

# Women's Franchise.

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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. 8d.), 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 FRANCE two of the oldest "feminist" associations have just seen their labours crowned with success. The law which gives married women the right to their own earnings has come to be familiarly known as the "Loi Schmahl," since it is largely due to the efforts of the society "L'Avant Courrière," founded and presided over by Madame Jeanne Schmahl. The first proposal to confer this obvious right on married women had been introduced into the Senate as early as 1890. But the attempt was unsuccessful, and in 1890 "L'Avant Courrière" was founded to supply the propaganda and enthusiasm without which even the simplest reform in women's favour can never be carried. In 1894 the proposal was again introduced, then it was practically dropped for over ten years on the pretence of being "under consideration." In spite of both apathy and opposition, the persistent and unremitting work of the supporters has borne fruit; and on March 20th of this year the Bill was definitely introduced into the Senate by M. Guillier, and passed its final stage in the Chamber on June 13th.

About the same time a proposal was carried to give women the right to vote for the "Conseils de Prudhommes," boards consisting of representatives of employees and employed, corresponding very closely to the German *Gewerbeberichte*. An amendment promoted by the National Council of French Women and introduced into the Chamber by M. Bénazet, would have given the right to sit on these boards as well as to vote for them. Though this was abandoned as a matter of policy, because it would have involved the reconsideration and possible rejection of the Bill by the Senate, there seems every likelihood of its being brought in again before long. This success is due largely to the efforts of "L'Égalité," a society which has been at work since 1888, and which aims at promoting the absolute legal equality of the sexes. To this end it has published a series of historical studies, dealing with the position and rights of women from the earliest times to the present day.

ICELAND is the most recent adherent to the Suffrage movement, for we learn that a Woman's Suffrage Society has been started at Reykjavik. It is probable that before long a proposal to confer the franchise on women will be introduced into the Althing.

## Women's Suffrage in Australia.

ONE of the favourite fictions of the enemies of Women's Suffrage is the assertion that it has been a failure in Australia and New Zealand. In vain the Prime Ministers of these colonies and other persons in responsible positions reiterate that it has been a complete success. Like the silversmiths of Ephesus, the opponents of Women's Franchise will listen to nothing but their own prepossessions, and continue perpetually to cry out that Women's Suffrage has been a failure in those colonies which have adopted it. When it is possible to press them for particulars, and to ask in what respect this alleged failure has been shown, they become less voluble, and the only answer I have succeeded in obtaining is that women show no permanent interest in politics, that although they were pleased with the parliamentary franchise when it was a new toy, and voted in considerable numbers, now that the charm of novelty has worn off they neglect their privileges, and come to the poll in declining numbers, so that Women's Suffrage is becoming a dead letter.

Now this is a definite charge, and fortunately it can be met by a definite denial of its accuracy. The correspondent of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in Melbourne, Miss Vida Goldstein, has just sent the official returns, issued by the Department of Home Affairs, of the number of men and women voting for the Senate and also for the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia in each of the States in the elections of 1903 and 1906, and, with the one exception of Queensland, where a smaller proportion of voters, both male and female, went to the poll in 1906 than in 1903, the returns show a larger proportion of voters of both sexes taking part in the elections at the later date. The totals are:

### THE SENATE ELECTION.

1903.		1906.	
Percentage of Voters to Electors enrolled.		Percentage of Voters to Electors enrolled.	
Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
53.09.	39.96.	56.38.	43.30.

### THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

1903.		1906.	
Percentage of Voters to Electors enrolled.		Percentage of Voters to Electors enrolled.	
Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
56.47.	43.50.	57.35.	44.81.

The actual increase in the number of women voting in 1906 over 1903 was, in the Senate election, from 359,315 in the former year to 431,033 in the later; while for the representative chamber the increase of women voting was from 305,820 to 403,018.

It would be an error to assume too much from the experience of these two elections, but, as far as they go, they seem to show that Woman's Suffrage has stimulated interest in politics among men as well as among women. Mr. Goldwin Smith has a favourite phrase which he rarely fails to use in his diatribes against Women's Suffrage: he repeatedly says that it would throw the female character and ultimately the home into the cauldron of politics. In Australia, as far as we can judge, the home has not been thrown into politics, but politics have been thrown into the home; men and women being both enfranchised, political subjects are probably more often the subject of conversation and thought in the home circle than in former years, a keener interest is awakened, and a larger proportion of those entitled to vote go to the poll. M. G. FAWCETT.

## 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.  
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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 L. O. FORD  
MISS ISABEL MARRIS  
MRS. PECHEY 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.

It goes without saying that the holiday weeks of August are not favourable to the promotion of many meetings in London and district; but members and friends of the Union are reminded that much useful work can be done when on holiday tours by the generous distribution of literature among fellow travellers and others likely to be interested in the cause of the enfranchisement of women. Small parcels of literature for free distribution can be obtained, post free, any time, from the Secretary at the offices, and specimen copies of *Women's Franchise* can be had gratis from the publishers, for the same purpose upon receipt of a post card bearing name and address.

