Holloway, and would place his vote, as a Liberal, entirely at the disposal of the Suffragists; and an offer from Lieut.-Col. A. R. Savile to help in any way desired. Many new members joined the Society, which is now for the first time, strong enough in numbers, energy, and enthusiasm to embark upon an active campaign.

**MR. GULLAND** is responsible for a Bill entitled the 'Law Agents (Scotland) Act Amendment Bill,' the object of which is to enable women to practice as law agents in Scotland. The Bill is backed by members who are opposed to Woman Suffrage as well as by some who are in favour of it. In Scotland a number of women have already taken the law degree.

**EXTRACT** from the Parliamentary news in the daily press:—

"Mr. Pickersgill (L., Bethnal Green, S.W.), raised several points as to the administration of the Act in London. As to the women's workrooms, he did not think Mr. Burns had dealt fairly with the women as compared with the men. It was said that the women's workrooms did not pay their way, but nobody ever supposed that they would. If they did not pay their way in cash they did in other ways. (Labour cheers.) He had visited these rooms, and he was satisfied that they were doing a very good work. If the President of the Local Government Board looked only at the financial results, he would remind the right hon. gentleman that the men's colony at Hollesley Bay did not pay its way; indeed, the loss on the women's workrooms was considerably less than the loss on the men's colony. He was afraid this was another instance of the disadvantages which women suffered through non-enfranchisement."

**ON** Thursday, last week, the Lord Chancellor received a deputation whose object was to ask that the appointment of a woman as a Lunacy Commissioner should immediately be considered. The Secretary of the Local Government Society considers that the Lord Chancellor's reply was sympathetic, and the deputation retired satisfied that, though they had received no pledge, their demands would be considered.

**MAY** we make a suggestion as to a practical way of helping towards the expenses of the paper, and of assuring its financial success.

We are grateful for the subscriptions sent by friends, but even these are not numerous enough to put *Women's Franchise* on a sound financial basis, nor to enable us to print additional pages, for much matter is each week held over for want of space. We are gradually enlarging the scope of the advertisement pages, and friends could greatly help in this by getting others to use our columns as a medium for advertising as well as for purchasing. A scale of charges and all particulars may be had on application from the advertisement manager.

**OUR** readers will find an advertisement of Farrow's Bank on our last page this week. This banking system should be of interest to all women, as the cheque book should

surely presage in some degree their coming economic emancipation. At the "Women of all Nations" Exhibition in September next a branch of Farrow's Bank is to be opened which will be entirely managed and worked by women.

**OWING** to the generosity of Mrs. Fels we are this week enabled to extend the number of our pages to sixteen.

### Meeting at Windsor.

**ON** Wednesday, March 10th, Miss Abadam addressed two invitation meetings at Windsor. Great interest in the question of the enfranchisement of women had been aroused in the neighbourhood by workers who had called the meeting, and the response to the invitations was most satisfactory. Miss Abadam's address was followed with deep interest and enthusiasm. The Vicar of Windsor was expected to take the chair at the men's meeting, but being unavoidably absent through illness, his place was filled by the Head Master of Eton, who is a member of the local society and a vice-president of the London Society. The subject was 'The Vote as a Moral Lever.' Miss Abadam dealt with two great national evils which make for the decadence of the race, and which must be stopped at all costs. This, she said, could only be done by striking at the root of the matter. These two great scourges were the Social Evil and Infant Mortality. There were many reasons why these terrible menaces to society were growing greater in the midst of our so-called "civilization." One of the most potent causes was economic pressure, brought about greatly by sweated industries. Industrial changes had driven women out of the home, but had not given them the full benefit of trade-unions or political protection. Women were working at skilled trades side by side with men, and yet it was difficult to find any trade at which they earned more than half, or even one-third of the pay given to men. These conditions were likely to continue and increase, unless the whole legal and political status of woman was raised. The demands of women to their representatives in Parliament seemed always to give place to those of the electorate. Oftentimes terrible stories of sweated labour came to light in the papers—shirts made at 10d. a dozen, tarpaulins, &c., sewn at 1d. an hour. Miss Abadam told how she once saw a young and pretty girl dead at her sewing-machine—dead from starvation and privation. The alternative to that life of starvation labour would have been a life of shame. It was the duty of every woman to realize the terrible price many of her sisters paid for their virtue. The proprieties resulted in a "conspiracy of silence," which might be condensed into one word, "Grundism." There are 80,000 women on the streets of London, and considering that the market value of one of these lasted on an average seven years, it was appalling to think of the new life which must be constantly inflowing to keep up these numbers. It had been said that Acts of Parliament could not make virtue, but they could at least make it more possible. These disagreeable facts must not be shirked, and it was the duty of all women to tear aside the veil of convention. Suffragists realized that equality in political affairs would make for morality, and that in a dual electorate moral questions could not be shirked. Infant mortality was one of the disastrous results of this social evil, a fact well-known to medical men and women. Fire-screens and orange-boxes would prevent 5 and 4 per cent of deaths, but what of the 45 per cent certified in medical terms as due to a "wasting disease." It was impossible for doctors to certify what they know to be the real cause, owing to the law of libel. Man-made legislation had not cured this state of things, and women, the mothers of the race, must see to it themselves. What had their "sweet influence" done as yet to solve these questions? If their life of "sheltered protection" was to balance the cost of those lives in want of protection, would it not be more truly womanly to throw aside the vaneer of "lady-likeness" and come forward as women strong with the desire and determination to right these wrongs? Woman was awaking to a sense of responsibility, and if she sacrificed privileges *plus* conventions, and bravely took her share in the regeneration of this England of ours, then, and then only, would she be truly a woman.

