

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

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VOL. III.—No. 25. PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

MANCHESTER, MARCH 1, 1872.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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THE Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women was introduced in the House of Commons on the earliest possible day, having been read a first time on February 7, the day after the opening of Parliament; the second reading is fixed for the first of May, and the friends of the Bill should use every effort, by means of petitions and public meetings, to promote its success, and strengthen the hands of the Parliamentary leaders. Already we are conscious of a great increase of force, as compared with last year. More meetings have been held, and these of a more important character. We much regret that the limited space at our disposal compels us to curtail the reports, and give mere records of many which deserve a more extended notice.

The subjects which have engaged the attention of Parliament since the opening of the session, sufficiently prove the justice and necessity for the admission of the voices of women as an element in the public opinion which must ultimately decide them. The votes of women should have especial weight in deciding matters which peculiarly concern their sex or their domestic relations; and the votes both of women and men should be taken into account on matters which concern both sexes equally.

The HOME SECRETARY has introduced a Bill ostensibly, among other objects, for the "better protection of women." It contains some provisions which are entirely satisfactory, others which are satisfactory so far as they go; but the purpose of the Bill, judging by its title and by the speech of its promoter, is to extend over the whole country the principle of a system of legislation which strikes at the very foundations of morality, which deals a deadly blow at domestic purity and peace, and which deprives all poor and defenceless women of civil rights, for the avowed object of protecting men from the consequences of their own conduct. Most of the clauses for the protection of "women" refer, in fact, to children, and are defective chiefly because the protection ceases at too tender an age. Other clauses seek to protect men from evils from

which women are left unguarded, and to impose penalties on women for offences for which men are to go free. Should the House of Commons pass the second reading of a measure embodying these principles, it will add another to the proofs it has already given that with its present constituency it is unfit to be trusted to legislate for women.

The Bill to render legal marriage with a deceased wife's sister has again passed the second reading in the House of Commons. During the debate Mr. CLAY, in supporting the Bill, adduced as an argument why the House should accept it, the circumstance that at a meeting of his constituents, where there were 600 or 700 women present, he explained the Bill and took a show of hands, and out of the whole number only 6 or 7 held up their hands against it. This argument comes with singular inconsistency from a member who votes against the repeal of the electoral disabilities of women. If women are not fit to have a voice in the election of a representative, still less are they fit to have a voice in the enactment of a law. If Mr. CLAY really desires the House of Commons to be guided by the sentiments of women in framing the laws, he is logically bound to support a measure providing for the expression of those sentiments in a regular and constitutional manner, by according to women a voice in the election of responsible representatives. From the ground occupied in common by Mr. CLAY and Mr. BERESFORD HOPE—namely that women ought not to have a voice in the government, the honourable member for the University of Cambridge was perfectly justified in rejecting this plea of Mr. CLAY for the Bill as a "rubbishing argument"—on the ground that "women were not electors."

So long as women are not electors, the vote of the House of Commons on this question represents the vote of only one of the parties to a contract, the conditions of which it is sought to alter, and to alter in such a manner that the unrepresented party is placed in a state of domestic and family relations which is not assumed by the party

which has a voice in making the laws. The fact that there are such differences in proposed and existing laws for husband and wife, proves the need for representative government for women.

Mr. STAVELY HILL has obtained leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, so far as regards debts contracted by women who afterwards marry. The Act of 1870 was hastily substituted by the House of Lords for the Bill which had received the assent of the House of Commons. It is mischievous in principle and defective in its application, and its passing has indefinitely retarded the settlement of the question on an equitable basis. What may be the precise effect of the amendment proposed by Mr. STAVELY HILL we are unaware; but we deprecate any attempt to patch up a measure which is radically wrong in principle, or to re-open the question without coming to a final and conclusive settlement. The basis of such a settlement must be that which was propounded by Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE in his original Bill, namely, the abrogation and not the modification of the rule of common law by which a woman forfeits her property rights on marriage. Less than this will not satisfy the just demands of women, or the demands of just men.

The question of the removal of electoral disabilities from women has a two-fold aspect—the disabilities of the individual persons possessing the qualification whose votes are rejected because they are women—and the disabilities of the sex generally, and the injurious consequences to them of the deprivation of representative government. We believe that these disabilities form no part of the constitution of this realm, but that they are accidental if not modern deviations from the rule which governs every other suffrage than the Parliamentary one. Mr. CARLYLE, in his essay on an election in the Long Parliament, gives the following incident as recorded by Sir SIMON D'EWES, High Sheriff in the Suffolk election in 1640:—"Tis true that by the ignorance of some of the clerks at the other tables, the oaths of some single women that were freeholders were taken without the knowledge of the said High Sheriffe; who, as soon as he had notice thereof, instantlie sent to forbid the same, conceiving it a matter verie unworthy of anie gentleman, and most dishonourable in such an election to make use of their voices, *although they might in law have been allowed*; nor did the said High Sheriffe allow of the said votes upon his numbering the said poll, but with the allowance and consent of the two knights themselves, discount them and cast them out."

It appears to us that the matter really dishonourable and unworthy of a gentleman, was, to discount and cast out votes which according to his own showing, might in law have been allowed; and it is probably through similar conduct to that of the High Sheriff of Suffolk, that the ancient right of women in parliamentary elections has been lost. Our claim now is, that for the sake of the personal rights of individuals, the special interests of the sex, and the general welfare of society, the voices of women may be no longer discounted and cast out in reckoning the influences that direct the national counsels.

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

HOUSE OF LORDS, *Friday, Feb. 9.* PETITION.

The Earl of DUFFERIN presented a petition from the Inhabitants of Warrington, in favour of the extension of the suffrage to women.

Tuesday, Feb. 13.

The Earl of DERBY presented a petition from Bury, in Lancashire, against the electoral disabilities of women.

Thursday, Feb. 15.

