

Women's Franchise.

No. 8.

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Notice to Contributors and Subscribers.

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. Subscriptions for the weekly numbers to the end of September (1s. 3d.), or less, if back numbers are not desired, should be forwarded to the Publisher, 'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE,' 13, Bream's Buildings, E.C.

The Suffrage in Other Lands.

IN BOHEMIA the communal franchise law dates from 1364 and has never gone through the "reform" stage, which in so many countries has explicitly disfranchised the woman voter. Prague alone has a "reformed" franchise, dating from 1858 and limited to "male citizens"; in all other parts of Bohemia women are entitled to record their votes through a male proxy. In actual fact women ratepayers are variously treated by the authorities of the different towns. In one they are personally admitted to the ballot, in another they must choose a man to register their votes for them, in a third their votes are absolutely disallowed. As the Electoral Law of 1861 gives all communal voters the right to vote and eligibility for the Bohemian Diet, all women ratepayers not residing in Prague are legally entitled to the franchise. Hitherto they have made little use of this right; but now that the widespread movement for Women's Suffrage has made itself felt in Bohemia, organized efforts are being made to teach the women about their rights and duties, and encourage them to exercise their votes. It may be that at the next election some female candidates will appear.

GERMANY. Mention has been already made in this column of the declaration of policy recently adopted in the new programme of the National Council of German Women, in which the Suffrage was definitely accepted as one of its aims. Considerable activity has also been displayed by the German Suffrage Society, which now issues a monthly publication *Zeitschrift für Frauenstimmrecht*. Energetic preparations are being made for the second general meeting of the Society, which will be held at Mannheim on September 24th, and at Frankfort-on-Main on the two following days. The chief subjects set down for discussion are 'Woman's Suffrage and the Family,' 'Woman's Suffrage and Politics,' 'Woman's Suffrage and Conscription,' 'Friends and Foes of Woman's Suffrage,' 'Universal, Equal, Secret, and Direct Franchise.' The Society enters on the second year of its existence under good auspices. Branches have been formed in different parts of the country, and meetings held in a great many German towns. Of course the spread of the movement is hindered by the Association Laws, which differ in the different States, and are perhaps most stringent in Prussia. The Suffrage Society has appealed to all the branches to invite the co-operation of the Women's Societies in their districts in agitating on a wide scale for the repeal of the objectionable clauses. It is suggested that this should begin directly after the summer holidays, and that meetings should be held in every town in Germany, if not on the same day, at least in the same week, in order to emphasize more distinctly the universality of the protest. To make the meetings effective, the branches will hold some preliminary discussions, and by means of lectures and leaflets spread information about the existing law and the need of modifying it.

A. ZIMMERN.

"Six Nations Indians" in Canada under Woman Rule.

AFTER my first lecture on Lord Haiwatha at Eustace Miles Restaurant, I realized that a much wider interest exists amongst women of all classes and shades of opinion for a new ideal of thought which shall bear an influence upon the future.

In consequence of what has since taken place in London, although I am, racially, a unit in person and language in the midst of teeming millions, I do not feel alone. I have a wide circle of companions whose hearts are burning for a ray of light to come into their soul with a message of reconstructive hope for the good of civilization in general.

Madame A. L. Pogosny, a Russian lady of wide human sympathies, secured my promise to write for *Women's Franchise*. It is rather a strange coincidence that a Russian should see almost eye to eye with me on this great question of women's freedom, because some years ago, when I first brought my studies to public attention, almost the only man in Europe who showed any interest in my paper was Prince Kropotkin, the great Russian thinker and writer. Unless there is something in the nature of unconscious affinity brought about by some similar groove of social organism in the Russian middle class and peasantry I am not aware of, in connexion with the ideal of my own people, the matter is beyond my brain power to understand, so I must do so with my heart.

It is necessary that I should lay emphasis on the question of heart understanding here, at the outset, in putting forth a new ideal, because the entire cycle of thought, put into a nutshell, resolves itself completely in the inevitable laws of maternal instinct, and cannot possibly admit a fundamental principle being dragged into a controversial arena.

My Mohawk ancestry, though Christianized for something like three centuries, is the guiding impulse of my life. On the Six Nations Reserves in Ontario we lead the life of agriculturists successfully. We are physically and mentally above the average, as a whole, to that of any race known. This can only be attributed to the successful working of the *mother rule* idea, which has been a practical force amongst my people from time beyond recall. Indeed, we do not wish for a system tabulating events for future reference, but see in our children and children's children the replica of ourselves free and healthy.

The sacrifices made within the past century or more in matters which a more material loving nation would regard as a national calamity only made our people much more tenacious to the Mother Ongwe (mankind) ideal rule as the only security for our freedom, family life, and confederate cohesion to be relied upon. The tenacity of a Mohawk mind is proverbial, yet adaptable; for instance, on the point of his Christianization, he must have foreseen the creed side of the change, and to him such a step was a retrograde step, because it invited him into the arena of holy controversy which, with his seasoned ideal of Mother Ongwe conception of social democracy was a real question of *God within the man*, and not God o'er head, to the accompaniments of outward ceremonial, religious ritualistic manifestations. Seeing, therefore, the unfortunate side of Christianity, the Mohawk has since played, and does play, the part of defender of the Kanonsh'yonnih ideal; while he has remained a consistent nominal Christian, sympathetic to all the world.

Under the mother rule, there has never been any question of restrictive inter-marriages. The entire question of union rests with the woman, and all relationship is traced from her.