Mrs. Fawcett has received a letter from Fru Qvam, the President of the Women's Suffrage Association, Norway, thanking her for the congratulatory letter sent by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies on the adoption of Women's Suffrage by the Storting on June 17th last.

It is probably known to many of our readers that the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies has taken counsel's opinion on the case presented by Mrs. Stopes in 'British Free Women,' and in 'The Sphere of Man,' that Women's Suffrage is the law of the land. The opinion of eminent counsel has now been received and is unfavourable to this view; their advice is that no appeal against the decision in the case of *Chorlton v. Lings* is likely to be successful.

This result is disappointing, but not surprising; in any case it is of value to those who are working for Women's Suffrage as setting all doubts at rest on the subject.

### Branch Societies.

**THE CENTRAL SOCIETY** (the London Branch of the Union), has increased its membership in July by 52 new members.

A second successful open-air meeting has been held in North Kensington, organized by the local committee.

**THE LIVERPOOL WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY** successfully organized an open-air meeting—the first of a series—on the evening of August 1st in the Pavilion Field, Greenbank, kindly lent for the occasion. A large attendance, representing both sexes, gave a sympathetic hearing to the speakers, who advocated equal civil rights for men and women. Mrs. Allan Bright moved a resolution calling upon the Prime Minister to confer the Parliamentary Suffrage on Women during the present Parliament. It was seconded by Mr. Allan Tracey (Socialist), supported by Miss Eleanor Rathbone, and carried unanimously.

### Work Done and Plans for the Future.

The following excellent and friendly criticism on the Cambridge meetings appeared in *The Manchester Guardian* a few days after they were brought to a close.

"It was a happy thought to invite the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies to hold its Council meeting in Man-

chester next October. Many thoughtful and active women will then be taking part in the Conference of Women Workers, and will come from all parts of England to share their experiences, to learn and teach and give to one another the encouragement of sympathy in matters of common interest. Perhaps the most important of all these matters, one that should interest every woman in the land, is her position as a citizen, her relation to those who make and administer the law and who direct the national policy. Unfortunately a great many women who do valuable service as private individuals and even work for public causes in philanthropic organizations do not yet see that it is their duty to take this interest. If the National Union of Women Workers can be drawn to feel the solidarity of women in this great question of political enfranchisement it will be a great thing done and a great force brought to bear.

Women who have for forty years been wandering in the wilderness must have felt when they attended the meetings of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in Cambridge that they were actually in sight of the promised land. The speeches in the Guildhall, where the public meeting was held, were still addressed to the unconverted, to those who, it is supposed, can be met by argument; it was only after the prolonged and more intimate Council meeting of the next day that one could fully measure the change in temper and policy that has come over the workers in the movement for the enfranchisement of women. It was reported that a Men's League had been started, and was engaging on an active campaign; that an Artists' League had been formed, and was guiding the electorate by posters and other forms of pictorial education, in which one hopes that caricature may take its due share; that a weekly newspaper, entitled *Women's Franchise*, had been started; but most significant of all were the accounts of the by-elections of Wimbledon and Jarrow, and the keen discussion upon the election policy of the National Union.

Mention has already been made of Mr. Bertrand Russell's plucky campaign at Wimbledon, and it was felt that so much had been gained by testing the electorate, even under such extremely unfavourable conditions, that every suitable opportunity will be seized to repeat the experience. If it were only that the official candidate of the Women's Suffrage party has unequalled opportunities for propaganda, this would be sufficient reason, for there is no doubt that one of the chief difficulties in the past has been to get voters to come and listen to the advocates of Women's Suffrage. Now they will come to the meetings of a Parliamentary candidate, and they can, as Mr. Russell has proved, be sometimes induced to listen. The money difficulty has turned out not to be so large as it had loomed in the distance. Those of us who only knew how difficult it is to get funds to run the various societies were agreeably taught that a policy so spirited as the running of an official candidate drew subscriptions easily and quickly. There seems little doubt that this is one of the best methods, but it is evident that there are many cases where it cannot be pursued. Then arises the question of what is the next best policy.

The Women's Social and Political Union have a clear and logical course. They oppose the candidate belonging to the party which happens to be in office until such time as the Government shall officially introduce a Bill for the enfranchisement of women. Another possible line of policy is to support the candidate of any party which would officially adopt as one of the principal

objects the immediate abolition of the sex disqualification in Parliamentary elections. Finally, there is the policy of the National Union as put forward in their letter to the press some little time ago, and as ratified afresh in Cambridge. They will support candidates of any party who will pledge themselves sincerely to Women's Suffrage.....