The Earl of DUCIE presented a petition signed by Lady Amberley on behalf of a meeting at Bristol, in favour of legislative measures for removing the electoral disabilities of women.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *Wednesday, Feb. 7th.*

Women's Disabilities Removal Bill to remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Eastwick, and Dr. Lyon Playfair.

Women's Disabilities Removal Bill "to remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women" presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 20.]—*From Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons.*

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE BILL:—

A Bill to Remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women.

Be it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. That in all Acts relating to the qualification and registration of voters or persons entitled or claiming to be registered and to vote in the election of Members of Parliament, wherever words occur which import the masculine gender, the same shall be held to include females for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to be registered as voters, and to vote in such election, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

A new female training college, in connection with the British and Foreign School Society, has been opened at Darlington, it being found that the distance of London from the North of England has prevented many teachers from seeking admission to the training college at Stockwell.—*Pontefract Telegraph.*

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

BRISTOL.

On February 2nd, the annual public meeting of the Bristol and West of England Society for Women's Suffrage was held at the Broadmead Rooms. There was a very numerous attendance, a large proportion of those present being ladies. Lady Amberley, president of the society, took the chair; and upon the platform were Viscount Amberley, Miss Ashworth, Miss Lillas Ashworth, Miss Ramsay, Mrs. Beddoe, Rev. U. R. Thomas, Mrs. Colman, Miss Estlin, Miss Canning, Miss Hill, Rev. W. James, Mr. W. H. Myers, Miss Sturge, Rev. J. W. Caldicott, General Hobson, and Mrs. Hobson, Miss Moole, Mr. Wilberforce Tribe, Mr. John F. Norris, &c.

Lady AMBERLEY, who on rising was received with loud applause, said: Ladies and Gentlemen—We are met this evening to advocate and support the Bill for the electoral enfranchisement of women, which was brought into Parliament by Mr. Jacob Bright. Mr. Bouverie, who moved the rejection of the Bill, tried to make out that this agitation came to us from America, the land "fertile in strange notions and ideas," as he called it. He hoped thereby to discredit it. Whether it be a reason (in your eyes) for rejecting it, that it came from the country which has so rapidly developed into one of the greatest nations of the world, owing to its carrying out and carrying on the notions of political liberty which it imbibed from the mother country, I will not stop to ask, for the assertion is not a fact. The enfranchisement of women and their equality with men was written about and discussed in England nearly 100 years ago—Mary Wollstonecraft having given an impulse to the subject by her book of the "Vindication of the Rights of Women." America was at that time engrossed with other struggles, and only in 1848 did this subject arise in the United States, when a woman's convention was held at Seneca Falls, and was followed by the formation of the National Women's Rights Association. The wave that had spread from these shores now rolled back with redoubled force; the tide could no longer be stemmed; converts were rapidly made, and societies formed. Since then those who read newspapers or periodicals may have been well bored with women's rights. But this boring, such as we are inflicting on you to-night, is a necessary process in every change brought about in England. Luckily for our country we do not carry measures by revolutions or spasmodic efforts, always liable to a worse reaction, but we go slowly and steadily to work to gain our point by talking and writing, and more than all by the inestimable privilege of free public meetings at which people may talk the most arrant nonsense, or the fiercest republicanism without let or hindrance, and long may this greatest of safeguards be respected. By this system of boring then, of importunity which we were taught in our Biblical education was the best way of gaining our end, we hope to convince our opponents, and to be nothing daunted by being told (even by Mr. Bouverie) that the women's question "is pretty well played out by this time." It will be played out only when we have gained the franchise, and can then agitate for further reforms in the laws respecting women, with the same effectual machinery that male constituents now have at their command, to carry our measures so antipathetic to the House of Commons as Trade Union Bills, Land Tenure Reforms, or Corrupt Practices at Elections Bills. How many of the candidates for seats in Parliament carry out their own views respecting Sunday questions, or the Permissive Bill, or any of these other measures. The first thing inquired into is the respective strength of the Nonconformist body, the publicans, the Permissive Bill men, and so on, and the candidate thereon often frames, I won't say his views, but his votes.

I do not think this the right way by any means, but mention it to show the engine of power now in the hands of the male part of the constituency, denied to women. So much only will I now say for the utility of the measure we advocate, but I should like to add one word as to the sentiment or esthetic side of the question which it is taken for granted we are quite indifferent to. I suppose it is so thought, from its being generally argued (in spite of women having so much to do with it) from the business point of view, and looked upon as requisite to secure justice and fair dealing for women. One of the arguments for it that oftenest convinces men (even Mr. Gladstone owns its weight) is the fact that women are often turned out of a farm, on losing their husband or brother, for fear of the *landlord* losing such a valuable article as that one vote. It is strange that only the argument of £ s. d. should be thought worthy of consideration, and that men can understand that women may dislike to lose all their worldly advantages and be turned adrift to begin life anew in some strange place, but do not understand that it may be quite as unpleasant for a woman to be taxed without a voice in the matter, or to be rated for a sectarian school, or see the country plunged into a foolish or useless war, or the education at the Universities kept strictly for men and for Churchmen; all this may happen, and she remains helpless and impotent to protest in any practical way against these grievances; and men think and say, "that cannot signify to a woman; these are public matters and do not affect her home life, which is her only proper sphere." How, living in such a complex state of things as we do, any law or act can be said not to affect even home life, I do not see. These practical reasons are undoubtedly the first and most important points. We do not seek to ornament our houses till we have got the bricks and mortar, nor do those shivering with cold stop to consider if a warm garment is of a becoming colour. We have many countrywomen shivering as it were at this moment under the pressure of their unequal political status, and we must give them the protection they demand before we consider if this adds to their grace and beauty. To them it is a matter of necessity. Afterwards we will consider if the upper 10,000 whom Mr. Gladstone says "have not even a presumptive case" for it, will be benefited. For these fortunate ones we will look upon it only as an ornament, not a necessity. As such we need not fear it, and can quote in our favour the most idealistic and poetical of poets. Shelley, after calling the present state of things "a servitude in which half of human kind were mewed, says:—

"Well with the world art thou unreconciled;
Never will peace and human nature meet
Till free and equal, man and woman greet
Domestic peace."

