

Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

MONTHLY PAPER.

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

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Price to Non-Members, 1d. monthly (including postage).

THE SITUATION.

In consequence of the Government's action with regard to the Conciliation Bill, the Executive Committee has summoned a Special Meeting of all Members of the Men's League at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, on September 23rd, at 8 p.m.

The following resolution will be moved in the name of the Committee by Mr. Mitchell, and seconded by Mr. Brailsford:—

"That in view of the refusal of the Prime Minister to grant facilities for Mr. Shackleton's Bill, this League decides to oppose the Government until a Women's Suffrage measure be carried into law, and that accordingly the Executive Committee shall at by-elections oppose all official Government candidates, and at a General Election oppose all such candidates except sitting Liberal Members who have rendered effective support to the Conciliation Committee."

Special attention is called to the rules governing general meetings, appended to the formal notice herewith enclosed. It will be seen from the notice that members are entitled to register their votes by letter, if they are prevented from being present. But it is sincerely hoped that as many members as possible will attend in person.

The only event of great importance in the Suffrage movement during the last month has been Mr. Lloyd George's speech to the Women's Liberal Association of Carnarvon on August 11th. As is well known, the Liberal Women hold one of the keys of the position. Any serious threat on their part to place the cause of Woman's Suffrage above the mere interests of party and family relationships would at once compel the Government to capitulate. Without the political help of women, whom the Prime Minister considers unfit to enjoy political rights, the Prime Minister's party would not have a chance of re-election. Even Mr. Lloyd George could not avoid noticing the undertone of impatience and distrust that marked Lady McLaren's speech when she introduced him to the meeting from the chair. He was compelled to risk everything in the hope of keeping his audience and other Liberal Women throughout the country faithful to his party's interests. He knew that their patience and loyalty had been strained to the uttermost, and now it was for him to defend himself by any means in his power against the very natural charge of treachery.

His task was so difficult that we may feel some human sympathy with him in the shifts to which he was put. He was driven to prevaricate, to assume ludicrous ignorance in his hearers, to go back on his own principles of government, and

to heap abuse upon the strongest advocates of the cause which he says he has so much at heart. He does not seem to have repeated the mere quibble he put forward in the House of Commons as a reason why the Government should refuse further facilities for the Conciliation Bill—the quibble that the Bill did not deal with the "whole" question. But he wildly asserted that the Bill would double the number of plural voters in the country, though every one who has taken the trouble to study the Bill knows that it carefully excludes the possibility of plural voting of every kind. The cause of plural voting is the franchise granted to "owners" and graduates; but by the Bill no franchise is given to women "owners" or women graduates. Only if they are occupiers of their own or other people's property would they receive the vote. As this has been for so many years the rule on the municipal register, it is almost incredible that Mr. Lloyd George was not aware of it. If he was not aware of it, he does not deserve his position in political life, or the large salary men and women taxpayers give him for his work in the Cabinet. If he was aware of it, he was presuming on the ignorance of his audience.

It is possible, of course, that he was putting forward the common fallacy of all anti-Suffragists, that a woman who is a wife or daughter is identical with the man of the family, and so is bound to vote the same. That was Mr. Winston Churchill's argument, and it is thoroughly characteristic of the anti-Suffragist mind. As things stand, exactly the same thing might happen with regard to the municipal franchise, or with regard to the Parliamentary franchise where a man has grown-up sons to whom he could give qualifications on his own property. But, as a matter of fact, it hardly ever does happen in either case, and no one raises the complaint. Still, to avoid all possible ground for the suspicion, the Conciliation Committee offered to introduce an amendment precluding every possibility of such an abuse, and Mr. Lloyd George must have remembered that offer perfectly well whilst he was making his speech. Again, we can only say that he either prevaricated or presumed on the ignorance of his audience.

His other line of defence for his betrayal of the Bill was to plead that it would not enfranchise enough women. "If you are going to enfranchise women," he said, "you must do it all round." It is the argument of a man who either is entirely ignorant of English political history or does not wish to see any women enfranchised in his lifetime. When Mr. Lloyd George tells us he is so anxious to give votes to all women that he must destroy a Bill giving votes to some, we can only reply that either he is talking humbug or that he ought to know it is useless to cry for the moon. Suddenly to create about 11,000,000 new voters, including about 10,000,000 who have had no experience even of the municipal franchise, is not the English way of doing things. At best it is a counsel of perfection—a barren and abstract ideal, of which no serious statesman need take account. At worst it provides a cowardly subterfuge by which a politician

hopes to retain the support of Liberal Women for electioneering purposes, while shirking the real point at issue—the removal of the barrier of womanhood in our political life.