The population of the "Six Nations" being on the gradual increase is a sign of the practical effects of woman's control over a modern community with so-called primitive ideals as their standard of social faith.

J. OJJIATEKHA BRANT-SERO.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

OBJECT.—To obtain the Parliamentary Suffrage for Women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to Men.

The Union is a Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies in Great Britain.

President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

Hon. Secretaries: MISS FRANCES HARDCASTLE, M.A. MISS FRANCES STERLING.

Telegrams: "VOICELESS, LONDON."

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OFFICES: 25, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

The Union will send Organizing Agents, Speakers, or Literature to any place requiring them, its desire being to form a Women's Suffrage Society in every County and Borough. All persons interested in the movement, or desiring information about it, are requested to communicate with the Secretaries. Increased funds are needed for the growing work of the Union, and subscriptions will be gladly received by the Treasurer.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 1907.

Chairman—MR. WALTER S. B. MCLAREN.

MISS MARGARET ASHTON
THE LADY FRANCES BALFOUR
MISS FLORENCE BALGARNIE
MRS. ALLAN BRIGHT

MISS EDITH DIMOCK
MISS I. O. FORD
MISS ISABEL MARRIS
MRS. PECHAY PHIPSON, M.D.

MRS. BROADLEY REID
MRS. FRED RICHARDSON
HON. BERTRAND RUSSELL
MRS. PHILIP SNOWDEN

LADY STRACHEY
And the Hon. Officers,
ex officio.

Current Topics.

THE NEW BILL.

We feel that it is only fitting that we should give "pride of place" in our report this week to the new Bill which our staunch and indefatigable friend Mr. W. H. Dickinson "presented" to the House of Commons on Wednesday, August 14th.

Our hearty thanks are due to Mr. Dickinson for his determination to acknowledge no rebuff in his efforts to secure the franchise for women, and for the promptitude with which he has seized the first suitable opportunity to bring in another measure.

The earlier measure, which was "talked out" on the 8th of March last, is still on the Order Paper, hence the title of the new Bill, which is officially known as the "Women's Enfranchisement (No. 2) Bill."

It gives the vote to every woman who would be qualified if she were a man, and is in that respect conceived on the same lines as its predecessor. It meets certain of the objections levelled against the previous Bill.

It specifically prohibits the woman elector from going to the poll in more than one constituency: this does away with the plural voting objection.

It removes the disqualification under which married women have been hitherto, and further, inasmuch as most married women in this country have no qualification which would give them the right to vote of itself, the Bill provides that a married woman living with her husband in a dwelling for which he is qualified, shall have a vote in respect of that qualification.

In Mr. Dickinson's own words "it does away with the disqualification hitherto involved in marriage, but, in addition to that, as most of the women of the country would have no qualification to vote, whether married or single, it provides that the wife of a voter, if living with her husband, shall *ipso facto* be entitled to a vote on the strength of his qualification. Thereby we remove the objection raised against the former Bill, that it limited the vote to women of property. By this measure the wives of practically all working men would be entitled to the franchise."

The Bill is introduced at this period of the Session in order that it may be before the country during the recess.

Branch Societies.

DARLINGTON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY. Miss Helen Bayes, B.A., who has acted as Hon. Secretary and Treasurer since the formation of this branch several years ago, has on her marriage been the recipient of a handsomely bound set of George Meredith's works. The following inscription was inserted in each volume, "Presented to Helen Bayes, B.A., on her marriage by the Darlington Women's Suffrage Society, August 20th, 1907." Miss Bayes has by her geniality and devotion to the cause been the means of strengthening the work in Darlington, and has especially endeared herself to all the members of the society.

FLEET WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY. The Hon. Secretary of the branch at Fleet, Mrs. Kayser, The Garth, Fleet, R.S.O., makes an important suggestion. She writes: "There must be a considerable number of blind voters whose interest we ought to try to secure. Has anything been done to this end, by addresses to blind audiences in their schools, or through their libraries? I am copying R. F. Cholmeley's pamphlet 'Women's Suffrage' in Braille type, and shall be glad to know of blind people who would read it and return it."

HUDDERSFIELD WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY. The Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, August 29th, at the National School, Meltham. After tea, at 5 P.M., the necessary business of the presentation and adoption of report and balance sheet for 1906-7 and election of officers for ensuing year will be proceeded with. Advantage will be taken to have a picnic party and reception, and a very attractive drive has been arranged. The hon. secretary, Mrs. Studdard, will be glad to furnish all information, and members are invited to bring as many friends, new and old, as possible.

NORTH OF ENGLAND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY. During the holiday season, while indoor meetings are at a discount in Lancashire and out-door demonstrations are discouraged by the weather, we are quietly working to help the Men's League for Women's Suffrage to organize itself and enrol members in our area, and to strengthen our own financial position for the coming winter's work, which, beginning with a demonstration in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, on October 25th, bids fair to be a season of hopeful hard work.

EDINBURGH NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE. We are requested to insert the following letter from the Executive Committee of the above society, copies of which are being sent to women in all parts of Scotland:—

Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage,
25, Great King Street, Edinburgh,
August 17th, 1907.

DEAR MADAM.—The procession and demonstration organized by the Central Society for Women's Suffrage, and carried out in London in February last, proved of value in widening interest in the subject of Women's Suffrage, and in testifying to the public the earnestness felt by many women in the movement.