If our opponents can pretend to more poetical fervour, and more devotion to a beautiful ideal than Shelley, I question if they understand the meaning of poetry. Have not the greatest poets taken their most beautiful conceptions either from a golden age in the past which never existed, or from an ideal future founded on their conviction of the possible development of greater virtues and beauties in our nature than we have yet reached. Only the extreme Conservative could venture to assert that we have reached the limit of progression, and that any change henceforward will be retrogression. Not any change, they may say, but this will certainly be done for the worse. Will the woman who has noble desires, unselfish wishes, hopes, and aspirations not bounded by the good of her husband and children—one who, as Shelley says, can endue her husband's purpose with wider sympathy, or who could give up her own hopes of happiness for the public advantage—who will work for the public good in a public way, who will desire and accept

the responsibility of a public trust—will she be degraded by her work—rather will she bring the vigour, the stir, the great aims and ends of life into the home, purifying and ennobling those public questions which are now thought so contaminating and so destructive of all beauty and ideality. How can her character be injured by considering such things as the education of the people, the great and never ending question of religious liberty, the State Church, the harmony and good will of other nations, and, above all, the question of war with its attendant difficulties of standing armies, increased taxation, and the best way of securing peace. How, I repeat, can any being be injured by considering such questions, and forming and expressing a deliberate opinion on them. The higher being is the most complex, and men and women have no right to impose on those who wish for that highest possible development, the suffocation of all their noblest and best desires.

Miss RAMSAY, the hon. secretary, then read the report.

Miss ESTLIN, the hon. treasurer, read the treasurer's account, which showed an expenditure of £77. 17s. 9d., and a balance of £3. 5s. 1d. due to the treasurer. Much as they were in need of funds, they needed sympathy and co-operation still more. (Applause.)

Professor NEWMAN then said he had been requested to state that they had received some friendly letters from a number of ladies and gentlemen. Dr. Lush, M.P., W. Morrison, Esq., M.P., Mr. Sholto Hare, Mr. and Lady Anne Gore Langton (cheers and hisses), Canon Kingsley and Lady Bowring, Rev. Alexander Knox, Miss Carpenter (loud cheers), had written to express regret that it was out of their power to attend the meeting. Lady Bowring, in particular, wrote: "As the injustice done to women ratepayers by non-representation is becoming more apparent to the thoughtful members of the community, I am led to hope that the present state of things cannot last, and I hail the efforts that are made by the various societies to diffuse information on a topic fraught with such important and beneficial results." (Applause.) Miss Mary Carpenter, who was at Weymouth, had written a long letter, indicating her strong convictions that women had as large a right as men to the Parliamentary vote. (Hear, hear.) There was another letter which he should like to read in full, because it was written under special circumstances. There was in Clifton now—Bristol and Clifton—a "Conservative Ladies' Association." There the Women's Suffrage Society took no part between the two great bodies of Liberals and Conservatives into which people were divided in England. (Applause.) They had supporters from both sides, but it so happened that the Conservative ladies were zealous in the cause of women's suffrage. (Hear, hear, and cries of "oh, oh," and laughter.) And he understood that they desired in a certain way to divide the field of canvassing between their society (the Women's Suffrage Society) and theirs, as it would be an economy to both. It was a mere executive action, and they had invited the lady secretary, Mrs. Savage, to appear on the platform that night, and he understood that she was there.

Viscount AMBERLEY rose to propose the first resolution, and was received with loud applause. He moved the adoption of the report and treasurer's statement. Willing as I always am to say whatever it may be in my power to say in behalf of women's suffrage, I cannot but think that that cause has now reached a stage at which more will depend on the conduct and example of women themselves than on the speeches which may be made by men. (Applause.) Although it was necessary when this question was first agitated, and to a great extent is necessary still, that the abstract arguments in favour of women's suffrage should be placed clearly before the public, yet I think that now they may rely more on that which women themselves

will do in those spheres of political or semi-political life which have already been opened to them. (Applause.) I allude to the municipal suffrage and the school board suffrage. Practically when those two suffrages were granted the principle at issue was conceded. The experience which will be gained by the exercise of the suffrage by women in these cases will familiarise men with their political action, and will induce them in time to grant the Parliamentary suffrage as well. Now the position which Parliament has taken up at the present moment, that of allowing women to vote in municipalities, of allowing them to vote for school boards, and even to sit at school boards, yet not allowing them to vote for members of Parliament, is one of the most inconsistent positions that can possibly be assumed. I can easily understand total opposition to this measure. I can understand a man saying that it is not the province of women, that they will only do harm by meddling in it. (Applause.) If that were the case, I should say by all means forbid them from interfering where their interference cannot be to the public advantage— forbid them leaving that domestic sphere which you think is all for which they are fit. (Applause.) That view I can easily understand; but I cannot understand the view which seems to be at this moment taken by the British Parliament, who have no objection to women taking part in the management of municipal affairs and in the important questions which are brought before school boards, and yet objects to their exercising the privilege of Parliamentary suffrage. I venture to say that had any position so illogical as this been taken by a female parliament, we should have had no end of exclamations about the incapacity of women to grasp a general principle—(hear, hear)—and of the unreasoning character of their minds. We should have been told, as one of the principal opponents of the measure told us when it was last debated in the House of Commons, that the sympathetic element in the mental constitution of women blinded them to all logic. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) What it may be that has blinded Parliament to all logic in this instance I will not undertake to say—certainly not the sympathetic element. (Laughter and applause.) I prefer illogical conduct with the sympathetic element to illogical conduct without it. There is some good in the one, but I can see no good in the other. However, granting the fact that men are more logical and women more sympathetic, I can see no reason whatever in this for excluding women from the suffrage. It is altogether unreasonable to draw the inference that women should be excluded from the affairs of Parliament. In a country like ours, where there is so much misery to be remedied, so much suffering of all kinds, I should think that plenty of sympathy combined with the logical element was precisely what was required for legislation. (Applause.) However, you may be sure when so much has been conceded that the rest is coming. There are signs of the coming surrender. One of the clearest signs, I think, is to be found in the speech of the Prime Minister, when he suggested that, although it might be inconvenient for women personally to vote at elections, he thought he would be inclined to give them the suffrage if they were only to exercise it through a deputy. Now, when such arguments as this are used it becomes perfectly clear that the fortress of the enemy is about to capitulate, and that we have only to insist on our own terms in their full extent in order to get them granted. (Applause.) Let us look to the correlative of this. Anyone who approves of this plan of voting by deputy should also approve of the hard and rough work which so often falls to the lot of women being done by deputy. If it is considered that the exercise of the suffrage contaminates women, how is it that they are not contaminated by that work already? And if they are, our