### Woman's Sphere.

**THOSE** of us who ask for the extension of the Franchise to women base our demand for it upon the principle that taxation and representation go hand in hand. It is always conceded that the plea is logical and reasonable in itself, but our opponents add that where women are in question the plea becomes invalid because women are naturally different from men. Those who oppose us are so anxious to press this very obvious fact that women are different from men—a fact which we have no desire to deny—that they appear to forget that after all, as human beings, men and women have also some important points of resemblance. For instance, if men can lay claim to have a voice in the affairs of the nation because they are constituent parts of that nation's life, are not women constituent parts of it also, and does not the same reason apply to them? If men have the right to a voice in shaping the laws of the land because their lives are affected by those laws, are not women's lives deeply affected by them too? If by the decisions of the State the lives of men are conditioned so that they have a right to approve or to condemn them, equally by those decisions are the lives of women daily and hourly conditioned for good or ill, and if to men life brings that experience which enables them to judge, does not life bring also to women an experience which teaches them what they must require of the State? For what I desire to press is this, that the ground of all legislative action is opinion based upon experience. If, then, experience is the basis of all legislation, by what logic is it that the experience of one-half the nation is ruled out? Can that legislation be all round and complete—can it make for the prosperity of the nation as a whole—when it ignores so large and distinctive a field of experience? Must it not rather be detrimental to progress and national well-being that the experience of women should not be organized and made effective in the same way as is that of men, and as it so easily might be? But let us turn to that other point that women are different from men, for is not this our strongest reason for insisting that they should have opportunity given them of expressing the distinct needs and views that that difference creates? If women were the same as men we might concede that men could speak for them; but, as it is, can we be sure that men, with the best will in the world, really know what women need? Do not men frequently say, especially when they are annoyed with some particular member of our sex, that it is impossible for any man to understand a woman? And in their more worshipful moods, do they not say, that "woman is a beautiful mystery"—which, of course, is very pretty, but, we may ask, is it possible to legislate quite satisfactorily for "a beautiful mystery"? or for a being whom, they acknowledge, no man can possibly understand? With regard to men themselves, it has not been thought that one class of men can speak for all other men, and it has been felt necessary to enfranchise different classes, in order that different interests may be represented. And this not merely for the sake of justice to the particular class, but because the prosperity of the country is felt to depend on the well-being of each class, which can only be attained by allowing each to express its particular needs. If this is true in the case of different classes of men, must it not still more be true when it applies not to a class, but to one-half of the nation, and that half one which is generally acknowledged by both to be different from the other. Must not the nation go lamely as long as the needs of one-half of it are not fully understood by the legislature—so long as the knowledge and experience of one distinctive part of the nation is shut out from the councils of the people? But our opponents would have us understand that the sphere of women is outside politics. Well, I would ask, What department in life is there that is not dependent on legislative action? Some people seem to think that women want to have the vote simply because men have it, just in order to say that they have got it. If these persons would only open their eyes and see that it is not the vote, but what the vote means, what the vote can bring. I overheard some persons discussing this subject the other day in a desultory manner. One lady was expressing her opinion that all classes of women needed the vote. Another lady laughed this aside, saying, "What good would the vote do to these women when they had it? *What*

*I say is, let them be taught to cook and to look after their houses, and to take care of their babies." I felt inclined to remark to her: "My dear lady, what does it matter what you say? The State does not care in the least for what you say, or what you think. What you say is very true in so far as it is very desirable that women should know how to do these things, and that they should have opportunity of so learning is a crying need; but don't you know that every facility for such a training of girls and women owes its origin to the legislative action of Parliament, and that every educational authority which has power to deal with this holds the power it possesses directly by reason of Parliamentary Acts? It is possible that men might think that women were born with an instinctive scientific knowledge of how to do these things just because they are women. Your experience teaches you better; but Parliament heeds you no more when you say, "Let them be taught how to cook and to manage their houses, and to take care of their babies," than if you were to say "Let them be drilled into an Amazon corps."*

But, again, we are told that the woman has nothing to do with the affairs of the State, for the woman's sphere is the home. Let us grant at the outset how much the home is to the woman, and how much the woman is to the home; but can there be any possible antagonism between the home and the possession of the vote? I do not wish to dwell now upon the number of women who have to leave their homes to earn their living, nor upon that sad number who are forced to work through long hours, and at starvation wages, and who have dwelling-places and families, and yet nothing that can be called a home. For the home-making instinct is in every woman's heart, and we shall not away with it, and the influence of women in the affairs of the nation would surely tend to bring about those conditions in which there should be more homes worthy of the name, homes which should be healthy and enlightened and happy, as it is the business of women to make them. But if the woman's sphere is the home, can that possibly mean that her interests are to be circumscribed by her own four walls? Except when this is brought forward as an argument against the Franchise no one for a moment supposes that the woman most devoted to her home has her interests so limited, any more than they would expect the busiest doctor to have no opinions on anything outside his profession. The whole trend of civilization has been to enlarge the field of women's interests. To-day she moves freely in the world; books inform her mind on every subject, the papers come daily to her hand; men converse with her upon political affairs, social, economic, and of European interest. Moreover, it is becoming constantly more recognized that those women best fulfill and enter into the manifold interests of the home whose intelligences have been most widely trained and developed, and who know and understand the life around them as a whole.

But what is meant by saying "The woman's sphere is the home, she has therefore no concern with the affairs of the State"? With what is the State concerned but with those affairs which make for the happiness and well-being of homes in the aggregate? and ought not the woman's view to be represented? When we talk about woman's place in the world, and woman's duties, let us be sure we appreciate the full meaning of the terms we use, and do not let sentiment degenerate into sentimentality.