The Edinburgh branch of the Women's Social and Political Union, having suggested that a similar procession and demonstration for Scotland should be held in Edinburgh, we, as a Committee, have agreed to unite with them, and I write on behalf of the Committee to express the hope that you and many of your friends will make an effort to aid us in this popular demonstration by being present.

The date has been fixed for Saturday, the 5th October, and it has been arranged for the procession to assemble in the King's Park, and march from there by Regent Road and Princes Street to the Synod Hall, where a meeting will be held.

There will be carriages for those who prefer to drive.

In order to suit the convenience of delegates who have promised to come from Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, St. Andrews, Dunfermline, and other places, the procession will assemble at

three o'clock, and the meeting will be held on arrival at the Hall at five o'clock.

Our president, Miss S. E. S. Mair who will take part in the procession, has consented to preside at the meeting; and among others who will take part are Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Billington-Greig, Miss Christabel Pankhurst, LL.B., Mrs. Philip Snowden, Lady Steel, and Miss Lees.

Hoping to hear from you that you and others will kindly join us in the procession

I am, yours faithfully,

JESSIE C. METHVEN, Hon. Sec.

A few tickets for reserved seats in the Synod Hall will be sold at 2s. 6d. each and will be advertised some days before the meeting.

The honorary secretary of the procession committee, Mrs. Bell, 39, Comely Bank Place, Edinburgh, will be glad to receive donations for expenses.

OXFORD WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY. On the afternoon of Tuesday, August 6th, the Oxford Women's Suffrage Society held a special meeting at St. Hugh's Hall for students attending the University Extension Lectures. The speeches were to have been delivered in the open air, but this was found to be impossible, owing to the uncertainty of the weather, and the large audience, many of them foreigners, were provided with seats inside.

The proceedings were opened by the Hon. Mrs. Bertrand Russell, who was very warmly received. She pointed out that it was unfair and illogical to encourage women to take part in politics by canvassing or otherwise, and at the same time to refuse them the vote. It could only result in making them irresponsible and mischievous. She had been very much struck by a remark made to her by an American friend of hers, needless to say not a Suffragist. "Why," asked the lady in question, "do you want a vote when you can persuade five men to vote the way they do not want?" There could be no question that voteless women were a danger to the State. She asked for the vote for her sex that they might become better and nobler. She went on to show that Women's Suffrage would be beneficial not only to women themselves by helping the workers to secure better conditions, but to the community as a whole. They had been told, and with justice, that the home was woman's sphere. If she were given the vote we might reasonably hope for improvement in matters relating to the home, and home life, housing, the education of children, &c. Above all, if women felt they had a voice in the government of their country they would be far more likely to show themselves generous and public-spirited, and to bring up generous and public-spirited children.

The Rev. W. Hudson Shaw, who spoke second, commented on the great advance of the Women's Suffrage movement during the last two years, an advance which he attributed to the agitation carried on by the Political and Social Union. Some people might think the "Suffragettes" exasperating, but he did not doubt that they had used the right method with John Bull, who was proverbially hard to move. He feared all the same that women would not be given the vote in the next ten years, unless, perhaps, Mr. Asquith were to be removed to the House of Lords. The present high enthusiasm might give place for a time to apathy. They must not despair on that account. All great reforms had been subject to these delays, and they were sure of success in the end. He concluded by urging them to make the justice of their claim the one plank in their platform.

His vigorous address was listened to with keen interest, though it provoked a certain amount of criticism from his own supporters.

Miss Rhys, the hon. secretary of the Oxford Women's Suffrage Society, spoke third. She addressed herself especially to those of the audience who were unconvinced, and set herself to refute the stock arguments of the anti-suffragists.

She was followed by Mr. Kyrenius, a visitor from Finland, who described the working of Women's Suffrage in that country. As yet there were only nineteen women in Parliament, but he saw no reason why the number should not increase. So far the women representatives had not mixed in party quarrels, but had devoted themselves to legislation tending to improve the position of their own sex.

A discussion followed, which was closed by Mrs. Sheldon Amos. In her opinion enough had been said of the rights of women. She would rather dwell on women's duties. She urged all the women present to work for the vote, and after attaining it to make it one of their first aims to help the women of India. Their condition, especially that of the child-widows, many of them under three years of age, was terrible beyond description. After a vote of thanks had been proposed to the speakers, and the authorities of St. Hugh's Hall, the audience adjourned to the garden for refreshments.

GARDEN PARTY AT WIMBLEDON.

THE following fuller particulars of Lady Gibb's successful evening garden party are reprinted from *The Wimbledon Borough News*.

On Thursday, August 1st, at her house, by Caesar's Camp, Wimbledon Common, Lady Gibb entertained a large gathering of ladies and gentlemen interested in the Women's Suffrage movement, to meet Mrs. Fawcett and Mrs. Philip Snowden. After a short but delightful time passed in strolling about in the beautiful garden, Lady Gibb took the chair, welcomed her guests, and introduced the speakers in a few witty and amusing remarks, which greatly tickled her hearers, and put them on the best of terms with themselves.

Mrs. Fawcett, who followed, gave clearly and forcibly the case for Women's Suffrage, and dealt with the objections raised to it in a very convincing way. She showed how good the results of the women's vote had been in New Zealand and Australia, where politics had been raised to an altogether higher level, and where none of the evils predicted by those who had opposed the suffrage had arisen. She contended that when men and women worked together on equal terms, it made the women more keen for their duties and the men for theirs, and that political enfranchisement, far from making women neglect domestic duties, taught them to take a deeper and more intelligent interest in the care of children and of the sick, and in household and domestic economy.