opponents should propose a retrogressive measure which would altogether alter the character of English life and destroy the freedom of women. But the fact is that those who argue in this way are thinking only of ladies of their own class. Now, while I have nothing to say against the character of English ladies, it is simply ridiculous, to talk as if they were all, without exception, models of domestic and quiet life. Many of them spend much time in the amusements of society, and these take them away from home as much as political life could do. The hours of the House of Commons are no doubt long and late, but the hours of society are still longer and still later, and whatever woman can do in the one without losing her domestic character, she can more fitly do in the other. More formidable than this argument is one that we frequently hear, that we are pressing for the suffrage for spinsters and widows, and not for married women, who it is said would be most competent to exercise it. This is not strictly correct, although a great deal might be said in favour of such a proposal. But we happen to find a certain qualification for the suffrage in existence. We do not enter into the question whether that qualification is good or bad. It suffices that the constitution of the country has long associated the right to vote with the possession or occupation of property. If that bungling bill which recently passed through the House of Lords is made a more complete measure, it is obvious that married women, if they possess the qualification, will be able to vote. Besides, in the course of time university degrees may, I hope, be granted to women, who will then possess a purely personal qualification which will be independent of the incident of marriage. I know that at the mention of university degrees for women, people will exclaim that we are bringing about a state of things in which the functions of the two sexes will be interchanged. You may have seen a very little amusing book which came from America, called "The Spirit of Seventy-six," in which the men stay at home to look after the babies, and the women go out; in which the young ladies propose marriage, and the bachelors accept it. (A laugh.) I do not suppose any one seriously entertains such fears; but I may remark that I cannot see how a man would be any the worse for understanding something of the management of children. Cato is said to have always superintended the washing of his children—(laughter)—and I suppose he was not a worse Roman citizen for that. And with regard to women, which is likely to discharge her domestic duties best, the woman who has wide and large interests, or the woman who has small or narrow interests? Which is the most likely to welcome a new discovery in science, to appreciate an argument, to second the orders of a doctor in illness with intelligence? Why, all experience proves that the cultivation of special intelligence goes along with the cultivation of general intelligence. You might as well hope to make a good lawyer by bidding a man read nothing all his life but legal books, or a good clergyman by never allowing him to know anything but the Bible, as good wives and mothers by confining women entirely to that occupation. While, therefore, women will be benefited by becoming better wives and mothers, the State will be benefited by the opinions and knowledge of women. On this subject I might refer to Plato, who was I believe the earliest, and certainly one of the most thorough, of the advocates of women's equality, who said that "Nothing can be more absurd than the practice of women not following the same pursuits as men with all their strength and with one mind; for thus the State, instead of being a whole and as such again, is reduced to a half; and yet has the same imposts to pay, and the same toils to undergo; and this is a wonderful mistake for any legislator to make." This, I say with Plato, is a wonderful mistake for a legislator to make; and it is to remedy that wonderful mistake that we are now

endeavouring to enable men and women to co-operate "with all their strength and with one mind" for the common good. (Applause.)

Miss E. M. STURGE, of Birmingham, seconded the resolution. She remarked that at the Council of Macon, in the year 1235, it was gravely debated whether women were human creatures. She thought it was much to the credit of the ecclesiastics of the 13th century that they debated the question gravely, and not with any implied assumption that women have not human needs, capacities, and responsibilities. She argued that it was only upon the assumption that women were not human creatures that civil rights could be logically denied them, and she was confirmed in that belief by the remarks to which Lord Amberley had alluded in Mr. James's speech in the last Parliamentary debate, which was considered the ablest speech in opposition to Mr. Jacob Bright's motion. The words stood—"The sympathetic element in the mental constitution of women absolutely blinds them to all logic." (Laughter.) The difference between the human creature and the brute creation consisted in the possession of reasoning capacity—all logic must surely include reason. (Hear, hear.) In looking through Mr. James's speech, she might perhaps be excused the suspicion that there were indications of the same mental blindness which he so freely attributed to women. (Applause.) She did not wish to be satirical—she knew no easier way of calling one's own logic in question than by impugning that of other people; but it occurred to her that she had never yet taken up a speech which asserted that women were too sentimental and illogical to be qualified for the exercise of the franchise without finding that the speech proved that they (the women) were not alone in that disqualification. (Laughter and applause.) Her first complaint against Mr. James's speech was that he blamed the Prime Minister for introducing the ballot into the question, and then did so twice over himself. (Hear.) With regard to women of property having votes, he said if property itself were the thing to be represented why should not minors vote? (Laughter.) Mr. James did not appear to see that the case of minors was not a parallel one; minors voted when they came of age, and they had never asked that women should do more than that. (Laughter and applause.) Further on, upon the question of fitness to govern, he asked whether it was not true that upon all matters connected with the army and navy, and matters commercial, diplomatic, and legal, women would have to judge on the basis of information obtained second hand and not from practical experience? If such second-hand information was valueless, surely Mr. James's information about women must be so. (Loud applause.) Finally, Mr. James invoked Nature to his aid and said, "Nature ordained and custom ratified the place for women in the State." With those two controlling forces—Nature to ordain and custom to ratify—what did they need with a House of Commons? (Loud applause.) The Education Bill must be a complete mistake, for Nature brought children into the world ignorant, and custom had ratified that a large number of them should remain so. (Applause.) Mr. Bouverie had spoken once or twice very lengthily in opposition to the Bill, but he took up a different task to Mr. James—she should call it the pedestal theory. (Laughter.) He said that women should never come down from their pedestal—any work, political or otherwise, would degrade them. She had very much wondered how the work of every household could be conducted upon the principle Mr. Bouverie represented. (Laughter.) If Mr. Bouverie believed in the principles he advocated, she thought that he ought to found a society for providing ladies with the means to remain on their pedestals. (Laughter.) She would then have more belief in his faith in his own principles. (Hear, hear.) It was