Truly it is the woman's place to mind the babies, to care for the children, to train the young, to lay out the husband's or the father's earnings, and to supply the needs of the house, to nurse the sick, to see that the home is healthy, to visit the poor, to know their needs and to help them. But these are surface phrases, the fulfilment of which goes down to the very roots of life, and covers a vast and most important field of experience. The woman, too, must be interested in the world without, into which the boys and girls have to go forth and to live their lives, in which she, too, has to find her place. But has the State nothing to do with all these things? Has legislative action no part in forwarding or injuring them? And yet when such an important question as the prevention of infant mortality comes before the country, and the woman says; "Can I not have an authoritative voice in this? *I know,*" she is told, "Certainly not, your place is—to mind the baby!" When the question of education of the young, and of religious education is brought

forward, then she is told, "We don't want your opinion, your place is to see that the children are trained properly, and brought up to know right from wrong." If it is the taxing of goods, has she any voice in that which so much concerns her? Certainly not, she is told, "You go home and do the marketing." Or if it is imperial affairs, then she is asked, "What can a woman know about questions of war and peace? her place is to bring up the young to be brave and yet forbearing, to be ready to defend their country, and, if need be, to die for the right, and yet to avoid self-glorification at the expense of others; but it is impossible for her to decide upon such matters." If it is the housing problem, then she is told, "We can dispense with your views on this subject, what you have to do is to find suitable accommodation for your family, that all may be brought up decently and well—and thus learn if this is difficult or easy." And so it is the same all through. Whether it be questions of health, social problems, or care of the young, she is told, "It is your sphere to know all about these things, but we do not want your help in deciding upon them." Would it be possible for the State to call a conference on health, and then to say to the doctors, "You mustn't come, your practice is your sphere. Go back and look after your patients; we will settle this without you"? Or, if legal matters were to be considered, would it say to the lawyers, "You need not come; you must keep in your offices; your sphere is to look after your clients' interests"? Or, if it were a council to discuss questions of war and defence, would it say to the men who know most about them, "We don't want you; you have enough to do to drill and train your soldiers; we can consider these things without you"? But I need not press the point further, for it is only where women are in question that the experts are ruled out. And yet, at the bottom of every woman's heart, there is the sense that there are things crying out for her thought and her experience to help to set them right. Surely the woman who cares most for her own home cares most deeply for the homes of others. She whose sphere it is to care for the children feels most bitterly for the little lives that are daily being sacrificed. She looks around and she sees sweated industries, the struggles of the poor to keep a roof above their heads, children forced out into life under conditions that ensure that later they will be swelling the ranks of the unemployed. She sees a world in which temptations are thick, in which good is waging a battle to the death with evil; and, she asks, with a sense of the power and the knowledge that is in her, to be allowed just to co-operate with men in helping things along. Yet at a recent Anti-Suffrage meeting the lady who presided said they were met there to protest against women having the burden of the vote thrust upon them. Now you cannot trust the vote upon any one. No man, though allowed to vote, is obliged to do so—many men never do; but if at any time the man feels strongly on any question, then the power is there, and it is regarded as a privilege and not as a burden. But can you by asking people to spare you really set a responsibility aside? Because some one in your home is willing to exempt you from fulfilling your share of some duties, do you feel that your conscience is cleared thereby? I have quoted what one woman publicly said; let me quote what another said to me privately. She was one of those women who, with a charm of character and person, and great gifts of mind, possessed naturally that influence which is said sometimes to be all that a woman needs. She was one of those who was inclined to shrink from the responsibility of the vote, and had been at one time opposed to it; but she was also one who felt the deepest interest in the questions of life, and a great sense of her duties in regard to the needs of others. She said to me: "I have become a Suffragist at last, but not from any argument that I have heard used; you know how strongly I feel our responsibilities in helping forward the good of others, and as to fulfilling as citizens our duties to the community—well, I found that I needed the vote." And then she added: "It is because I am a good Christian that I am a good citizen, and because I am a good citizen I find that I need the vote; it is my Christianity that has made me a Suffragist." I have said that we base our claim to the Franchise upon a constitutional right, but I think that we women have never been very eager to press our rights simply as such. I think we have been, perhaps, too ready sometimes to let them pass us by with a smile and a shrug

of the shoulders; but when once we recognize that the good of others depends on our coming forward, and that to claim a right has become a duty, then standing aside is over for ever.

M. F. BASDEN.

### The Suffrage in Other Lands.

**DENMARK.**—The first municipal elections since women obtained the Franchise were held last Friday, and Fru Münter has kindly sent us an account of the results.

National Danish Woman Suffrage Association.

Yesterday for the first time women took part in the municipal elections. In Copenhagen 42 members were to be elected on the Citizens' Representatives Board; and of the 126,461 electors of the city, 95,319 recorded their votes: 7 women were elected. Of these 2 are Socialists; 2 (Mrs. Thora Knudsen and Mrs. Vibeke Salicath), both very capable women, were on the joint Conservative and Liberal list; 2 on the Radical list (Mrs. Harbon Hoff, a medical doctor, and Mrs. Arenholt, an engineer); while 1 was elected from a list which, in the last few days, had branched out from the Conservative and Liberal list. This circumstance was unfortunate, for it deprived two capable women on that list of seats. We have done well, though we have not quite taken a fourth part of the seats on the Council, as was done at Reykjavik in Iceland. The women were eager electors and often in the majority. It was a pleasant sight in the early morning hours to see the procession of husbands and wives go side by side to the poll. All seemed so happy to have the women taking their part in the elections.

As usual the Socialists had a majority of votes, and won 20 of the 42 seats. Their supremacy was in no way affected by the women's votes. In the neighbouring town, Frederiksberg, the Conservative and Liberal party defeated the Socialists, and the same thing has happened in other town and parish councils. On many of them no woman has gained a seat, on some there are one or two. The political question is considered the essential thing, no matter whether it is men or women who are elected. That, at any rate, shows a unity of standpoint between them.