The old question that used to be asked of candidates was merely: "Are you in favour of Women's Suffrage?" and many found themselves able to give a pious opinion in the affirmative. They are now asked: (1) To give the subject a prominent place in their election address. (2) To promise to ballot for the introduction of a Bill enfranchising women. (3) To state what would be their attitude towards a Bill introducing adult suffrage. This last is, and is meant to be, the severest test of loyalty. A section of the Liberal party have good hopes of bringing in a Bill introducing adult suffrage. But a section, again, wish to make it a Bill for manhood suffrage, and, if it came to the test, the women want to know, will they be jettisoned once more to "save" the Bill, and will every male creature in the land who happens to be over twenty-one be made a ruler over all the women of the land? The women not only feel that this would be an intolerable insult, but they believe that it would defer almost indefinitely their hopes of a just allotment of power. They are sick of being told that other things are more important—nothing is more important to them; that they must take a wider view—their view embraces humanity; that a man can't be expected to wreck a party or a measure for their sakes—many of them feel that only in the wreck or at least in the sinking of party will one-half of the nation at last come by its own. "H. M. S."

### Prof. Armstrong on Woman's Proper Sphere.

AMONG the many interesting speeches and debates at the recent meetings of the British Association at Leicester perhaps those embodying views upon our educational system will make the strongest and most widespread appeal.

In the section devoted to Educational Science Prof. Armstrong, in an address on 'Home Science,' urged the need of a scientific basis for the domestic education of girls, and said that the prevalent ideas of society were producing a disastrous moral effect upon their training in some quarters. He asserted that home life was woman's true vocation, and that the education for home life was the only real education for girls who would become wives and mothers.

He charged the "advanced woman" with displacing man everywhere to the neglect of her own domain. Was it not time, he asked, that the pendulum should swing back and women cease their unreasonable competitions with men, and from neglecting themselves and their own true interests.

Prof. Armstrong contended that women had forgotten that their place in society was defined by Nature from a biological standpoint. They were forgetting the duties of motherhood and the education they received made no attempt to remedy this. No effort was being made in our schools to train girls as efficient citizens. Men generally seemed to be hopeless and helpless in these matters, continued the Professor—preoccupied, ignorant, prejudiced, self-satisfied, and eminently selfish. Could not women take up the task of establishing a sound system of education? Could not they adapt themselves to their own nature—not simply follow men? They have essayed to show that they could do what men could do, and they had failed. The passing of a few wretched examinations was no proof of equality. It was of no value whatever as a practical test. They should strike out a policy of their own, and glory in meeting the requirements of their natural duties, which were chiefly in relation to the science of home life.

With Prof. Armstrong's doctrine that woman's true vocation is the home, and that her education should be so framed as to fit her for it we are in hearty and complete accordance. But we want her to bring this genius for home-making into that huge aggregation of homes which is the community. As a wife and mother she has great and infinitely important interests which should be directly voiced and represented. To confine this

influence to the home alone, to forbid her sphere of influence to widen in concentric circles is to deny to the nation just those things which, as Prof. Armstrong himself so clearly sees, it most sorely lacks.

That our present system of teaching domestic economy to girls needs improvement—perhaps even drastic reform—we are quite ready to concede; but has woman herself yet been given a sufficiently responsible and adequate position on those bodies dealing with the question? Might not the scheme and its interpretation be improved if those whose "proper sphere" is the home had been more often consulted?

But when Prof. Armstrong ceases to criticize and indulges in a string of vague generalizations it is difficult to refrain from characterizing his speech as reactionary. Women, he tells us, are to stop their unreasonable competition with men. But who is to decide the unreasonableness of the competition? The woman, neither wife nor mother, but only one of many sisters, who has no one's home to make or keep, and whose healing talent is to rust, or the governor of a hospital who denies her the privilege of learning the art of surgery alongside the male student?—the widow with a young family to feed and educate, or the trades-union man who would turn her out of the factory or workshop?

It may be, as the Professor says, man's pride and privilege to fight for women, and to provide food and raiment for them; but as things are it is a physical impossibility for them to realize this ideal. There are, and probably always will be, hundreds of women dependent on themselves alone, and it is only right that they should find fair conditions awaiting them in the field of labour. They do not become undomesticated any more than does the man who works all day in office or workshop. As a matter of fact, these professional women are quite as home-loving as their so-called domesticated sisters, taking infinite pride in the care of their little flats, doing their own cooking and dressmaking.

We are "forgetting the duties of motherhood." Would it not be truer to say that we are only just awakening to their full significance, and claiming for ourselves, for our daughters, such real education, such true character development as shall fit us to rear children that shall be morally and physically sound. It is because the women of the nation are also the mothers of the nation that we desire for them a voice in the household management of the community, in the domestic economy of the society. They know how necessary it is that education should be good, homes sanitary, and social life pure. Why then condemn them to be silent onlookers when there is so much in which their peculiar knowledge and experience might be of incalculable value. It is because they are different from men, and not because they have wished to prove themselves equal to men, that they have passed "the wretched examinations" of which Prof. Armstrong is so eloquent. Women have fitted themselves to follow various callings because they felt that therein lay their best means of helping their fellows, and because they held that talents were given them to be developed and used, not from any desire to vie with or emulate men. It is just this that makes them ask for opportunities of complete development and their recognition as full citizens by the conferring of the franchise.

What is the use of training us to be efficient citizens if our efficiency is to remain a mere label, if we are never to give proof of it by voicing our opinion at the polls, or by taking our rightful place in the public service?

It is only since women have been allowed to develop freely and have been admitted even in a limited degree to public service that the social life of the nation has advanced. The progress has emanated from the home and penetrated to the school, the factory, the hospital, and the workhouse.