sometimes said that if women voted they would have to go into crowds, and that it was undesirable that they should go into crowds. For herself she had never tried to go into crowds, and she had never avoided them, and if they asked people politely they would give way—(applause); and if men were not fit to be met with in public, how must it be for the poor women who were with them at home? (Loud applause.) In conclusion she remarked that she thought the vote was a very valuable bringing home of responsibility to every human creature—they were too little apt to think of responsibility unless it was brought home to them in a direct manner. (Applause.)

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

The Rev. J. W. CALDICOTT proposed a vote of thanks to the members of Parliament who had voted for the Bill.

The Rev. URIJAH THOMAS seconded the resolution.

The resolution was then carried with five or six dissentients.

Mr. HERBERT THOMAS then in an appropriate speech proposed that a petition to both Houses of Parliament should be signed by Lady Amberley on behalf of the meeting, and forwarded to Earl Ducie for presentation to the House of Lords, and to the senior member for Bristol for presentation to the House of Commons.

Miss LILIAS ASHWORTH, of Bath, who in seconding the resolution was enthusiastically received, trusted that the 202 members of Parliament who voted for the Women's Disability Bill would be more strengthened than they hitherto had been by petitions from the constituencies of the country generally. Last year the petitions to Parliament in favour of the Bill were signed by 187,000 persons (applause); and when they considered this fact, and also the great number of public meetings held throughout the country, that had been mostly addressed by women, she thought it hardly possible for their opponents to say that women did not want the suffrage. (Applause.) As a householder and owner of property herself in several constituencies, she might say that she never paid the Imperial taxes without a sense of the indignity of the position in which she was placed. (Hear, hear.) She pointed out that the Bill they were asked to support proposed only to enfranchise those women who fulfilled all the conditions as ratepayers required, as men, and she contended that at any rate the vote should be tendered from the home, whether it emanated from the husband or the wife, the man or the woman.

Mr. J. F. NORRIS supported the resolution in an earnest speech, and read the petition, which prayed the House to pass the Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women. Mr. Norris expressed the opinion that in this part of the country it would be an intensely Conservative measure for some years ("no, no," and cheers); but whether Liberal or Conservative it was a common matter of justice. (Applause.)

The resolution was carried with half-a-dozen dissentients, and on the motion of Professor Newman, seconded by Mr. Wilberforce Tribe, a vote of thanks was given to the lady president and to those who had come from a distance.

Lady AMBERLEY, in replying, trusted that that room, in which had already been witnessed to the triumph of so many great causes, they would one day have to congratulate one another on the success of the object which they at present had at heart.

The proceedings then terminated.

WARRINGTON.

On January 29th a public meeting was held in the Wycliffe Hall, Warrington, in support of the Bill to Remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women. The room was crowded, a large proportion of the audience consisting of ladies. The chair was taken by Mr. Peter Rylands, M.P., who was accompanied on

the platform by Miss Lydia Becker, of Manchester; Mrs. Ronniger, of London; and Mrs. Moreton, of Lynn. There were also present, the ex-mayor (Mr. C. Broadbent), Rev. G. S. Reaney, Aldermen Holmes and Neild, Major Cartwright, Mr. Artingstall, Mr. John Harrison, Mr. Greening, &c.

The CHAIRMAN said: I have been requested to take the chair to-night, not in any way with a view of giving this meeting a political character, because I wish it to be distinctly understood that there is no question of a party nature involved in the opinions which will be brought before the meeting this evening. The question of women's franchise is in no sense a question of a party nature, because in the House of Commons on the last occasion when I had the honour to vote for the franchise being given to women, I found myself in the same lobby with Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Ward Hunt, and Lord John Manners, and therefore we may fairly take it this question is one that must be considered entirely apart from any political views. The question has reference to the enfranchisement of women, wherever a woman lives in a house and pays rates, either as a widow or as an unmarried woman; wherever women undertake the duties which would devolve upon a man under similar circumstances, then the object of the Women's Franchise Association is to give to such women votes in precisely the same manner as they would have had had they belonged to the other sex. It seems to me that women should have votes because now every year will bring up before us great social questions in which they are particularly interested. In dealing with a question, for instance the drink traffic—(hear, hear)—women have a very deep and sincere interest in it, and might give very good votes upon that subject. (Applause.) In reference to the rights of women—their personal and property rights—they have a perfect claim to be heard in the house of Commons, because if you take the statute book of this kingdom you will find that the laws of this country have been made by men, and that whenever it happened that the interests of women came into contact with the interest and the desires of men, the interests of women have been sacrificed to the desires and to the interests of men. I must mention one circumstance showing the indirect effect of women not having the franchise. There is no reason why women should not be farmers, and that the widow of a farmer left in the occupation of a farm should not be allowed to carry on a farm, but in many cases as soon as a woman has the misfortune to lose her husband who happened to be a farmer, the landlord takes care to get rid of her, simply because she has not a vote. I will state a fact that I have received upon information which I can fully rely, communicated to me by the parties concerned. A gentleman in the neighbourhood of Liverpool took a farm from one of the landowners of Lancashire, in the neighbourhood of Liverpool, and in order to get possession of that farm he gave to the outgoing tenant a very large sum of money. I believe he reckoned that he had given about £1,000 to induce the outgoing tenant to leave the farm. Relying upon his landlord, he proceeded to lay out £2,000 or £3,000 in a manner which could not by any possibility have given him a return for several years. After he had invested some £4,000 or £5,000 in this property he unfortunately died. I tell you as a matter of fact upon which I have no doubt, and I think I ought to say that the landowner in question belongs to the same political party as myself, and I do not wish to make any political capital out of it. That this landlord actually gave notice to his agent that this poor widow who had lost her husband under these distressing circumstances, should leave her farm, and although great representations were made to the landowner that her husband had invested all this money in the expectation that he would receive from it a very considerable return, yet because