JOHANNE MÜNTER.

Bredgade 34, Copenhagen, March 13th.

**ITALY.**—During the recent elections to the Italian Parliament women have for the first time helped in the canvass. The National Suffrage Committee, which under its energetic president, Donna Giacinta Martini, has made such rapid strides during the last two years, formed a special election sub-committee to question candidates as to their views on Women's Suffrage, and give active support to those who were favourable. Of the Deputies elected 19 have declared themselves in favour. The Committee is also trying to induce women to take a more intelligent interest in politics, especially in matters that affect the home, such as the enormous increase in the price of food, &c.

**FRANCE.**—The newly-formed French Union of Women's Suffrage Societies is now engaged in appointing its officers. Madame Schmahl, to whose initiation the Union is due, will be the President, and Madame Jane Misme, editress of the *Française*, Secretary. Among the committee are Madame Vincent, to whose energetic campaign the admission of women to the councils of Prudhommes is due; Madame Blanche Schweig, who has done so much for the organization of women's trade unions; Madame Blanche Cremnitz, Secretary of the *Union fraternelle des Femmes*; Madame Hammer, Vice-President of the *Ligue des droits des Femmes*; Madame Pichon-Landry, Secretary of the Legislative Section of the National Council of Frenchwomen; Madame Marya Cheliga; and Madame M. L. Compain.

The meetings will be held at the office of the *Française*, 49, Rue Lafitte, Paris. The next general meeting will be on March 20th, when the participation of the Union in the London Congress is on the Agenda. The subscription to the society is 10 francs. Men as well as women can become members. Branches in the departments will be organized as soon as possible. English Suffragists will all join in wishing success to the newest "National Union."

ALICE ZIMMERN.

### Then—and Now.

When Noah's Ark swam on the Flood,  
And gently bobbed the waves between,  
The women-folk were never heard,  
And only very rarely seen.  
They shared the space with sheep and kine,  
To steer the Ark they never sought,  
But said, with meekly downcast eyes,  
*Ye men approve it not.*

When Mrs. Shakespeare saw the works  
Her world-renowned husband wrote,  
She did not straight forget her place,  
And start to clamour for a vote.  
She starched his ruffs, she poured his sack,  
To read the plays she never thought;  
But, truly womanly, she said,  
*Ye men approve it not.*

### "THE OPPORTUNIST."

Reproductions of this  
Cartoon can be obtained  
from the Office of this  
paper.



When Florence Nightingale defied  
The instincts of the Saxon race,  
And, with divine audacity,  
Flew straight in Mrs. Grundy's face,  
They watched this forward female go  
To nurse the sick 'mid shell and shot,  
And murmured, through their pursed-up lips,  
*Ye men approve it not.*

And all throughout Victoria's reign  
One often heard the same remark;  
The women then wore crinolines,  
And kept their houses after dark.  
When some bold hussies studied Greek,  
Or, shameless, little cycles bought,  
They lisped, with sweet Victoria grace,  
*Ye men approve it not.*

And now? Well, things are somewhat changed,  
Society is more complex,  
Less primitive, we do not own  
Our deference for the other sex.  
Our lips are silent—but, alas!  
Doomed are we to our present lot,  
As long as in our hearts we say,  
*Ye men approve it not.*

A. L. LITTLE.

### By the River's Brink.

Oh, foolish Antis, kneeling by the brink,  
To watch the mighty river there below,  
Your little handkerchiefs were never made  
To check that current's flow!

Ah wherefore seek to poke with parasols  
The foaming crest of these advancing waves?  
Before we were, that river took its course,  
And shall roll o'er our graves.

Then cease, oh Antis, with your futile plaint  
To wake the echoes by the river's brink.  
Strength, freedom, life is in yon silver wave—  
Stoop down your heads and drink!

A. L. LITTLE

### "THE OPPORTUNIST."

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from the Office of this  
paper.

### Correspondence.

[The Proprietors of 'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE' do not necessarily identify themselves in any way with the opinions expressed by their Correspondents.]

SIR,—With reference to the matter of a badge which may conveniently be worn by all supporters of the Women's Suffrage Movement, may I advocate the adoption of a sprig of oak leaves and acorn? I suppose that few can doubt that one of the main reasons for the rapid spread of the Primrose League at its commencement was the attractiveness of its emblem, together with the memories and associations thereby evoked. What can be prettier than the green leaves and brown seed of the oak? What more suitable than the suggestion conveyed of self-reliant strength and of useful vigour, as well as of vast results from small beginnings? Already the Portsmouth Society has adopted this badge, and I commend it to the favourable consideration of other organizations.

I may add that we have been supplied with some quite beautiful sprigs of artificial leaves, with acorns, by the Cripple Girls' Guild, Sekford Street, E.C. Faithfully yours,  
JULIA M. A. HAWKSLEY.

Church Lodge, Portsmouth.

[We have had some specimen brooches made consisting of the words "Women's Franchise," fashioned by the "Wire King" of Brighton. These cost one shilling each, and have greatly delighted those who have obtained specimens.]