Surely much of our better education, better poor law administration, better sick nursing, better treatment of criminals, lunatics, and imbeciles is due to women. By all means give woman the best domestic training possible, but let her use it in the greatest home of all, that of the nation itself.

\*\* Owing to pressure on our space we are obliged to hold over until next week the report of Lady Gibbs's successful evening garden party at Wimbledon.

## VOTES FOR WOMEN.

## Women's Social and Political Union.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

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.

Bankers: MESSRS. BARCLAY, BEVAN &amp; 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*l.* 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.

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

Telephone—5550 Holborn.

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

Organizing Secretary: MISS CHRISTABEL PANKHURST, LL.B.

## The Movement Week by Week.

## PROSPECT OF ELECTORAL REFORM.

THAT a Government measure for electoral reform is a possibility may be gathered from the Prime Minister's reply to a question in the House of Commons on August 7th.

Mr. Soames having asked whether the Prime Minister would consider the advisability of bringing in a Bill next session to remove the electoral disabilities of Londoners who are kept off the register by removal from one London division to another, the Prime Minister made the following reply:—

"I am aware of the special electoral disabilities which attach to the London voter, and my hon. friend may be assured that they will be considered by the Government when the reform of electoral anomalies and defects is undertaken. When that may be, however, I am not at present in a position to say."

It will be noticed that the Prime Minister had no such reassuring reply to offer when, on the 16th July, Mr. Philip Snowden asked him what the intentions of the Government are in regard to Women's Suffrage. His answer to Mr. Soames is another warning to women suffragists of the danger that there may be in an attempted extension of the franchise for the benefit of men only.

## ANOTHER BY-ELECTION.

A Parliamentary vacancy has occurred at Bury St. Edmunds in consequence of the death of the Marquis of Bristol and the elevation of Capt. Hervey to the peerage. The Liberal party have selected as their candidate Mr. Yates, who fought in the Liberal interest at the General Election. The Union will offer uncompromising resistance to his return.

I shall be glad to hear from those willing to take part in the campaign. It is well to take this opportunity of pointing out that a by-election entails heavy expense, and that contributions to the special fund are needed. Those members who are unable to work in the constituencies will no doubt be glad to take their share in the election work by collecting subscriptions from persons sympathetic to the movement. This should not be difficult, as there is no part of our propaganda which gains more general approval than the by-election policy. Many suffragists have long felt that the only hope of success lies in independence of all the political parties, whether Liberal, Conservative, or Labour, and they therefore welcome the appearance in the political field of the Women's Social and Political Union.

Each election that comes witnesses an improvement in the practical working out of the new policy. It is our aim, acting in the light of experience gained in recent contests, to raise the organization of the Bury St. Edmunds campaign to a very high point.

## MISS GAWTHORPE'S HEALTH.

Miss Mary Gawthorpe's condition is so much improved that she will very soon be able to leave Derbyshire for London, where she is to undergo an operation. It is her hope that she may be well in time to attend the October conference. Members of the Union will be overjoyed to have the opportunity of welcoming her on her return to health after her severe illness.

## THE WORK OF THE UNION.

Most of the London members are at present away from home, but those who remain here are carrying on the work of the

movement. The Sunday meetings in the parks are being held throughout the holidays. Almost every night in the week street corner meetings are being held in various districts. The stall at Earl's Court is still open, and many of our members have been very constant in their attendance there. I should like to remind our friends that whenever they have a spare evening they would be very welcome at Earl's Court.

CHRISTABEL H. PANKHURST.

## Scottish Notes.

THE series of Saturday meetings at the Mound, Princes Street, Edinburgh, was commenced under very favourable conditions. Miss Munro was the speaker, and the chair was taken by Miss A. Murchison. Many questions followed the address, and a vote of thanks to the speakers was moved spontaneously from the crowd. Some new way of collecting will have to be found for the closely packed crowds that now attend our meetings. On this occasion, as on two others during the week, it was not possible to get through the people in order to give every one a chance of contributing.

In the Irvine Valley I have had five meetings, four of which have been successful, and two of which can only be described as grand. As a result of the series more names have been obtained for branches at Galston, Darvel, and Newmilns, and a big branch has been formed at Kilmarnock. It was in this famous old town that our specially fine meetings were both held. On Sunday a mass meeting was held in the park, which surprised the old inhabitants by its size and enthusiasm. On the Monday evening the I.L.P. Hall, kindly lent by the local branch, was packed to its utmost capacity by the women who had come to form a branch of the W.S.P.U. This meeting was alive from the start, the resolution to form a branch was carried unanimously, and officers and committee were immediately elected. Other branches will undoubtedly follow in this district in a very short time.

TERESA BILLINGTON-GREIG.

Mrs. Billington-Greig has gone on holiday, and has handed over to me the completion of Scottish Notes for this week and the writing of them for the next two weeks. I feel as though something startling really ought to happen in Scotland soon, so that I may chronicle it during my term of office as special correspondent for the North.