We need hardly discuss Mr. Lloyd George's further excuse that the Conciliation Bill would not give a sufficient proportion of votes to working women. The excuse rests on his bare assertion, and all the statistics collected by Liberal agents and Labour representatives, and students of economics like Sir Charles Booth, go to prove that between 80 and 90 per cent of the enfranchised women would be working women. Mr. Lloyd George may not think that proportion sufficient, but it is enough for the Labour party and for most rational people. This is a subject on which we would rather trust men like Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Snowden, and Mr. Keir Hardie than Mr. Lloyd George or Mr. Winston Churchill, whose knowledge of the working classes is, at best, second hand. Under the Conciliation Bill, the women who stand most alone in the battle of life—those who are most "independent" of others' help—would be enfranchised first, and to any one, except the merest party politician, it must be obvious that they have the first claim.

As Mr. Brailsford, our colleague on the Executive of the Men's League, pointed out in an admirable letter to *The Times* of August 15th, Mr. Lloyd George set up quite a new constitutional theory in his assertion that the House of Lords would strengthen their position by rejecting the Conciliation Bill, because the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet would support them in the rejection. This is to add a new claim to the powers of the Cabinet, already excessive. When the representatives of the people have passed a measure by a majority of 110 it is obvious that the Lords cannot reject it without a challenge to the principles of democracy, no matter how strongly Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. Churchill may oppose the majority's will. It is statements like these, as well as his action in voting for the exclusion of women from the Local Government Bill of 1894, that prove Mr. Lloyd George to be untrue both to the principles of democracy and to the cause of Woman's Suffrage, which the very name of democracy involves. At this time of day, when a cause has been argued for fifty years at least on every ground of reason and expediency, we also demand "Deeds not Words" of a statesman who goes about protesting his loyalty to that cause. And when by his action he does his utmost to wreck the first genuine hope of victory, we know what value to give to his protestations, and what title best suits him in political life. For he who is not with us is against us, and the worst of enemies is a traitor in the camp.

A RETROSPECT—AND A CONCLUSION?

ALL members of the Men's League and many other men have naturally been asking themselves during the last six weeks how they may turn to best account the ten weeks which must elapse before the House of Commons reassembles. Even those who have the most limited second-hand knowledge of the facts must realize that women have a right to demand a very special effort upon our part, in order that the Bill may be saved.

The political situation is anomalous. No serious constructive legislation is to the fore. The issue of the Veto Conference will be satisfactory to no one; it is obvious that neither party will provoke a combat *à outrance* till the Coronation is over. Consequently, for once, party politics are at a standstill.

I contend that this is therefore the time *par excellence* for all men who support the woman's claim to take the field on this great reform into which party does not enter.

The position of our Bill is singular in the extreme. We become so accustomed to everything that many even of the keenest Suffragists scarcely realize the Gilbertian character of the situation. I would ask every member of the League to ponder these points:—

Nearly two-thirds of the members of the present House are declared Suffragists.

A Bill is before Parliament based on the municipal franchise conferring the vote on women occupiers—about a million votes.

It was drawn up by a Committee consisting of members of Parliament representing all parties, and was specially worded in such a way as to meet the party difficulties necessarily involved.

It was moved by a distinguished Labour representative, Mr. Shackleton, and passed its second reading by a majority of 110 votes in a large house.

Mr. Balfour and Mr. Haldane both spoke for it as well as many of the rank and file of all parties. Mr. Asquith among others opposed, *as a private member*. Mr. Asquith, *in his capacity as Prime Minister*, the responsible head of the State, says that he will not give time for the further stages through which the Bill must pass before it receives the final assent of the House of Commons.

In other words, he utilizes his official position to give effect to a personal opinion, in defiance of the whole basis of government in virtue of which he holds that position.

A CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION.

It will be observed that I am not discussing the merits of the Bill. My purpose in setting forth the facts of the situation is to show the incontrovertible and startling fact that a Prime Minister (or, if you like, a Cabinet) is deliberately assuming the position of a dictator. He is saying, not I will oppose this Bill and throw into the scale against it the official weight of Government hostility, but—and this is the real point—I will use the position of trust to which the King has called me in the name of the electors to deprive the other representatives of the people of the opportunity of further discussing a measure to the principle of which they have given their assent.