## Mrs. Fawcett and Mrs. Humphry Ward Debate.

SIR.—I have read with mingled feelings of amusement and amazement the report, in your issue of the 4th, of Mrs. Humphry Ward's speeches in the debate with Mrs. Fawcett on Women's Suffrage. Many of Mrs. Ward's allegations are not new, and those which are new are not true. The whole of Mrs. Ward's statements are devoted to prove that the granting of the Parliamentary Franchise to women is not necessary, and that if granted, the exercise of it would be dangerous to the community. I have looked carefully for any facts or arguments in support of either or both of those points, but without success. There are plenty of assertions, but no arguments and no statements of facts, and Mrs. Ward appears to be one of those possessed of the "Sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione, voluntas" view, and to think that the expression of her opinion ought to be regarded as conclusive. That there have been improvements in the laws relating to women cannot be denied: notably the Married Women's Property Act, of which, it has been recently stated, that men by a stroke of the pen gave up to women many millions. This statement is not true as a fact, for men did not give up to women a single farthing; they only gave to women the right of retaining their own property; and this was done partly because of the frauds that had been practised on women by men, and which the more respectable men would not permit to continue any longer, but largely on account of the effect that it would have of enabling men to protect themselves against their creditors, an object in which it has been very successful. It is not true that factory legislation was "conceived entirely in the interests of women"; it did affect women, but it did a great deal more for men than it did for women; and now the Factory Acts are being carried out, in many cases, in such a way as to turn women out of work, in order that men may be employed at men's wages in the place of the women at women's wages. Mrs. Ward is reported to have said that "the falsehoods on that subject—economic rivalry—told to factory workers at street corner meetings by members of the Women's Social and Political Union represented 'errors clad in lies.'" By common consent a large amount of license is always granted to poets, writers of fiction, and auctioneers; but it appears to me that a special license is required for the use of such a term, especially as Mrs. Ward does not supply any evidence in support of her statement, and I think that Mrs. Ward should either supply such evidence, or make an apology for the statement; for though I have read a great many of the speeches of the members of that Union, I have not met with any statement that is not in accordance with fact. Mrs. Ward speaks with contempt of Australia, and finds it convenient to forget—or probably she had never heard—that the Ballot Act now in force in this country was taken from the South Australian Act, which had been in operation in South Australia for some fifteen years before the Ballot was introduced into this country; and as this country has followed the Australian law in respect to elections, so will this country, before long, follow Australia in giving the Parliamentary Franchise to women. Mrs. Ward owes a deep debt of gratitude to the movement for Votes to Women, for it has afforded a splendid advertisement of her last work of fiction. Mrs. Ward sums up her case by saying that "the admission of women to the Suffrage would mean... the wholesale degradation of English public life," and concludes by saying that "Women's Suffrage would weaken the national vote by a political inexperience, a natural ignorance," &c. Mrs. Ward takes no objection to the illiterate voter, or to the fact that any drunken loafer who can make himself out to be a lodger or a latchkey-voter can exercise the Parliamentary Franchise; but the most highly-educated and intelligent women in this land are placed in the same category as idiots, lunatics, and felons, the last of whom can regain the Franchise after a moderate period of probation. It appears to me, therefore, that Mrs. Ward's prophetic vision has led her a good deal astray of all reasonable probabilities. I have seen the working of Women's Franchise in municipal matters both in this country and in Australia; and I hear from Australians that since the women have had the Parliamentary Franchise, several men, who had been regularly

returned to the local Parliaments, have found it necessary to remain in private life. I know that Australians have said that they would not allow their women to be treated as women have been treated in this country. In my opinion much of that treatment has been unlawful. If the statements made to me are correct, and I have good reason to believe that they are correct, many of the women have been—in Holloway—treated in a most unlawful manner; so unlawful, that if any of the persons aggrieved had brought an action against the Governor of the gaol, she would have recovered swinging damages. Again, the women have at several of the meetings been subjected to treatment by the "stewards" or persons acting as stewards that the lowest type of public-house "chucker out" would have been ashamed to resort to, and this was the case at the Albert Hall meeting. There is a well-known legal maxim, "Qui facit per alium, facit per se," and if some of the women who were so brutally treated at the Albert Hall had issued writs against Mr. Lloyd George or Lady MacLaren, the actions would have succeeded, and probably have taught a useful lesson. I am in favour of granting the Parliamentary Franchise to women because of the great changes that have taken place in nearly every line of life. Women have now to discharge important duties in the work-a-day work of the world, and they are entitled to a voice in the making of the laws by which they are governed, and a large proportion of which they have to carry out. I have asked myself, and I invite every male creature to ask himself, this simple question, "If the Parliamentary Franchise is given to women, what harm can, by any possibility, result to any respectable man?"

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,  
(Hon.) H. B. T. STRANGWAYS,  
Formerly Premier of South Australia.

## Confessions of an Anti.

SIR.—Since confessions are always interesting, I append four, made by Cheltenham Anti-Suffragists to members of the local Women's Suffrage Society. —

1. "We can't debate."
2. "We think we had better keep quiet."
3. "We have very few speakers at present."
4. "You have all the brains!"

No. 1 is too well-known to need mentioning. We always smash them at debates—when they appear—and, to judge by their recent meeting here, indeed, they "can't debate." One seldom agrees so completely with an opponent.

No. 2 is also granted. Much better! Not keeping quiet is apt to expose ignorance. Let them also destroy their leaflets, for nothing converts to the cause of Suffrage like Anti-Suffrage literature. A holocaust of it would do more for "Antis" than all Mrs. Humphry Ward's speeches.

No. 3. They know more about this than we do; but we willingly take their word for it, especially on the evidence of the quality of speakers on their platforms.

No. 4. A Suffragist would hardly have gone so far as to make this statement. It would have seemed rather vain and rude; but as the "Antis" of their own accord pay us such a compliment, we must accept it cheerfully. Besides, as in No. 3, they must know themselves best.

Thanks, "Antis"; I wish I could make you some pretty speeches in return; but never mind, a gift is better than a compliment any day, and we are going to make you a beautiful present soon, a present you have told us you will be glad to use when we have won it for you—the Parliamentary vote.

THEODORA MILLS,

Hon. Sec. W.S.S., Cheltenham.

[We trust some friend will make it possible for us to enlarge our next issue, as we still have many articles held over for want of space.]