Mrs. Snowden, with true eloquence, pleaded the cause of the enfranchisement of her sex vigorously and earnestly. Dealing with the objection often raised that the majority of women did not want the vote, she said that, even if that were admitted to be the case, it was no reason for not giving it to them. History always showed that no great reform had ever been demanded by the majority of the people, but that an intelligent and earnest minority had ever dragged up, almost against their will, an ignorant and careless majority. Some women, no doubt, had got to like the idea of being governed, and of not having to think for themselves, but that was really the strongest reason for giving them the vote, as their dependent condition had produced an inferior type of womanhood.

Answering the assertion often made of the power of women's influence under present conditions, she scornfully stigmatised what is usually meant by the "blessed word influence" as disgusting. It meant wheedling and coaxing—in plain language, the use by women of sex influence to get what they wanted. Reliance on this developed into something indescribable, and degraded women far more than anything else could do. Women should ask for comradeship, healthy, sane comradeship, and for the right to work together with men in politics, as in other ways. The movement was making tremendous headway, and the vote recently given at the election at Wimbledon was wonderfully good, and had greatly cheered them. In conclusion, she urged that the actual possession of the vote was not nearly so significant as the raising of the whole status of women, as, from the present condition of inequality, proceeded many of those immoralities of civilisation, which in so many ways we had to fight.

Councillor Satchwell having spoken strongly in support of the suffrage movement,

Mr. James Triggs voiced the gratitude of all present to the kind hostess, and to the speakers who had made so deep an impression on the minds of the gathering.

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Women's Social and Political Union.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

OFFICE: 4, CLEMENTS INN, STRAND, W.C.

Telephone—5550 Holborn.

Telegraphic Address—WOSPOLU, LONDON.

Hon. Secretaries: MRS. DESPARD. MRS. EDITH HOW MARTYN, B.Sc., 4, Clements Inn, W.C.

Hon. Auditor: A. G. SAYERS, Chartered Accountant, 19, Hanover Square, W.

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. W. F. PETHICK LAWRENCE, 87, Clements Inn, W.C.

Organizing Secretary: MISS CHRISTABEL PANKHURST, LL.B.

Bankers: MESSRS. BARCLAY, BEVAN & Co., 19, Fleet Street, E.C.

The W.S.P.U. appeals for the name and address of every Woman in the country, of whatever class or political creed, who is willing to unite and work actively for the removal of the present degrading political disability imposed upon women. The Union welcomes every helper, and needs a great staff of voluntary speakers and canvassers and workers, whose services can be organized in the ever-growing National Campaign, and who can assist in raising the Special Fund of 20,000, which is now needed to carry on and extend its present work.

Organizers: MISS ANNIE KENNEY. MISS MARY E. GAWTHORPE. MRS. M. BALDOCK. MRS. MARTEL. MISS ADELA PANKHURST. MRS. FLORA DRUMMOND, 4, Clements Inn, W.C.

The Movement Week by Week.

THE BURY ST. EDMUNDS ELECTION.

THE election campaign at Bury St. Edmunds is being carried on under very pleasant conditions. The town is interesting and picturesque, and the people accord us a very friendly reception. It was here that in 1215 the barons swore that they would force King John to sign Magna Charta. We tell the Bury electors we have come to seek their aid in wrestling from the Government of the day the women's Magna Charta.

On the day of our arrival in the constituency we sent round the two town criers to announce an open-air meeting for the same evening. As a result a large crowd assembled to hear us. Years ago Miss Lydia Becker and others held Women's Suffrage meetings here, but of late years the town has been unvisited by advocates of the movement, so that the question was new to most of our hearers. Although every one had heard of our active demonstrations and of our election work in other constituencies, the majority of the audience were unfamiliar with the arguments in favour of Women's Suffrage. Yet they had only to hear those arguments to be convinced of the justice of our claim to vote. The meeting was a complete success, and next day everybody in the town appeared to be discussing votes for women.

A similar meeting is held every night on the Cornhill, which is an ideal meeting-place. Several Liberals have attempted at question time to persuade the rest of the audience that our by-election policy is ill-advised, but our replies to their questions seem to be regarded as convincing.

It is interesting to notice that none of our opponents venture to attack the principle of Women's Suffrage. They all profess to be firmly convinced that women should have the vote. Question time is of course very interesting to the audience; they delight to hear us proving the hecklers to be in the wrong. In addition to this large central meeting, similar meetings are held on the outskirts of the town.

In the day time we are busy canvassing. The town consists of six wards, and our band of workers is accordingly divided into six parties, each of which takes charge of a ward. Meetings at street corners are held in the afternoons, and these are attended by the wives of the electors and by such of the men as are not at work. In addition we have dinner-hour meetings at the works gates.

We find that the women are deeply interested in the movement. Some of them have read in the newspapers of the imprisonment of women who claimed the vote, and they express their gratitude to those who are ready to make this sacrifice for the sake of women's liberty. They very much appreciate the meetings, and several of them assure us that they "glory in our spirit." That they are proud to see other women holding their own with men in the political field is very evident. We find that although the Liberals were defeated at the last election, adherents of the Liberal party are somewhat numerous. Mr. Yates has a strong position, and to reduce the number of votes given to him means hard work on our part. We feel hopeful of success, however, and we intend at any rate to deserve it.