Now it will be argued that in practice every Prime Minister refuses every session to give time for the further discussion of Bills moved by private members. Perfectly true; but this is a very different matter, for two reasons—(1) The reason why Government does not in general give time for private members' Bills is that its own work requires all the time at its disposal. In the case of our Bill this is not the case. Parliament is to meet in November to hear the result of the Veto Conference. Now it is pure hypocrisy to contend that Mr. Asquith could not have summoned the House a week earlier to deal with our Bill. No sane man can deny this.

(2) This Bill cannot be classed with ordinary private members' Bills. It is the outcome of a unique agitation over a period of many years, backed both in the House and outside by a body of opinion the weight of which it would be pure affectation to disregard.

On these two grounds, I contend that Mr. Asquith in refusing time is creating a precedent pregnant with the most disastrous consequences, and arrogating to himself in virtue of his office a power which is the negation of our whole constitutional rubrics, and incomparably more dangerous to democracy than the veto of the Upper House.

THE BILL ITSELF.

The chief opposition to the Bill itself on the Government side came from Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill. Both these Ministers are professed Suffragists, and have time after time soothed the uncomfortable qualms of more clear-sighted Liberals by emphatic asseverations of their loyalty to the principles on which the women's claim is based.

Their opposition is based on the contention that the Bill is undemocratic, and this argument has received the applause of *The Daily News*, *The Morning Leader*, and *The Westminster Gazette*—BUT NOT OF 'THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN,' the last remaining great Liberal journal.

Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill oppose as undemocratic a Bill which was supported by 30 out of 40 of the Labour Party! I said before that the situation is Gilbertian. Will any man, be he a Conservative or a Socialist, be he any one but Bernard Shaw, contend that the Labour party have abandoned democracy and that Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill are its sole exponents? If you take the most cynical view of the sincerity of the Labour members, you will even so be forced to admit

that their political existence depends upon a democratic electorate. Passing over the fact, then, that the Bill is obviously not undemocratic in operation though the number it would enfranchise is but a million, the division lists are conclusive evidence that the contention of Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill is preposterous and absurd.

Some may be inclined to argue that this conclusion is not warranted by the facts, and that both Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill opposed the Conciliation Bill in the genuine belief that it is undemocratic. I submit that this view is untenable. Mr. Lloyd George has given utterance to the strongest statements on behalf of Women's Suffrage, and it is absurd to suppose that these views have been formed since he became a member of the Cabinet. Now he has had a long Parliamentary career, and if he had had convictions as strong as the words he uses, he would inevitably have made some perceptible effort to promote legislation. Has he done this? Emphatically no! Even now, when he is imposing taxes on women in direct defiance of the simple principle on which he fought Mr. Balfour's Education Act 1902, does he show the least sign of helping on the Bill which he pretends to desire?

What is the sense of asking us to draw up the Bill he would vote for? To every Bill, broad or narrow, he returns the cynical answer "Guess again"! If he will kindly draft the Bill he wants, and make somebody move it if he dislikes to advertise himself, then we shall be prepared to accept his oft-reiterated pledges—and not till then.

But does he—as a Liberal—expect Liberal men and women to cool their enthusiasm for the prime law of democracy, while he carries out the particular applications of those principles to which he attaches special importance? Such an expectation is both illiberal and doomed to disappointment.

I have tried to show that the present position is entirely new in several essential particulars, and that women, having tried every conceivable path, may legitimately call on us for a special effort of a new kind.

What that effort is to be is the theme of the Special Meeting on Thursday, September 23rd, notice of which accompanies this issue.

We are faced by a Prime Minister who talks mysteriously about opportunities of fully and effectively dealing with the matter, and then tries to interpret this in the form of an abortive second reading; by a Chancellor of the Exchequer who jeers at the Bill as enfranchising prostitutes (as though, forsooth, the men who support them were disqualified); by a Home Secretary who takes refuge in airy suggestions of fancy franchises which he knows his newly found Liberalism would be the first to condemn.

What can Mr. Haldane do with colleagues like these, unless we show him that we mean business?

Mr. Balfour may do nothing for us—though his speech and Mr. Lyttleton's were admirable—but are we worse off with the frank hostility of Mr. Austen Chamberlain and Mr. F. E. Smith than the cynical evasions of Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill?

J. M. M.

OPEN-AIR CAMPAIGN.