## National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

MRS. FAWCETT, in a letter published in *The Times*, gives the following among other reasons for supporting Mr. Stanger's rather than Mr. Howard's Bill:—

"We know approximately the number of voters which this Bill would add to the existing register. A Parliamentary return recently published gives the exact number of women entitled to vote in England and Wales in county and borough council elections, viz., 1,009,092. If allowance is made for lodgers, freeholders in counties, and other minor electoral qualifications, and also for a proportionate addition from Scotland and Ireland (for which the existing register of male voters gives sufficient guidance), the total number of women added to the electorate of the United Kingdom by Mr. Stanger's Bill would be something between 1½ and 2 millions. That is to say, the present electorate of 7½ millions would become an electorate of from 9 to 9½ millions. It would give what all the Suffrage Societies unite in asking for, and it would relieve half the population from the ban of perpetual exclusion from a place in the Constitution without entailing the disadvantage of an overwhelming addition to the electorate. It would, moreover, give a fair proportion of representation to all classes; for to describe Mr. Stanger's Bill as one to enfranchise propertied women only is a serious misrepresentation. The vast majority, four-fifths at the lowest computation—some statisticians say nine-tenths—would belong to the working classes.

"A parallel to the untoward action of the promoters of Mr. Howard's Bill might have been found in, in a former generation, those who desired the removal of Jewish disabilities had shown their zeal by introducing a Bill to sweep away every then existing restriction upon the exercise of the Franchise.

"It is tolerably plain that there is no active demand for universal Adult Suffrage. Any steady man, however poor, can get a vote now if he wishes for one, and no man, therefore, is condemned to perpetual disfranchisement. There is a real and active demand for Women's Suffrage for duly qualified women. The keen interest in the subject is manifested in a thousand ways. Mr. Howard's Bill is not what we want, and the Suffrage Societies disclaim any part or lot in it."

Mrs. Fawcett concludes by hoping that "all Parliamentary friends of Woman Suffrage, of whatever party, will support the amendment, of which Mr. E. A. Goulding, M.P., has given notice, 'That the extension of the Franchise to women now disqualified on the ground of sex should precede the consideration of the further changes proposed in this Bill.'"

On March 10th, by invitation of Mrs. Mansel and the Hon. Mrs. Haverfield, a most successful meeting to advance the cause of Women's Suffrage was held in the Digby Assembly Rooms, Sherborne. The speakers were Lady Frances Balfour (who came from Bournemouth, where she had held a very successful meeting on the previous day), Mrs. Corbett, Miss Margaret Robertson, B.A., and the Hon. A. J. Thynne, formerly Minister of Agriculture for Queensland, and Mrs. Mansel kindly took the chair. The room was quite full, the audience numbering about 360. This was the first meeting on Women's Suffrage ever held at Sherborne, and the interest and sympathy shown were very gratifying. Questions, especially from "Antis," were invited at the close of the meeting, but unfortunately, two of the speakers having to catch a train, this interesting and useful method of instruction was brought to a premature end. Miss Lonsdale, a member of the Anti-Suffrage League, and a Poor Law Guardian, assured the audience—in a trembling voice—she felt sure she would never be re-elected on account of the actions of the Suffragettes; but what this had to do with the non-party and constitutional Women's Suffrage meeting was not quite clear to speakers or audience. As a result of this meeting a branch of the National Union is being formed, with Mrs. Mansel as President, the Hon. Mrs. Haverfield as Hon. Secretary, and Miss H. Parry Okeden as Treasurer. The speeches were lucid, and held the interest of the audience, especially that of Miss Margaret Robertson. The chief feature of Lady Frances Balfour's address was her fine defence of the militant tactics. At the close of the meeting a vote of thanks to the speakers was proposed by the Hon.

Mrs. Haverfield, seconded by the Rev. Canon Goodden, which was carried unanimously.

On the previous evening Miss Robertson addressed a village meeting at Bishop-Caudle, and though quite a small village, from 40 to 50 people turned up, in spite of the cold and damp, and it was satisfactory to note most of them were men.

A DEBATE on Women's Suffrage will take place in the People's Hall, Goodson Road, near Church Road, Willesden, on Thursday, March 25th, at 8 P.M., under the auspices of the Willesden Branch of the London Society for Women's Suffrage. The opener will be Mr. H. McKay; the opposer, Mr. Alex. Maconochie, barrister-at-law, a member of the Men's League to oppose Female Suffrage. The chair will be taken by Mr. James Gibb, M.P., and the admission is free.

## Debate.

UNDER the auspices of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies a debate was held at St. Peter's Institute, Wolverhampton. There was a large and interested audience. Mr. T. F. Crickmay, M.A., was in the chair, and after introducing the speakers, read the resolution which was to be discussed: "It is desirable in the interests of the State to remove the political disabilities of women by granting to them the Parliamentary Franchise on the same terms on which it had been or might be granted to men."

Lady Isabel Margesson supported the resolution, and Mr. H. W. L. Rumsey opposed it.

Lady Isabel Margesson, speaking in support of the resolution, said that the great difficulty which met all advocates of Women's Suffrage was that they had to fight not simply against argument, but against instinct, sentiment, and feeling. The fear that there might be danger to the home if the Suffrage were granted touched the deepest instincts of men; but it was really in the interests of the home that women claimed the vote.

The home is the woman's stronghold: her part is to bring up the boys and girls to be good citizens. Scientifically it is true that good mothers are essential if the nation is to have good sons. "The home is the mint of the nation." Women's work in the home proves her right to have the vote for a Parliament three-fourths of whose laws have to do with homes and house-keeping.

It is not so much the woman's as a national demand. Women have wits enough to use the vote without neglecting the home, and it is to the nation's interest that they should do so.

Then we want the vote for the sake of the women out in the world—the labouring women. If a Bill were introduced into Parliament on the lines of the resolution, 82 per cent of the women affected would be working women.