NO TIME FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

It is well to draw the attention of those women who accept the plea that the Government have, as yet, no time to deal with Women's Suffrage, to the fact that time has been found to carry through the House of Commons the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. This measure is pressed forward, while the Government refuse to have anything to do with the infinitely more important and popular measure for Women's Suffrage.

It is quite plain that lack of time has nothing to do with the refusal of the Government to enfranchise women. When the Cabinet wish to legislate they have no difficulty in finding the necessary time.

AN EARLY DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

Critics of this Union have often said that in demanding the immediate enfranchisement of women we are making an unreasonable claim, since an electoral reform should properly be effected at the end of a Parliament. Now that certain Liberal organs are adjuring the Government not to look beyond the session of 1908, the wisdom of pressing for immediate legislation is apparent. Unless the franchise is extended to women next year, another General Election at which only men can vote is possible. Women suffragists must unite in demanding a Government measure next Session. If all the women now engaged in politics would for the next few months work exclusively for the vote, success would be certain. The members of the W.S.P.U. are determined, whatever may be the attitude of other women's societies, to insist with all their might upon votes for women being granted next Session.

CHRISTABEL H. PANKHURST.

Class Bondage and Sex Bondage.

Speaking in the House of Commons on August 6th on the Land Bill the Prime Minister said:—

"An order of things in which one class regulates the life, apportions the toil, and provides, or assumes to provide, the homes, and it may be on occasion the opinion of another class, that is a worse thing than a class war."

Substituting the word sex for the word class, the extract would read as follows:—

"An order of things in which one sex regulates the life, apportions the toil, and provides, or assumes to provide, the homes, and it may be on occasion the opinion of another sex, that is a worse thing than a sex war."

Perhaps those who still believe in the good faith of the Prime Minister where Women's Suffrage is concerned, can explain why he is so much more willing to act upon the first of these two propositions than upon the second.

Contributions to the £20,000 Fund

From Aug. 12th to Aug. 17th.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged	2,352	7	10	Miss Laura Richardson	..	..	0 0 0
Miss H. J. Polo	..	1	0 0	Miss Elsie Renwick	..	..	0 5 0
Miss Beatrice Harraden	..	1	0 0	Miss L. Morley	..	..	0 1 0
Mrs. C. L. J. Herringham	..	5	0 0	Miss Moon	..	..	0 0 6
Miss Ada Vachell	..	0	10 0	Miss Una S. Dugdale	..	..	0 2 6
Mrs. Deane	..	1	0 0	Collections, &c.	..	..	0 16 11
Miss C. Hamilton	..	0	5 0				
Henry C. Naylor, Esq.	..	1	0 0	Total	..	..	£2,366 14 9
Liverpool Branch, W.S.P.U.	..	0	5 0				

An Open-air Campaign.

THE London outposts have been extended to Putney and Barnes, and a new excitement provided for the good people there. In Putney every Wednesday and in Barnes every Friday for the last six weeks the proclamation of the new Evangel has proceeded, and the meetings, starting with the customary accompaniment of cat-calls and the usual effervescence of juvenile wit, have passed quickly through the intermediate stages of unintelligent opposition and honest misunderstanding, and become weekly gathering places for enthusiastic supporters of the cause.

The education of an audience in this way is not without fascination, and where one has so good a cause and so clear a case as the right of the women to equality in the State, it is not difficult.

Perhaps a little sense of humour is needed at times; it is certainly useful; and our opening meeting at Barnes Green I shall not readily forget. Dr. Jones and I had spent the afternoon canvassing in the district, and as the evening came on we seized the borrowed chair, and, planting it firmly near the High Street, Dr. Jones, with her customary self-possession, began to "address the audience." This "audience," rather unkindly epitomizing much of the opposition to the movement, for some time consisted of two fighting dogs, one perambulator, the occupant of which signified his disapproval in the usual way, and a drunken man, whose remarks, if good humoured, were highly irrelevant and somewhat incoherent. Meanwhile, I was collecting people from the highways and byways, and before long we secured a good attendance.

That was the beginning of the fight; the following week our audience got to the meeting place ahead of us, and never since have we had less than some hundreds. In fact in Putney we usually have some five or six hundred people. In both places we are finding many enthusiastic supporters, and the sale of literature and the collections are evidence of the lively interest evoked. As soon as the holidays draw to a close branches will be formed, and our operations carried further afield.

On Monday we reconnoitred in Highgate, and in Richmond the ground is being actively worked. Wherever we go we find the same conditions; no ill-will to the women, but an opposition due almost wholly to ignorance and mental indolence. Under these circumstances the utility of active personal propaganda is unquestioned, and with increased workers it should prove of no small service to the movement. Going through the districts and finding the people so sympathetic, so willing to learn, and, as soon as they understand the justice of our demands, so ready to assist, one cannot help being impressed by the splendid field for the movement London offers; in fact, to paraphrase Blucher, "What a city to convert!"

B. BORRMANN WELLS.

Scottish Notes.

THE procession arrangements have been settled now, and Mrs. Bell, who has been working so hard that one wonders how she manages to do these myriad things, tells me she hopes to know definitely by September 9th what our numbers are going to be. The Edinburgh branch is busy helping, and their Saturday meetings at the Mound are to be held through September also, to aid in the working up of numbers as well as for propaganda. Mrs. Sanderson of Forfar is speaker on Saturday 24th. The delightful feature of the work has been the way in which the National Society and W.S.P.U. have worked together. Miss Methven is helping with this. I do not believe one could appeal to Miss Methven in vain for help for any suffrage work. The Dunfermline National Society are helping there. In the west we have Miss Grace Paterson enthusiastically helping and acting as one of the conveners. It is especially delightful to have those whose long advocacy made our position and forcible actions possible, working with us for this national demonstration.