THERE is every reason to be satisfied with the results of this month's work. In spite of the holiday season large audiences have been attracted to our platform week after week, and the turn-out of speakers has been excellent so far, and raises hopes that the remainder of the season will see even more of the League's speakers appearing every Sunday.

The Sub-Committee has authorized me to issue a letter to all the Suffrage periodicals, urging women speakers to assist in our Hyde Park propaganda, and it has also been decided to hold *two* meetings a Sunday henceforward, one at the usual pitch near the Marble Arch at 2.30, the other on the grass at 6 P.M., and members should try to attend at least one of these until the close of the session. The League's speakers have been exceptionally busy with engagements for other societies during the past

weeks. Mr. Hammond, a member, has also organized meetings on Saturday evenings, 8 P.M., at the Clock Tower, Hornsey, and speakers or supporters will be welcomed. TH. G.

SPEAKERS:—

July 31st.—Messrs. Mitchell, Manson, Yaldwyn, Simpson, Gugenheim.

August 7th.—Messrs. Manson, Yaldwyn, Mitchell, Simpson, and Gugenheim.

August 14th.—Messrs. Mitchell, Manson, Simpson, and Gugenheim, and Mrs. Stanbury.

August 21st.—Messrs. Duval, Yaldwyn, Abbey, Simpson, and Manson (2 meetings).

August 28th.—Messrs. Mitchell, Gugenheim, Yaldwyn, and Simpson, and Mrs. Manson (2 meetings).

A FABLE.

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGIST AND THE CABINET MINISTER.

I strove to climb a steep ascent,
And first I met a stubborn foe,
To bar my progress all intent—
We battled fairly, blow for blow.

With rusty sword he fought, encased
In ancient armour, little worth;
In vain my fierce attack he faced,
I felled him lifeless to the earth.

Then on I toiled, and near the end
I met a Minister; he smiled
And told me I had found a friend:
Soft words my doubting fears beguiled.

I threw my weapons at his feet,
And without burden marched along,
Fearing no foe with him to meet,
He seemed so great and brave and strong.

We came to parting ways. One led
Straight on to Freedom's sunny height.
He cried, "The other path I'll tread,
In time, maybe, 'twill lead us right."

"My road is clear," quoth I, and steep
Upon the broad and easy way;
He, without warning, madly leapt
Across my path and shouted, "Stay!"

"If not with me, then not at all!
My humour is that you should run
The dangers dire that must befall
A traveller who forsakes the sun."

And if the moral you would know:—
(For fable must with moral end)
"You'd better meet an open foe
Than journey with a faithless friend."

HERBERT JACOBS.

BRANCH NEWS.

MANCHESTER.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee held on August 4th the resignation by the Bishop of Lincoln (formerly Canon Hicks) of his office of President of the Branch was, with much regret, accepted, warm appreciation being expressed of his active interest in the work of the Branch during his connexion with us. Mr. George Clancy, who, as a private member, has done much good work, was co-opted a member of the Committee.

Although the Branch officially has not done anything of note during the month, individual members continue to keep the objects of the League in mind. Councillor Sam Brooks, Joint Hon. Secretary, for instance, presided a few days ago over

a successful Suffrage meeting held at Radcliffe under the auspices of the local branch of the I.L.P., at which Miss Manning, B.A., of the Women's Freedom League, was the speaker. A unanimous vote was secured for the Bill.

There are two points which I should like members to bear in mind. The first is the importance of newspaper correspondence wisely conducted. And will members when writing to the Press please make a point of subscribing themselves members of the Men's League? The importance of this is, I think, obvious. Secondly, will members who are able and willing to speak on the Suffrage, either indoors or in the open air, be so good as to let me know?

W. BENTLY CAPPER, JUN., *Joint Hon. Sec.*
21, Oxford Road, Manchester.

FORMATION OF NEW BRANCHES.

NEW BRANCH AT NORWOOD.

THANKS to the vigorous efforts and kind hospitality of Miss E. Fennings, a meeting of male sympathizers was held at Anerley on August 23rd.

After some discussion it was decided to form a Branch of the Men's League, to be called the Norwood Branch, and a committee was formed to carry out the necessary arrangements.

The possibility of an Anti-Government election policy being adopted by the League at the Special General Meeting on September 23rd, was discussed, and a resolution approving of such a policy was passed.

Mr. R. French, 70, Mackenzie Road, Beckenham, who is acting as Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, will be glad to receive the names of intending members or donations to the general fund.