The question is asked, "Cannot men take care of the women and legislate for them?" One class cannot legislate for another. We want to help in legislating for ourselves. All that is now said against Women's Suffrage has been said against each additional extension of the Suffrage in other days.

As to the physical force argument that women cannot fight—well, if they are not in the fighting line they are behind succouring the wounded. But in civilized countries authority does not rest on force alone. There is no hard and fast line to mark the division between men and women, their work and their natures are interlocked.

We want the vote because there is no greatness without responsibility. It is a great responsibility to have the vote, but also a great educating force.

Mr. H. W. L. Rumsey opposed the resolution on the grounds that the Franchise was already too largely extended, and though the admission of women would not add to the proportion of incompetence, yet it would not alter it; so the increased numbers would be a disadvantage; that even in the present terms it would benefit more married women with property than working women, but it would not stop there, but would go on to Adult Suffrage.





Branch Notes.

MANCHESTER BRANCH.—At a weekly meeting held at 47, Mosley Street on March 10th, Mrs. Rhys Davids, M.A., gave a splendid address on 'Women in Ancient India.' Miss Farquharson, M.A., of Glasgow, who was present at the meeting, appealed for help and goods of every description for the "Green, White, and Gold Fair." She also appealed for the loan of drawing-rooms in which to hold meetings. Members please to remember the "Cake and Candy Fair" on Monday, March 22nd, which will include a little Anti-Suffrage play by the Misses Manning.

THE WEST SUSSEX BRANCH on March 10th welcomed Miss Turner to Midhurst on her return from Holloway, when the members organized a torchlight procession in her honour. This was headed by the banner of our branch, borne by Mrs. Cobden Sanderson and Miss Cummin, and accompanied by the town band. Five of our members drew Miss Turner in a carriage, kindly lent for the occasion, from the station to the Assembly Room, where a crowded meeting was held. The Hon. Secretary proposed, and the Hon. Treasurer seconded, a vote of thanks to their delegate for the services she had rendered. In responding, Miss Turner gave an interesting account of her recent experiences in London, and was then decorated by Mrs. Cobden Sanderson with the Prison Badge, after which the latter moved the usual resolution, which was carried by a large majority. Seldom has so much excitement been aroused in the neighbourhood, and it is hoped there will be a greatly increased interest in Votes for Women in consequence.

SALE BRANCH.—At Chorlton-cum-Hardy on March 8th a drawing-room meeting was held, which proved, both in point of numbers and enthusiasm, an unqualified success. Our hostess, Mrs. Hiller, made an admirable chairman, and Mrs. Nidd, as speaker, was at her best, which means that an hour passed like ten minutes. Eight new members were enrolled, and we were nearly sold out of literature. Mrs. Nidd was asked to address another meeting at the house of Mrs. Nicholson—Mayfield—on the 26th inst. A branch is in course of formation.

Acknowledgment is hereby made to the "Antis" who had so roused the ladies in this district as to make them most anxious to hear the other side. L. F.

WOLDINGHAM BRANCH.—The work of education as to the true meaning and necessity for Women's Suffrage is proceeding briskly among the inhabitants of Woldingham. On March 6th was held the second meeting since Christmas, organized by members of the Women's Freedom League, and they were fortunate in securing as Chairman Mr. Herbert Jacobs, Barrister, who is Chairman of the Committee of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage. The meeting was held in the Village Hall, under the very able management of Mrs. W. R. Snow and Mrs. Fisher, who had provided an excellent tea, and tastefully decorated the hall in the colours of the League, green, white, and gold. The weather was exceptionally atrocious, making it impossible for many intending visitors to get to the hall, but those who were present, and they were a goodly number, all showed how delighted they were and how deeply interested in the subject.

The speakers were Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett and Mrs. Marian Holmes, both of whom delivered most excellent speeches—the one impressing her audience by the brilliancy, the other by the strength and earnestness of her address. Mrs. Arncliffe-Sennett gave a most witty and entertaining description of her experiences in the police court, and both speakers dealt at large with the ethical as well as the political side of the movement.

At the close of the speeches, and after a few questions had been asked and answered, the following resolution was put by the Chairman, viz.,

"That the exclusion of women from the Parliamentary Franchise is neither just nor expedient." This resolution was carried with only one dissentient. An exceedingly animated discussion then took place.

The results of the meeting are decidedly satisfactory, several members of the audience declaring their wish to join the Women's Freedom League, and some of the men present also expressing their intention of joining the Men's League.

DESPARD PRISONERS' FUND.

Table with columns: Amounts previously acknowledged, Despard Prisoners' Fund, Brought forward, and Total. Lists names like Livingstone, Wright, Stansfield.

This fund will be open until March 31st. All those who have friends now imprisoned for the vote should use this opportunity of helping the League, and so thanking the prisoners. All sums to the Hon. Treasurer.

Cash Received March 7th to 13th.

Table with columns: Amount previously acknowledged, Brought forward, Total. Lists names like Anderson, Arklay, Bath, Bodmer, Bradfield, Central Telegraph, etc.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS. March 18th to April 1st.

Table listing events: March 18th (Holloway Gaol, Release of Prisoners), March 19th (Tintern, Parish Rooms), March 20th (Cheltenham, 41, Winchcombe St.), March 22nd (Manchester, 47, Mosley Street), March 23rd (Tottenham, Earlsmead Council School), March 24th (Glasgow Masonic Halls), March 25th (Holloway Gaol, Camden Rd.), March 26th (Holloway Gaol, Camden Rd.), March 29th (Birmingham, the Temperance Hall), March 30th (North Finchley, Stephen's Memorial Hall), March 31st (Cheltenham, Swansea, Albert Hall), April 1st (Manchester, 47, Mosley Street).