this poor widow was a woman and had no vote, and could not support the political party this man belonged to, she was turned out of her farm, and the money which her husband had laid out on the farm, expecting no doubt that it would be for his benefit and the benefit of his family, was all sacrificed. I say this is an infamous thing, and certainly it ought to lead us to see that no woman under any circumstances should be placed in that position of disadvantage.

The Rev. G. S. REANEY moved a resolution affirming the principle of Women's Suffrage. He said he appeared there that night in the character of a man who, as an elector, wished to do justice to women. He was struck with the reference which Mr. Rylands had made to Mr. James's assertion that because the ladies did not know anything about the army, the law, and this thing or that, they should not have votes. If that argument was carried out to its logical conclusion then only lawyers would have anything to do with law making, and only soldiers with voting supplies for the army. He wondered whether they were prepared to give in to that principle, and allow men who were most interested in a particular matter to have the whole control of it and voting the supplies. (Hear, hear.)

The resolution was seconded by Mr. ARTINGSTALL and supported by Mrs. RONNIGER, and on being put to the meeting, was carried by a large majority.

Miss LYDIA BECKER moved a resolution of thanks to the 159 members of the House of Commons who voted or paired for the Women's Disabilities Bill, on March 3rd, 1871.

The motion was seconded by

Mrs. MORTON, of Lynn, who said: I have very great pleasure in being allowed to come amongst you this evening, and especially to second this resolution, because I feel from my heart that we owe a great amount of gratitude to those Members of Parliament—Mr. Rylands, Mr. Jacob Bright, Dr. Lion Playfair, and others—who have so nobly come forward and defended this our Bill in the House of Commons. We cannot possibly do better on this occasion than express our thanks to them, and encourage them to go forward and press the matter upon the Legislature until we arrive at success. I feel that on this question of women's suffrage the justice of our cause is such that no rational man or woman who will give the subject now before us their calm consideration can hesitate a moment in pronouncing in favour of it. There can be no reason why the thoughtful, educated woman should be placed at a disadvantage when those who have had no such advantages are permitted to exercise the power and right of choosing representatives who are to elect how their money shall be spent. It is a very hard and a very unfair thing that women are called upon to contribute their full share of the liabilities and the responsibilities of Government, and yet be excluded from a share in deciding the way in which that money shall be spent. (Cheers.) I am sure that the more the women of this country will give their thoughts to these subjects the better their minds will be employed, and so far from their being anything unfeminine in considering these questions it can only promote their intellectual, social, and moral improvement. (Applause.) We see women at the present time occupied in various ways. There are many amongst our higher classes whose home is a misery and a trouble to themselves, who rise late because they do not know how to spend their days, and who are glad to while away the *ennui* and weariness of their lives by any device they can arrive at. Were these women to occupy their minds with higher social questions we should have an impetus given to society generally that would carry us forward many centuries in advance of our present civilization. (Cheers.) It has been said that if we could see the Statute Book, we should find that

there are many laws there which are a disgrace to it, and I feel very strongly on many of these points, where the law is pressing in a most unjustifiable manner upon women, and I would just allude to one in which I shall carry with me the hearts of mothers of families. I allude to that by which a mother is not considered the natural and legal guardian of her own child in cases of the husband's decease. I feel that it is such a blot upon our Statute Book, that I should know no rest nor any peace, until that statute is erased from the Statute Book, and until that event takes place it is my earnest desire to make it known everywhere I can, and to instigate all our young men to do, at least, the justice which is allowed them to do, that of placing their wives' names as the natural and legal guardians of the children belonging to them both. (Cheers.) I am unable to-night to take up more of your time with any further observations. I have not, like Miss Becker or Mrs. Ronniger, entered into the statistics, and I am not accustomed to address public meetings, therefore I can only join in giving my warm-hearted support to all those ladies who are devoting their minds and hearts. I wish also to say that I shall be able to support the question in every possible way that I can in Warrington, and to assist it by all the means in my power, so that we might bring the question this or next year to a triumphant issue in the British House of Commons. (Cheers.)

The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. BROADBENT proposed a resolution adopting petitions for the Bill.

Major CARTWRIGHT seconded the proposition. It was the first time he had heard ladies make speeches upon such an occasion, and he must say their arguments appeared most sound and convincing. If members of the House of Commons who opposed the Women's Suffrage Bill only listened to the ladies who had addressed them that evening, he thought they would be willing to concede their claims. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He had no doubt that women would be able to exercise the franchise in an equally intelligent manner with men, and he had great pleasure in seconding the resolution, which was duly put and carried unanimously.—*Abridged from the Warrington Guardian.*

MANCHESTER.

On January 30th a public meeting, in support of the bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women, was held in the Manchester Town Hall—the Rev. S. A. Steinthal in the chair. Amongst those present were Mrs. Ronniger, of London, Miss Alice Wilson, Miss Lydia Becker, Mr. R. D. Rusden, Mr. T. B. Waters, and other ladies and gentlemen interested in the movement.