Some one has said "we have no climate, only weather." Some one else has called Scotland "Land of the mountain and the flood." I agree with both, and heartily with "flood." Two days of our coast campaign this week have been spoiled by rain, and had to be given over to the prosaic work of letter-writing and arrangement-making. It rained on those days with a persistence worthy of the noblest cause; and when you know people are at the coast places in their hundreds, with time to listen—working women, with children, who have so little time in town—you feel doubly aggrieved.

At Largs Miss Phillips and I had two good meetings on Monday. On Tuesday evening we read in the midst of the deluge a nice little paragraph in *The Glasgow News* that said the Suffragette campaign had left its mark on Dunoon and Rothesay, where "Votes for Women" buttons now abounded, which cheered us a little.

Now we are in Ayr, which is full of Paisley "buddies," who have holidays just now. The value of the coast campaign is the myriad places our audiences come from. We had three Londoners in our crowds at Rothesay, who told us they never heard a Suffragette till they listened to us. We had men from Manchester—Lancashire men, some wise, one otherwise. We have new members for Glasgow, for Leith, for Stirling, for Falkirk, and it still goes on.

Best of all, the women come so well, and I have had support and strong replies to opponents from more than one indignant woman at question time. Heckling, once started (we are slow sometimes to start), Scotsmen and Scotswomen specially enjoy, and the crowds close in at question time, and our "followers" watch with glee our disposal of the masculine objectors, who are so afraid of our intellect and capacity that they fear, if we once get equality, they, poor things, will have no chance at all. But the more one speaks to many people the more hopeful one feels that some day they will all see truth and justice—so many are beginning to see and understand.

Miss Phillips and I finish here on Saturday evening, when Mrs. J. D. Pearce, who spoke splendidly for us at Millport and at Rothesay, will come down here and help with our closing meeting.

On Monday I go to Dumbarton for a few days' work for our faithful branch there, who, because they are so nice, like Mrs. Pethick Lawrence's good baby, have, I am afraid, been rather neglected. Stirling also, one of the towns in C.-B.'s constituency, is to be revisited, and a big meeting for October arranged. Miss Munro, our clever secretary in Dunfermline is busy arranging fixtures for my week there, which begins on 19th, and Dunfermline, by the way, is going to do splendidly for the procession. The Western Branch in Glasgow has arranged an "At Home" for September, and the Southern Branch intends to hold one also; so in Glasgow we are going to enjoy ourselves and sow seed at the same time.

Dunfermline branch is running a very successful series of meetings—an outdoor one weekly and indoor fortnightly.

Last Monday's outdoor meeting was held at the Abbey Gate, and Miss Petas, M.A., of Dundee, had a large and sympathetic crowd and gained new members.

Miss MacCallam read a clever and original paper on 'Woman's Home Instincts' at Thursday's indoor meeting.

On 12th, Miss Brand, M.A. (Dundee), will speak at the Abbey Gate, and Miss Murchison, of Edinburgh, on 26th, following up my week's work.

HELEN FRASER.

## Women's Work in Leicester.

MISS SYLVIA PANKHURST is writing a series of articles on various women's trades. She is going from place to place, making sketches of the women at their work and investigating their conditions of employment.

She has recently been to Cradley Heath, seeing the work of the women nail makers and chain makers; to Wigan, where women work on the pit-brow; and has just returned from Leicester, the home of the boot trade. Miss Pankhurst tells us that in a town like this, where at least seventy per cent. of the women inhabitants go out to earn their daily bread at the factories, one realizes how closely the labour of women has become interwoven with almost every industry of our national life. Between certain hours every street is thronged with vast numbers of women and girls going to and coming from their work.

How sad to think that almost every one of that great army of workers is shamefully underpaid. Girls employed in the boot trade are paid from 4*s.* to 7*s.* a week. Women's wages, according to the skill of the worker and the kind of work performed, vary nominally from 11*s.* to 19*s.* per week, but in reality, owing to short time, they only average from 7*s.* to 10*s.* a week. The women do the whole of the boot uppers after they have been cut out, and are also employed in the stock room in ironing, polishing, and packing the completed boots. The men prepare the leather and cut it out, fasten the uppers to the soles, make and fasten on the heels, &c. The minimum wage for men is 29*s.* per week. Some of their work is very much less skilled than that of the women. There are cases in the stock room,

for instance, where men and women are sometimes found doing exactly the same work—the men earning at least the minimum wage of 29*s.*, the women probably 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week.

The women's section of the Boot and Shoe Trade Union recently prepared a statement of prices which they thought should be enforced throughout the trade. This was laid before a committee of men trade union officials—without a single woman representative on the council—and employers' representatives, who rejected it, saying that it was undesirable.

While Miss Pankhurst has been in Leicester an active campaign has been carried on by the Women's Social and Political Union branch there. Eleven meetings were held during the last fortnight, including two "At Homes" for members and friends. On Mondays and Thursdays large mass meetings are being held in the Market Place. Meetings have also been held, and will continue weekly on Tuesdays, in Northampton Square. On Sunday morning last Miss Pankhurst addressed a very successful meeting at the Harvey Lane Adult School. Several other schools had been invited to attend. On Sunday evening last, Miss Pankhurst had the help of the Rev. Gertrude von Petzold, who gave a most inspiring speech, and spoke in terms of high praise of the work done by the Women's Social and Political Union.