Green, White, and Gold Fair, April 15, 16, and 17. Suffrage Day, Albert Hall, Sat., June 19.

Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

OFFICE: 40, MUSEUM STREET, LONDON, W.C.

Telephone: 9953 CENTRAL.

Chairman of Executive Committee: HERBERT JACOBS. Hon. Secretary: J. MALCOLM MITCHELL.

Hon. Treasurers: GOLDFINCH BATE, H. G. CHANCELLOR. Hon. Literature Secretary: A. I. G. JAYNE.

Notes and Comments.

We would draw special attention to the announcements of coming events in connexion with the League. Every member who can possibly arrange it should be present to give hospitality to the International Delegates on May 1st, and there ought to be a good number at the debate with Mr. Norris on May 6th.

Great interest is being taken in the Open-Air Campaign, a report of which appears below. We desire to thank Miss Dalby for her gift of £1 towards the funds. A few more similar donations will enable the sub-committee to draw up a full plan for active work during the summer months. We shall want a large number of speakers: names should be sent at once to Mr. A. W. Holland at the League offices.

A number of our members were present at Mr. Asquith's Free Trade meeting in the Queen's Hall, and endeavoured to ask questions in the way of ordinary political heckling. One member, Mr. Baxter, attempted to ask Lord Avebury whether he might put an amendment. The only answer obtained by any one was given in the form of physical coercion by the stewards.

Mr. H. Baillie-Weaver made a brilliant speech at the Victoria Hall, Horley, on the 11th inst. We greatly wish his time were less occupied, so that he could help us more often on the platform.

Mr. J. Y. Kennedy will speak at the Stephen's Memorial Hall, Finchley, for the Women's Freedom League on March 30th.

Mr. Forbes-Robertson addressed a meeting of City men at the Cannon Street Hotel on the 10th inst. Other members who have spoken during the week are Mr. John Russel and the Rev. Canon Talbot. Mr. J. M. Mitchell is debating to-night at the Lyric Restaurant, Ealing, when Mr. J. Y. Kennedy will take the chair. Mr. Mitchell is at Haslemere to-morrow.

Mr. Victor Duval addressed a meeting of the North-West Ham Branch and the League of Young Liberals last Tuesday week. He insisted that no true Liberal could be opposed to Women's Suffrage, and pointed out how the economic position of women suffered by their exclusion from the Franchise. He also explained the arguments for the anti-Government policy, and showed how great had been its effect in helping to make the subject a living political issue.

Forthcoming Events.

On May 6th a debate between Mr. Alexander W. Norris and a representative of the Men's League will take place at the Holborn Restaurant at 8 o'clock. This debate is the outcome of a challenge thrown down by Mr. Norris in The Evening Standard of February 18th, and taken up by the Hon. Secretary some days later in the same journal.

Mr. Norris has stipulated that he shall not be called upon to discuss the question of justice, being prepared to admit that we have a strongish argument on that score. This stipulation has been willingly accepted, and the debate will therefore be confined to the question of utility, all references to justice being strictly out of order.

Full arrangements will be announced later on. It is, however, specially requested that members will make a note

of the date, in order that we may have a good audience. Smoking will be allowed, and various refreshments will be obtainable. Friends are therefore asked to bring as many male friends as they can, especially opponents. We gather that our opponent will direct part of his speech to proving that women are shown to be unfit as a body for political power by the way in which they strive to obtain it. We are not afraid of him on this point!

Tickets, 1s. and 6d., will be on sale as soon as all arrangements are made. As April will be a particularly busy month, owing to various causes, friends are specially urged to book their seats at once.

RECEPTION.—On Saturday evening, May 1st, the Men's League will give a reception in honour of the delegates to the coming International Conference.

OPEN-AIR CAMPAIGN.—Meetings in Hyde Park on Sunday, March 21st (chair, Mrs. Nevinsion) and 28th, 3 p.m.

An account of last Sunday's meeting appears below.

Branch News.

BIRMINGHAM.—We are glad to announce that a preliminary meeting with a view to the formation of a branch in Birmingham was held on March 11th. Details were held over for the time in order that a small committee might first take the opportunity of meeting Mr. Jacobs, who is speaking in the city on the 22nd inst.

Mr. A. W. Evans was appointed honorary secretary to carry out the necessary arrangements. His address is 19, Temple Street, Birmingham. Any of our readers who know of men in the neighbourhood likely to join are requested to send names and addresses without delay.

There is a very large number of prominent citizens in Birmingham who are known to be in favour of Women's Suffrage. Among the professors at the University, the Principal (Sir Oliver Lodge), Prof. J. H. Muirhead, and Prof. E. de Selincourt have already expressed their opinion in our favour.

Hyde Park in a Blizzard.

As we stood by the railing in Hyde Park last Sunday at 2.30 the driving snow was so thick that we were scarcely able to see the one policeman who was the solitary occupant of the oratorical arena. It needed a great effort of faith to give orders for the production of the platform.

However, shortly afterwards the speakers arrived, and at 3 o'clock, when Mr. Manson mounted the platform, there was an audience of about thirty, which rapidly increased till at one time there were probably four hundred people listening. After Mr. Manson had opened the meeting, Mrs. Nevinsion braved the elements, and made a brilliant speech, full of that spirited argument and humorous illustration which are so characteristic of her utterances. Several persons in the crowd vainly endeavoured to interrupt, apparently from the Adult Suffrage point of view, but the audience strongly resented their methods, and the chairman had little difficulty in maintaining order.

The other speakers were Mr. E. Duval, who was as forcible as always with an enthusiasm which no weather can damp, and Mr. Th. Gugenheim, who made his maiden speech very successfully.

According to a promise made at the beginning of the meet-





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