Miss Lucy Wilson (Leeds) sent a letter of apology. She said:—

"Dear Miss Becker,—I trust that the meeting will pronounce so decidedly the opinion of your influential city in our favour as to give a real impulse to the movement. We must win, as soon as people will seriously consider our claim; but paradoxical as it may sound, it seems to me that the enormous strength of our cause is our chief weakness. People refuse to believe because they will not inquire, and they refuse to inquire because they will not believe, that the existing state of things can be so unjust, so really cruel, and so really inexcusable as we declare it to be. The very flagrancy of the injustice makes them declare that it cannot be unjust, for if it were so it would not exist! They do not like to admit that they can even have been so far wrong. Such people should be reminded that they are not responsible for the acts of their forefathers except in so far as they adopt and endorse them themselves. It is not their fault that women are disfranchised: it will be their fault if they continue to be so. On such questions as free trade,

close boroughs, religious disabilities, and representation of the mass of the people, they have already decided that their forefathers were either fundamentally wrong, or that the regulations which once were expedient have ceased to be so from altered circumstances. We ask them seriously to consider whether the time has not come when the disfranchisement of women is at least as indefensible as the exclusion of Nonconformists from educational rewards and emoluments; seriously to consider what right, and how derived, one human being can have to decree the everlasting slavery of another."

The CHAIRMAN, after a few remarks, called upon Mrs. RONNIGER (London) who moved the following resolution:—"That the exclusion of women, otherwise legally qualified, from voting in elections of members of Parliament being unjust in principle and inexpedient in practice, this meeting is of opinion that the right of voting should be given to them on the same conditions as it is, or may be, granted to men."

Mr. T. B. WATERS seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. R. D. RUSDEN moved a resolution approving the course taken by the members for Manchester in introducing and supporting the Women's Disabilities Bill.

Miss LYDIA BECKER seconded the resolution. She said it was not the least gratifying circumstance connected with this agitation that the five members for Manchester and Salford, who were not, that she knew, agreed upon any other political question, voted in one solid phalanx for this Woman's Suffrage Bill. It was simply a Household Suffrage Bill, and it adhered strictly to the ancient lines of the constitution. They were not asking for the introduction of any fancy franchise or new electoral law—they were only asking for the application of the existing electoral law to all persons who were qualified under its provisions.

The resolution was then carried.

Miss ALICE WILSON then moved and Miss HODGSON seconded the adoption of a petition to the Lords and Commons, and also that a memorial be sent to the Premier praying the support of the Government to the Women's Disabilities Bill.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

A lecture, on "The Political Disabilities of Women" was delivered on February 15, by Miss Lydia E. Becker, in the clubroom of the St. Clement's and Oxford Wards Liberal Club, No. 33, London Road. The meeting, which was crowded, included a large number of ladies. Mr. W. Southern acted as chairman. At the conclusion of Miss Becker's address, Mr. THOMAS ALDCROFT proposed that a petition in favour of the enfranchisement of women should be adopted by the meeting, signed by the chairman, and forwarded to Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P., for presentation to the House of Commons.—Mr STRONG seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

SALFORD.

On January 31, Miss Becker gave an address on the Political Disabilities of Women, by invitation of the Greengate and St. Matthias branches of the Salford Liberal Association, in the Liberal Hall, Broughton Road. The chair was occupied by Samuel Mellor, Esq. The room was densely crowded, and the lecture received with cordial approbation.

BURY, LANCASHIRE.

On February 1st a meeting in support of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill was held in the large room of the Athenæum, Bury, presided over by Mr. R. H. Alcock. There were present:—Miss Lydia Becker, of Manchester; Mrs. Ronniger, of London; Mr. J. Ainsworth, and Mr. Skelton. The meeting was fairly attended.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the meeting, remarked that when he was first asked to take the chair he declined, because he was not a supporter of the women's suffrage movement, and he had not seen his way clear to support it. At the same time he must say that he thought it right that the people of Bury should know something about this matter, because it was one which had been brought before the whole country. It had also been brought before Parliament, and it was a subject upon which the whole of the country evidently took a great deal of interest. It was therefore right that the people of Bury should not be entirely shut out from hearing what was to be said in favour of the scheme. He then called upon

Mrs. RONNIGER to move the first resolution, which affirmed the principle of the Bill.

Mr. AINSWORTH seconded the resolution, and in the course of his remarks said there had been too much class legislation in this country, which had been the cause of the exclusion of women from exercising the franchise.

The CHAIRMAN then put the resolution to the meeting, and declared that the feeling was decidedly in favour of it.

Miss BECKER moved a resolution, adopting petitions to Parliament and a memorial to Mr. Gladstone in support of the Bill:—"That the following petition be adopted and signed by the chairman, on behalf of this meeting, and forwarded to R. N. Phillips, Esq., M.P., for presentation, with a request that he will support its prayer; that a similar petition to the House of Lords be adopted, and that a memorial be forwarded to Mr. Gladstone, praying that the support of Her Majesty's Government may be given to the Women's Disabilities Bill." In supporting the resolution, Miss Becker stated that she had a reason for coming to Bury, and that reason was that Bury was the only Lancashire borough which sent a member to Parliament who voted against the Women's Disabilities Bill. She thought the remedy was in their own hands, and that Mr. Phillips would not vote against the Bill if he had reason to believe that his constituency were convinced that the measure was just. She hoped the voters of Bury would instruct him upon that point. She hoped next session when the Bill was brought forward that the Government would take this grave question seriously to heart, and consider whether the reasons which made the franchise valuable and desirable to men did not also make it a necessity for women. (Applause.)

The resolution was carried almost unanimously, and a vote of thanks to the chairman terminated the proceedings.

OLDHAM.

On February 2nd, a well attended meeting was held in the Temperance Hall, Horsedodge-street, in furtherance of the agitation now on foot for removing the electoral disabilities from women householders. The Rev. Arthur Peaton presided.