On Saturday I spoke at the Edinburgh Branch's weekly meeting at the Mound. Mrs. Grant took the chair, and we had a very large and lively meeting. There was some very excited heckling, one man sternly demanding to be told "What is a woman's mission?"—another, "What is a woman's proper place?"—conveying by his tone that his conviction was that it was not a platform. Others were exceedingly worried about the poor babies—what is to become of them, who is going to mind them? Others again expressed themselves greatly worried over our by-election policy, and one man asked, in grievous tones, if I thought our conduct at Westminster was "ladylike." One sensible man finished up things by asking the pertinent question, "Could the women do any worse than the men have done?" I heartily agreed that they couldn't, and the majority of the crowd seemed to agree. Mrs. Williams, Mrs. MacLeod Easson, and Mrs. Paterson were selling literature, and quite a large amount was disposed of.

Members of all our Scottish branches are busy collecting for our Scottish funds, and we are looking forward to having quite a formidable bank balance soon; but there is no fear of its being too large for our needs, which are many, and the hon. treasurer is always delighted to receive contributions—mites or millions—at 114, West Campbell Street, Glasgow.

The latest addition to our Scottish branches—Kilmarnock—has got properly under way. They held a meeting on Monday, at which they discussed plans and drew up rules. They have started a correspondence in the local press, and hope and expect to have the usual crop of objectors to dispose of, with their ancient "home" objections, and all the old, old story.

I see the local papers gave Mrs. Billington-Greig excellent notices and the good old penny-a-liner's adjectives "spell-bound" and "entranced" occurred frequently.

Dunfermline's Monday outdoor meeting at Abbey Gate, at which Miss Brand, M.A. (Dundee), was speaker, and Miss Husband (Dundee) took the chair, was a very successful one. On Monday my week in that district begins.

The Glasgow Evening Times wakened up the other night and discovered that we took part in by-elections, and were going to offer strenuous opposition to the Government's nominee at Bury St. Edmunds.

What we need here is a good lively by-election, not too far from Glasgow. England might spare us one, but "some people have all the luck."

HELEN FRASER.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

From August 21st to August 28th.

			P.M.
Wed.	Paddington, corner of Elgin Avenue and Waltherton Road	Open air meeting	8
	Putney, Weimar Road	Mrs. Borrmann Wells	8
	Dunfermline, Townhill	Miss Helen Fraser	8
	Liverpool, Waterloo	Miss Annie Kenney	3 and 8
Thur.	Ravenscourt Park	Open air meeting	8.30
	Liverpool, Crawford Factory Gates	Miss Annie Kenney	1.15
	Liverpool, Picton Clock, Wavertree	Miss Annie Kenney	8
	Cowdenbeath, Fountain	Miss Helen Fraser	8
Fri.	Barnes Pond	Mrs. Borrmann Wells	8
	Liverpool, Cope's Factory Gates	Miss Annie Kenney	1.15
	Edge Hill Sump	Miss Annie Kenney	8
	Lochgelly	Miss Helen Fraser	3
	Aberdour	Miss Helen Fraser	3
Sun.	London, Hyde Park	Miss C. H. Pankhurst	3.30
	London, Finsbury Park	Miss Irene Miller	3.30
	London, Victoria Park	Mrs. Borrmann Wells	3.30
Mon.	London, "At Home," 4, Clement's Inn	Mrs. Pethick Lawrence	4-6
	London, 4, Clement's Inn	Miss C. H. Pankhurst	8
	Dunfermline, Abbey Gate	Evening meeting	8
Tues.	Wolverhampton, Market Place	Miss Helen Fraser	7.30
Wed.	Paddington, corner of Elgin Avenue and Waltherton Road	Mrs. Sproson	8
	Putney, Weimar Road	Open air meeting	8
		Mrs. Borrmann Wells	8

BURY ST. EDMUNDS BY-ELECTION.—Meetings are held several times daily in various parts of the constituency. Speakers, Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Martel, Miss C. H. Pankhurst, Miss A. Lamb, and others.

Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

OFFICE: 38, MUSEUM STREET, LONDON, W.C.

Telephone: 9953 CENTRAL.

Notes and Comments.

We are glad to be able to make a preliminary announcement of a public meeting to be held under the auspices of the Men's League at Queen's Hall on December 17th. A list of speakers will be published in these columns at the earliest possible date, together with particulars as to tickets, &c.

This meeting will be practically the official announcement of the existence of the Men's League. Members and friends are earnestly invited:—

- (1) To notice the date and keep it free.
- (2) To communicate with the hon. secs. (on and after Sept. 1st), offering to contribute to the success of the meeting by selling tickets, acting as stewards, and making the meeting widely known.

The meeting will be open to both women and men, though we earnestly hope that the proportion of men will be larger than it has been at most of the meetings which have been held by the women's societies. It is confidently hoped that the speakers will include men of all shades of political opinion, and that party differences will be sunk in a genuine enthusiasm for the cause of Women's Suffrage.

Our members are ardently invited to assist the committee in the work of making the meeting widely known. The League is a comparatively small one to attempt so large an enterprise. Offers of clerical assistance will be warmly welcomed, and it is specially requested that such offers may be made in good time in order that the secretaries may at once organize the forces at their disposal.

The Autumn Campaign.