Although the Union has not long been formed in Leicester, and therefore comparatively little propaganda work has as yet been done, the audiences are largely sympathetic. The men respond readily to the women's appeal for the franchise, and many women are joining the Union.

## Meeting at Petersfield.

ON Thursday last a very successful meeting was held in the hall of Bedale's School, kindly lent for the purpose by Mr. and Mrs. Badley.

Mrs. Pankhurst spoke on the need of Votes for Women and on the work of the W.S.P.U. She explained and defended the by-election policy of the Union, and pointed out the necessity for opposing the Government in order to compel them to include Women's Suffrage in their Parliamentary programme.

Many questions as to the aims and policy of the Union were satisfactorily answered.

Mrs. Badley, who presided, announced that a branch of the Union was in course of formation, and several names of intending members were taken at the close of the meeting.

There is every reason to believe that in Petersfield we shall find many enthusiastic workers for the women's cause.

## Contributions to the £20,000 Fund

From Aug. 5th to Aug. 10th.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged	2293	14	3	Glasgow (Western) W.S.P.U.	1	0	0
Edward Dugdale, Esq.	1	0	0	Mrs. J. F. Ward	0	2	6
— Crossman, Esq.	0	2	6	Mrs. G. C. Hay	0	5	0
Miss Radclyffe-Hall	5	0	0	Mrs. S. A. Stacey	1	0	0
Miss Garrett Anderson	4	0	0	Miss J. C. Methven	1	1	0
Mrs. Rigby	2	10	0	Sympathizers and Members of			
Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Budgett	25	0	0	the W.S.P.U.	0	7	6
Lady Harberton	11	0	0	Mrs. R. McGinnis	0	10	0
Miss Freda Pont	2	0	0	Miss M. O. Haydon	1	0	0
Miss Lena Willcocks	0	1	0	Collections, &c.	1	3	1
Lady James	1	1	0				
Mrs. Streetfield	0	5	0	Total	2292	7	10
Mrs. F. Vincent	0	5	0				

## PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

From August 15th to August 22nd.

			P.M.
Wed.	Paddington, corner of Elgin Avenue and Waltham Road	Open air meeting	8
	Putney, Montserrat Road	Mrs. Borrman Wells	8
Fri.	London, Barnes Pond	Mrs. Borrman Wells	8
	Stepney Mission Hall, Old Church Road	Mrs. Baldock	8
Sun.	London, Hyde Park	Miss Christabel Pankhurst	3
	London, Victoria Park	Mrs. Borrman Wells	3.30
	London, Finsbury Park	Miss Irene Miller	3.30
Tues.	Wolverhampton, Market Place	Mrs. Sproson	7.30
	Liverpool, 6, Colquhitt Street	Miss Marks	8
Wed.	Putney, Montserrat Road	Mrs. Borrman Wells	8
Thur.	Ravenscourt Park	Open air meeting	8.30

## Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

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

Telephone: 9953 CENTRAL.

### The Sphere of Woman.

THE annual assemblage of the British Association has rightly come to be regarded as the occasion for a comprehensive summary and discussion of the researches of the past year in the various branches of human knowledge with which that august body is concerned. To be invited to hold a responsible position in any of the sections, or to deliver a paper on any of the subjects connected therewith, is a final recognition of the competence of the fortunate person concerned. Nay more, any subject which is selected for discussion must be regarded as a question of burning importance. When, therefore, I learned that Prof. H. E. Armstrong, of the City and Guilds of London Institute, had read a paper dealing largely with the sphere of woman and the education which is necessary to fit her for it, I felt that I might assume not only that the subject is one of pressing importance, but also that Prof. Armstrong is peculiarly qualified to deliver *ex cathedra* opinions upon it.

Now, before proceeding to consider the important dicta which emanated from so distinguished an authority under the aegis of the British Association, let me confess that I am indebted for my knowledge of them to the report published in *The Tribune* of August 7th. Knowing how earnestly that journal has striven to convince its readers of its eagerness to promote the full enfranchisement of qualified women, I am convinced that anything in Prof. Armstrong's remarks which might seem hostile to that cause would not be exaggerated in its report. The press, however, is so notoriously cursed with a fatal tendency towards unconscious misrepresentation, that I am prepared to apologize to the Professor if in the sequel I am found to attack him for something which he did not say.

There are two statements in Prof. Armstrong's speech as reported with which I am in entire agreement. The first is that the education of women in this country needs to be improved; all education in this country needs to be improved. Having recently examined more than a thousand papers written by boys and girls of between eleven and sixteen years of age, I say unreservedly that our educational system has not as yet attained to perfection. But I would add with equal emphasis that the girls were incomparably better than the boys. It so happened that I had to prepare careful averages for the purpose of a report, and it may interest many to hear that the girls' average was between 14 and 15 per cent. higher than that of the boys. I do not mean merely that their knowledge was so much better on the whole. As the examination was in English Literature perhaps this was only to be expected. But I would lay emphasis on this—that the great superiority of the girls lay in their sense of proportion, in their general outlook on the subject in question, and in their literary facility. Whereas the boys were unable to express their knowledge in accurate or graceful language, the work of the girls was marked by precision, a copious vocabulary, and considerable imagination.