A meeting in support of the Branch was held on Friday, August 26th, at Norwood Junction, when Mr. Mitchell and Mr. John Simpson were the speakers.

I shall be glad to receive the names and addresses of any gentlemen who will help me to form a Branch covering Highgate, Crouch End, Hornsey, Hampstead, Highbury, Islington, and Finchley.

JOHN SIMPSON.
1, Priestwood Mansions, Highgate, London, N.

We are greatly indebted to Mrs. A. M. Haslam, Hon. Secretary of the Irish Women's Suffrage and Local Government Association, for her help in forming a Branch of the Men's League in Dublin. A small preliminary meeting for the promotion of this object was held on August 19th, when a number of names and subscriptions were handed in. A further meeting for the formation of the Branch and the appointment of office-bearers and committee has been summoned by Mr. T. J. Haslam for September 1st at 35, Molesworth Street, Dublin, at 8 P.M. Will members who have Dublin friends interested in the Cause urge them to communicate with Mrs. Haslam, 125, Leinster Road, Rathmines, Dublin?

We have also to thank Miss Alice Crompton, M.A., Organizing Secretary of the Dundee Women's Suffrage Society, 12, Meadowside, Dundee, and Miss T. W. Powell, Hon. Secretary of the Godalming Women's Suffrage Society, Munstead Rough, Godalming, for their efforts to assist us in the formation of Branches in Dundee and Godalming. It is hoped that members and friends in these districts will do their utmost to make these efforts successful.

Steps are also being taken for the formation of Branches in other localities.

A WELL-SPENT HOLIDAY.

AUGUST has been by common consent a period of relaxation. Mr. John Simpson in the course of the eighteen days ending last Sunday addressed no less than twenty-one meetings: average 1.16 per day! Would that Mr. Lloyd George had been sentenced to these 21 meetings without the option! And that more of our members would come up to the average of the odd decimal!

OXFORD UNIVERSITY REFORM.

THE University of Oxford, partly on the initiative of Lord Curzon, though by no means entirely, has in hand a scheme of internal reform. It is the subject of very great regret that the proposed reforms do not include the giving of degrees to women. There are many eminent men in Oxford who feel with us that the refusal of degrees to women is the most disgraceful anachronism in its whole system, perverse and inexcusable. The omission is strongly condemned in a leading article in *The Manchester Guardian* of August 31st.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SUSSEX LEAGUE.

22 August, 1910.

DEAR SIR,—I regret that it has been impossible for me to do much for the League this last month, but I am preparing now for what I hope will be a prosperous session. I have sent membership cards to about twenty centres in Sussex, and already have promises of help in forming branches in Worthing and Hassocks. Dr. F. G. Bucknell, Councillor F. C. Neale, Mr. J. Edward Francis, and myself have addressed various Suffrage meetings during the month.

Yours faithfully,

ADRIAN BRUNEL.

Frankville, Franklin Road, Portslade.

DONATIONS RECEIVED IN AUGUST.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Mary E. Dalby	1	1	0
Miss Louisa Bigg	5	5	0
Miss G. Tollemache	0	10	0

MEN'S LEAGUE LITERATURE.

MEMBERS are reminded that the following literature, published by the Men's League, will be found most effective for purposes of propaganda. They are therefore urged to provide themselves with copies, and also to do their utmost to push the sale:—

An Open Letter to the Prime Minister.

Price 1d., post free 1½d. 1 doz. copies 1s. 1d., 50 3s. 5d., 100 6s. 9d., post free.

A Declaration of Representative Men in Favour of Women's Suffrage.

Price 1d., post free 1½d. 1 doz. copies 1s., 50 3s. 5d., 100 6s. 9d., post free.

The Conciliation Bill Explained.

A 2-page leaflet, giving the text of the measure and a full and clear exposition of its operation, and answering all specious objections. Price 9d. per 100, 6s. per 1,000, post free.

Men's League Queen's Hall Speeches.

(Prices on application.)

Why Men Should Help Women in their Claim for Enfranchisement: The Economic Aspect.

By Dr. Chas. V. Drysdale. Price 1d., post free 1½d. 1 doz. copies 10d., 50 3s. 5d., 100 6s. 9d., post free.

Seven Good Reasons Why Men Should Support Women's Suffrage.

A 2-page leaflet, with Men's League membership form. An excellent means of increasing our strength. Every member should always carry a few. Price 5d. per 100, 2s. 6d. per 1,000, post free.