THE summer—to employ a somewhat trite euphemism—is gradually running its course, and the shortening of the days reminds us that we must, in a few weeks, return to avocations of a more productive character than those of the tennis-lawn, the river, and the moors.

With this recollection comes the determination to gird up our loins in the battle we have sworn to wage on behalf of Women's Suffrage. Let us once again unite in the name of justice and common sense, bent on setting forth before the minds of our fellow citizens the calm and sober reasons which are the foundation of the faith that is in us. It is the duty of the members of the Men's League not merely to stand by and applaud the enthusiasm of the women of the other societies, whose determination is beyond all praise from us, but rather to take a definite part in the work. This work—I take it—is primarily to show that a large and responsible body of masculine opinion is in favour of women's enfranchisement. There are many people who habitually decline even to think of any reform so long as its only prominent advocates are among the class with whose advantage that reform is immediately concerned. I would not say for a moment that this is the only work of men in this connexion. They must give of their brains and their money; they must sacrifice time and strength, first in studying the whole question in its most comprehensive aspects; secondly, in framing logical and convincing arguments wherewith to meet the most intelligent and the most stupid of their opponents; and thirdly, in seeking out the enemy in his lair and making him a friend.

But the duty of the Men's League in these respects is largely supplementary. The women are already in the field, and acquitting themselves with success. The peculiar duty of the Men's League is, as I say, to show the country that the

movement is heavily backed by those who have no personal advantage at stake. True men will, as we believe, benefit with the community as a whole by the recognition of women as full citizens. "The enfranchisement of women is the ennoblement of all." But the distinctive element in our position is that we are working to extend to others a privilege which we already have.

How is this to be done? In the first place, all those who are in sympathy with the movement should join the Men's League. Let none hold back for extraneous reasons. If we take the reasons which have been advanced, conclusive replies are ready to hand.

I am too busy (&c.) to join the League, and I don't like to join a society for which I cannot work. Now, of course, we prefer men who can give work, men who can speak, write, canvass for us. But even the busiest man can do a great deal by joining, even if his subscription be small. Firstly, the mere fact of his saying once or twice a month to his friends, "I am a member of the Men's League," is a real asset to the cause. Every man exercises a certain degree of influence, however small the area in which it operates. Secondly—regret it as we may—the numerical strength of any society like our own is to many people a criterion of its effectiveness.

I am entirely in favour of your principle, but I do not wish to do anything to embarrass the Liberal Government. This objection—a very common one—raises several issues of importance. We may ask whether under any circumstances a man is justified in withholding his support from a cause in the justice of which he believes, in the supposed interests of his party. We may ask whether a profession of support for Women's Suffrage can reasonably be construed as an embarrassment to a Government so many of whose supporters have publicly made that very profession. We may ask in what way the promotion of an essentially Liberal measure can embarrass a Liberal Government. But the fundamental argument against this objection is simply this. The great principle of Liberalism is that legislation should follow the expressed will of the majority. Presumably the present Government has abstained from officially adopting a measure for the enfranchisement of women primarily because it believes that there is not a majority in its favour. If this belief were shown to be mistaken, legislation would *ex hypothesi* follow without delay. Therefore, if it were known that a large number of Liberals were keen enough on the subject to join a league founded to promote its interests, a new and important datum would be supplied to the Prime Minister, who, as he has said, regards women's enfranchisement as desirable and necessary. It follows that the Liberal who remains silent is disloyal to his leader, by deceiving him as to his views on an important issue. Furthermore, a large number of representative Liberals have joined the League already, and this is in itself sufficient guarantee that no action hostile to the Government will be taken by the League officially.

I dislike your policy. Here again we are faced with an important point. Those who read the report of the general meeting of the League, held in the spring at Anderton's Hotel, will remember that the discussion turned almost exclusively on the question of tactics. The result of the discussion was practically an adjournment. Instead of two sharply differentiated classes, we now have a triple system, not of classes, but of registration.

For the information of the Executive, members are registered as (1) in general sympathy; (2) pledged not to vote for any candidate who is not pledged to Women's Suffrage; (3) pledged not to vote for any candidate supporting any Government which has not adopted a measure for Women's Suffrage. Now it is perfectly clear:—(A) that the League cannot officially adopt in any given by-election the policy

advocated by either (2) or (3), and (B) that the attitude of the League at a General Election must be discussed *ab initio* at the time.

The result is that, so far as elections are concerned, the League has no policy. It is purely propagandist. Whether this is right or not, is a matter of opinion. In any case the whole question must come up for discussion at the next General Meeting. It follows that all men who are in sympathy with the movement should at once join the League in order that they may have an opportunity of speaking and voting on the question of tactics at that meeting. It would be matter for profound regret if for want of proper discussion the League should embark next year upon an unstatesmanlike policy, and thus fritter away its forces in a blind alley of misdirected enthusiasm.

Lastly, I will join your League and give you money and work when I see you doing something. Let such a man ask himself how anything would ever be done if every one argued on this wise. I would say to him "Join us at once and help us to do something. If we are unprofitable servants, come and stir us to enthusiasm. Teach us how to work. Prove your capacity, and we shall receive you with open arms—nay, in process of time we shall resign in your favour and work under your guidance. We have the will, show us the way. Especially, join us at once and help us to make a success of our big meeting at the Queen's Hall on December 17th."

For those men who, though in favour of the enfranchisement of women, are still disinclined to join the League, there are other channels of activity.