Therefore, while I agree with the Professor that there is room for all-round improvement, I can confidently assert that, so far as my own experience goes, the improvement is at least as necessary in boys' schools as it is in girls' schools.

Passing rapidly from this point—which is, indeed, only a side issue—I come to the second point in Prof. Armstrong's speech on which I am able freely to agree with him. "It is difficult for mere man," said Prof. Armstrong (I quote from *The Tribune*), "to understand woman." Now we have seen that Prof. Armstrong, having been invited to lecture to the British Association, cannot be regarded as "mere man." Therefore we ought to assume that the views which succeeded this somewhat trite exordium are perfectly clear in his mind, and therefore categorical and authoritative. After perusing those views I

confess that I am convinced more strongly than before of the difficulty of understanding women.

The very next sentence in the report is one which I feel able categorically to deny. "The advanced woman apparently is aggressively bent on displacing him (*i.e.*, man) everywhere." In the first place "everywhere" is manifestly absurd; secondly, there is a subtle falsehood conveyed in the central words "bent on displacing." To "displace" is to "take the place of," *i.e.*, to expel and supplant; "aggressively bent on" is a phrase which implies conscious determination of a conative or volitional character. The only possible meaning which we can derive from the whole sentence is that women do not like to see men in any position whatever, and that they are definitely attempting to supplant them. When we further read that "woman is becoming more and more neglectful of her own domain, and that, in consequence, the foundations of the homes, if not of society, are becoming undermined," we cannot avoid the conclusion that, in Prof. Armstrong's opinion, we are faced with a sort of sex migration, a new rush of feminine Vandals over an Alpine barrier into a peaceful Italy of manhood.

This is a very serious statement. If it could be proved that modern women are universally or frequently or typically unwilling or incompetent to manage their houses and their children, then it would behove all men to band together firmly in defence of what, as Prof. Armstrong rightly asserts, is the foundation of society.

Moreover, I agree with the Professor when he says that training in domestic economy is a proper part of a woman's education. Let every person who has to perform a duty be fully prepared to discharge that duty effectively.

But there are two points in which I reluctantly but firmly decline to accept the Professor's guidance.

In the first place I do not agree that women are "aggressively bent on displacing him (*i.e.*, man) everywhere." No doubt some women thoroughly like to go out to work, and prefer it to domesticity. It is, however, much more commonly the case that women have been driven into the labour market by stern necessity. Consider the daughters of a struggling professional man—a clergyman, a schoolmaster, an artist. The standard of comfort for such families is high, salaries are low, competition is stringent, the old servant is nowadays almost non-existent. Who is to maintain the household? No amount of domestic labour will bring in revenue. Eligible young men are few. How many men are rich enough to marry young; how many prefer the freedom of bachelorhood to the responsibilities of the marital relation? The fact is that innumerable delicately nurtured women are being driven into the ranks of labour as governesses, schoolmistresses, nurses, dispensers, and the like. No doubt some of them prefer it. But there is little doubt that the majority heartily dislike it, and would infinitely prefer the quiet seclusion of home life. Human nature dislikes work, dislikes the necessity of adaptation to the will of the paymaster, dislikes the restraints of working for fixed hours, regardless of health, inclination, weather, and the like.

To speak of such women as "aggressively bent" on displacing men is an entire misapprehension. To demand that the education of women shall not take full account of these facts is to disregard the interests of the community in so far as they depend on the efficiency of women's work. If it were possible to provide domestic work for all women—if it were possible for the State to provide domestic work for all the women who cannot be married—well and good. The fact is that, though the home is characteristically the place for women, there are not enough homes for the women.

The second issue is a more fundamental one; it belongs to the whole truth of human development. If our children are to be competent to deal with the problems of the future, it is

essential that their parentage should be as sound as possible. That the father of the child should be a man of fine intellect, wide knowledge, and high moral character, is all to the good. But why should not its mother possess the same valuable qualities? Is it good that the one parent should be a woman of narrow views and partial development? Is it good that the parent to whom is due the earliest teaching the child receives should be blind to the wider activities which the child is later on to undertake?

Finally, I do not believe, nor, I am persuaded, does Prof. Armstrong believe, that the best possible education will, as a matter of fact, reduce the domestic competence of our women. Bad education would indeed have, perhaps *is* having, this result in many cases. But what we need is a system which will teach women to realize their domestic function, not in itself but from the wider standpoint of the great conceptions of social development—as Aristotle said, to know not only the "that" but also the "why."

This, I doubt not, is the conclusion to which Prof. Armstrong would lead us, and if I have seemed to attack him categorically, it is because I take exception fundamentally to his premiss that the present phenomena of women's "emancipation" are due to a spontaneous determination on the part of women to oust men from their rights. I believe that such a theory is true of only a small percentage of women; I believe that it is grossly unjust to the majority of women; and I believe that the fuller development of women, intellectually, socially, and politically, will conduce to the highest and noblest interests of society as a whole.