Three kinds of activity at once suggest themselves. Approach your Member of Parliament, your political association, the proprietors of your daily paper. For some reason even the more sober and far-sighted of the leading newspapers are unwilling to give prominence to news connected with the movement. True, the sensational press floods its columns with "horrible details" of what it gracefully calls the "shrieking suffragettes at St. Stephen's." Such reports are essentially vulgar in the worst sense. Tactically the Westminster demonstrations may or may not be wise; the question is open to discussion. But by reports of this kind the gutter press merely succeeds in emphasizing its own abysmal degradation.

The better-class press abstains from such sensationalism, but at the same time it does its best to make light of the whole movement, by assigning to it the very barest mention. I was very curious to know what sort of effect the W.S.P.U. was producing in the recent election in North Staffordshire. In vain I read *The Tribune* and *The Times*. Ultimately, I made personal inquiries, and discovered a great many facts of extreme significance, not one of which appeared in the London press. These facts were not sensational; therefore, the gutter press had no use for them. They were not palatable to Tory or Liberal; therefore, *The Times* and *The Tribune* were discreetly silent.

Now the press is sensitive to the views of its readers. Let every man demand that Suffrage news shall be fairly given, and we shall soon see a change. The press cannot afford to suppress news which its readers demand.

The same argument applies to the constituent and his Member. Let every elector who favours Women's Suffrage not only watch how his Member fulfils his election pledge, but write to him personally and inform him that this watch is being kept. Sooner or later every member will again be a candidate, and he will not forget such warnings.

Thirdly, much can be done by those who are members of local political organizations. At certain meetings of the General Councils and Ward Councils it is open to members to move resolutions. A resolution in favour of Women Suffrage should be moved in every political association throughout the country. Such resolutions may be defeated, but they serve to awaken interest and to show how opinion is balanced. We shall be glad to receive reports of all such discussions, and to give some account of them in these columns.*

* Address to the Hon. Sec., Men's League for Women's Suffrage, 38, Museum Street, W.C.

Correspondence.

SIR,—I should very much like to hear the opinions of your readers as to the ideal Women's Franchise Bill. While I recognize the wisdom of a general readiness to accept any Bill which establishes the principle of political equality between the sexes, I am inclined to think that the advocates of Women's Suffrage take too little account of what may be called the administrative details. Those of us who are energetically prosecuting propagandist work are perpetually asked "What Bill do you want?"

Now, sir, we have before us a new Bill drawn up by Mr. Dickinson. This Bill—*quod di bene vortant!*—proposes to "do away with the disqualification hitherto involved in marriage, but in addition to that, inasmuch as most of the women of the country would have no qualification to vote, whether married or single, it provides that the wife of a voter, if living with her husband, shall *ipso facto* be entitled to a vote, on the strength of his qualification. . . . By this measure the wives of practically all working men would be entitled to the franchise."

For my own part I am strongly of the opinion that, in point of expediency, the women who have had the experience of independent housekeeping with its financial and, generally, maternal training, will be by far the most valuable of woman voters. Further, in justice I fail to see why the single woman should have a political privilege which is denied to her married sister.

But, sir, we have to recognize that we are herein faced with a problem which goes beyond the purely political and trenches upon the legal. It must in time affect more or less directly the whole status of the married woman. In other words, many who are up to a point in favour of women's enfranchisement would strongly oppose Mr. Dickinson's new measure. Moreover this Bill enormously increases the hostility of two classes of opponents, viz., those who prophesy disruptive domestic dissension from the enfranchisement of married women, and those who contemplate with anxiety the sudden enfranchisement of a large number of new voters, and argue that the male voters are in danger of being swamped. When, furthermore, we remember that the status of the married woman has not only a legal, but also a religious foundation, we must recognize that this new Bill will provoke determined hostility from those who regard the Apostolic attitude as categorical and for all time.

Now I do not suggest that any of the arguments here indicated are unanswerable; I firmly believe that not one of them is ultimately tenable. Still it is neither honourable nor prudent for suffragists to disregard the fact that Mr. Dickinson's proposals, if carried, would practically involve, or can colourably be construed to involve, a change in the legal and religious, as well as in the political significance of the married relation. If, for example, the married woman is to exercise the parliamentary vote, it must be clearly seen that her criterion must not be that of blind obedience to her husband, or at least that to cast her vote for a Tory candidate must not be held to constitute an act of disobedience to a Liberal husband. Otherwise the virtuous wife merely doubles the voting power of the dominant husband. This would be plural voting in the silliest of all its silly aspects.

Passing from this fundamental question of the married woman—on which every women's suffragist should be perfectly clear in his mind—we notice that Mr. Dickinson's new measure would enfranchise, as he himself says, "the wives of practically all working men." Now this is a proposal which will probably stir up the resistance of that party which in its heart of hearts still regards government as the privilege of wealth.

In a word, sir, it is a question whether this Bill is good tactics. Would it not be possible to hold a conference in the near future attended by representatives of the chief Suffrage Societies for the discussion of the whole position? To this conference should be invited those Members of Parliament who have actively upheld the cause in the House of Commons. If such an assembly could agree on a single, simple measure—possibly also on the general problem of tactics—the cause would be greatly advanced. I hope that your readers will take up this suggestion and discuss it in succeeding numbers of your valuable paper.

Yours faithfully, A. B. (Card enclosed.)

[We invite discussion on A. B.'s letter in the portion of this paper placed at the disposal of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage. All communications to the Editor of this section at 38, Museum Street, London, W.C.]

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