J. M. MITCHELL.

### Correspondence.

#### The Average Man.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE.'

SIR,—Your correspondent "Average Man" does indeed voice the caution and hesitancy of the average man, which so largely creates the demand for leaders. But he underrates the gentleman on another side. The average man, as I see him, will respond to an ideal if his bread and butter is not thereby threatened—frequently when it is. Your correspondent rather suggests that ideals are a matter of indifference to him.

Of course the ideal must be put before him in a way that will interest him; and here perhaps "Average Man" touches our Men's League rather nearly at present.

We can show him, however, at any rate, that "Woman Suffrage will do him no harm"; not by "muzzling our ecstatic virgins," but by pointing to the examples of our colonies and the Western States.

But after all, what we need is a new type of average man (and woman)—an average humanity that will not be the slave of its own bread and butter, but will so control the bread and butter question as to make it subserve human ideals. *The key to this new type is the equality of men and women.* Even the PRICE OF HIS TEA, and the wherewithal to pay it, can only be secured to "Average Man" by a united male and female humanity. With the one-sex point of view we shall never solve our difficulties. Average man is getting overwhelmed by social problems. Let him summon average woman to his aid.

Brighton.  
Yours truly,  
A. P. HARDY.

SIR,—"An Average Man" writes with such lucidity, and affirms with such clarity his brazen creed, if I may so term it, that it is difficult for one holding the diametrically contrary view of the basis of political science to venture against him. It is, indeed, almost impossible to argue with profit as to what we conceive as axiomatic (I hope he will pardon this lapse into Euclid phraseology). He flaunts abroad his motto "*Meliora*

probo, deteriora sequor"; in a word, whatever may be just must be postponed to what is comfortable. Now I would advance a totally different conception: that duties of citizenship confer rights, just as in a well-ordered society rights imply duties. I would urge that as long as he does not interfere with the wellbeing of his fellows, each has a right to "go to Hell his ain gait"; that the Suffrage is not a reward of merit, nor a carefully balanced mechanism for obtaining certain results, but the inalienable right (the only basis for the cohesive force of society) of each to settle in his due share the policy of the community.

But "An Average Man" has chosen his ground, and waives all such considerations aside; and as he speaks, I concede, for a vast number of others, I must, even on my own theory, meet him on the ground he has chosen. Well, his ground is roughly one of fear. A friend of mine goes further, and says that not only will men not yield to the claims of women on abstract grounds, but that if they did, he would consider it a sign of degeneracy. A curious pass that the lip-service offered to unselfishness and love of justice would, if translated into action, spell degeneracy. I gather from your correspondent's homely reference to tea, that his main fear is not one of danger to the body politic, but to the serene repose of the domestic hearth. He fears he may have to discuss the world's affairs at home. This is typical of a certain fear, which I am convinced is unfounded, that the intelligent woman of affairs is less comfortable to live with at close quarters. It is surely the reverse. The woman who makes most claims on men is the woman without rational interests, the woman who loves excitement, the petty excitements of trivial personal successes, who has not learnt by experience or study the relative proportions of the world's affairs. It is this type that is less tolerant of the divers interests of the world, more querulous and complaining of the lesser details of life. It is, on the other hand, the woman who has learnt of the claims of her own individuality that is willing to concede more to the generous flowering of the individuality of others, and incidentally she is no whit the worse housekeeper; for, with the modern correlation of the sciences, even cookery, and most of all child nurture, cannot be mastered without that larger outlook that must always be lost through any narrowing of the sphere of human activity.

It often appears that persons have an exaggerated opinion of the amount of time that the ordinary voter, even the most conscientious of ordinary voters, devotes to politics. Concede that a man's main sphere is bread winning, woman's child rearing. At the present moment the average man devotes a certain portion of his spare time to political interests. Women could spare that amount of time without treading on the time set apart for child nurture. I take my own case. My mother, a vicar's wife, visited a district, attended mothers' meetings, arranged parish concerts, organized temperance societies, paid calls upon her neighbours, entertained them in turn. Yet no one pretended that she was neglecting her family, nor that the duties of her official position unfitted her for her duties towards us, nor, again, that the home became one of discomfort for her husband. Take any similar position you like—take a Primrose dame, the manager of a Board School, the Queen of England, what you will—none has ever said that the presence of other duties made them uncomfortable to live with.

Perhaps, then, we must fall back on his other fear—that if we enfranchise women our politics will be so philanthropic that we become other-worldly. Did space permit, I would like to enlarge on the paradox of the vast costliness of running a country on a business-like *£. s. d.* basis. But can we be too ethically minded? for is not ethics but the science of right conduct? If not, away with your State religion, founded on a creed which professes, not without justice, to be the highest of ethical systems; away with your white man's burden, and, indeed, away with all the pretensions on which civilized Europe boasts itself.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

F. HERBERT TOYNE.

2, Hare Court, Temple, July 27th.

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