Mrs. RONNIGER, of London, moved the first resolution, affirming the principle, which was seconded by the Rev. B. Glover and unanimously carried.

Miss LYDIA BECKER then moved the adoption of a petition. She observed that it was said that women did not want a vote. The best test of that was to see if women did exercise the vote when they had that chance. There was in Oldham one elector to 6·7 men, and at last municipal election one woman voted for every 7 men—that is, in nearly the same proportion as the men. In the division that took place last May on this Bill, 15 Lancashire members voted—10 for and 5 against it. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Councillor TRAVIS seconded the motion, which was carried, and votes of thanks to the chairman and the deputation closed the meeting.—*Abridged from the Oldham Express.*

ROCHDALE.

A public meeting, convened by the Mayor, in compliance with a requisition from a numerous body of ratepayers, was held in the Rochdale Town Hall, on February 22nd, "to consider the Bill now before the House of Commons to remove the electoral disabilities of women." The Mayor of Rochdale (Mr. W. T. Shawcross) presided, and there was a crowded attendance.

The CHAIRMAN said that at the request of a number of ratepayers, he had called the meeting to consider what many ladies thought a very important subject indeed, and he thought the extent and number of the meeting quite justified him in having called it. He did not appear as an advocate either for or against the extension of the suffrage to women.

The Rev. W. N. MOLESWORTH moved a resolution approving the principle of the Bill. In supporting the resolution, Mr. MOLESWORTH referred to the hardships imposed upon women by the existing law, and said that the object of the ladies present was to seek justice for women, and the franchise in order that they might obtain justice, believing as they did, and as he did—(hear, hear)—that our legislation must always be partial, unjust, and wrongful to women, so long as women had no voice whatever in that legislation. They were proceeding upon what Mr. Bright called "the old lines of the British constitution." It had been said that the ladies originally possessed the franchise, and that they lost it through disuse, in early times. He was not prepared to say whether that was the case or not, but he was prepared to say that all the franchises which had come down to us from that period seemed to encourage the idea that they did possess the elective franchise. This much was certain, that the British constitution allowed a woman to be sovereign of these realms, and yet, though a woman might exercise the power of the sovereign, and exercise it well, it was supposed that she was not fit to vote for a Member of Parliament. If it was possible that a woman could exercise such an important function, and exercise it as our present Queen had, with very great ability and success, surely there could be no reasonable objection to women exercising the small right of the franchise. (Cheers.)

Mr. GREENWOOD (Rochdale) seconded the motion.

Miss E. M. STURGE (Birmingham), in supporting the resolution, said that a gentleman had recently intimated to her that women ought not to meddle with politics. If women were not to meddle with politics, politics ought not to meddle with them. (Cheers and laughter.) She saw politics in the sugar basin, the tea caddy, and the coffee pot. The most domestic of housekeepers was unable to keep the result of the duties upon provisions out of her account book. (Hear, hear.) At a meeting at Birmingham, held recently, when their borough members met their constituents, after a resolution had been passed in favour of many Ministerial measures likely to come before Parliament, an amendment was proposed in favour of equal rights to both sexes. This was carried unanimously in a large town's meeting. She thought that was the most hopeful indication she had yet seen, that Liberals, and, in fact, men altogether, were beginning to recognise the great duty of justice to women as well as to men. Englishmen were apt to think that women ought not to be heard in public. The Turks also thought that women ought not to be seen in public. Was there any difference in the two ideas? It appeared to her that men would give them civil speeches, but not civil rights.

Miss RHODA GARRETT (London) also supported the resolution. She said that one objection to giving women the franchise was that they themselves would not be benefited by its possession. This assertion she maintained was totally false. Many of the social disadvantages under which women laboured

might be traced to their want of political power. In this country every career, from the Prime Minister downwards, was open to men, but for women there was no middle part; either she must be the Queen of England, or she must be excluded from nearly all the privileges of citizenship in a country where a woman rules. It was said that women were neither physically nor mentally strong enough to compete with men; but no amount of real hard work, with the hope of success at the end, would break down a woman's health in comparison with the struggle with anxiety and disappointment and contempt which at times made the whole head sick and the whole heart faint. They demanded, as men had demanded, the right to protect themselves; and they believed, as men had believed, that they should never gain that right until they had a voice in framing those laws they were called upon to obey. (Cheers.)

The resolution was then put, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Alderman ASHWORTH moved a resolution, thanking the borough member, Mr. T. B. Potter, for his vote on the Bill, and adopting petitions to both Houses of Parliament, and a memorial to the Prime Minister in support of the measure.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Alderman Taylor, and supported by Miss Liliash Ashworth, Miss Lucy Wilson, and Miss Becker, and was carried with one dissentient.

A vote of thanks to the Mayor concluded the proceedings.

NOTTINGHAM.

On February 19, Miss Lydia Becker, of the Manchester School Board, read a paper in the Mechanics' Large Hall, Nottingham, on Woman Suffrage. There was a large attendance. The chair was occupied by

The Hon. AUBERON HERBERT, M.P., who, in opening the proceedings, remarked that he had no hesitation in saying that the one thing which will make society much better and happier was the more perfect development of the faculty of every individual who formed part of that society, and the one thing which we wanted and towards which we are moving slowly was that we should encourage in every way by means of free and unrestrained growth the habit of feeling, thought, and faith in each one of us. And no man or woman should restrain or limit the thoughts and feelings of another except so far as he or she could exercise moral influence. To effect that desirable end the chairman pointed out the great necessity for full individual liberty, after which he went on to say if they agreed with him in what society ought to be and what he believed one day would be, then he claimed that they were on his side in that great woman's question. Because having once admitted that they were placed on earth to develop their nature to its fullest extent in claiming it for themselves they were bound, in all justice, to admit it for others; then they could not refuse the plea which would be put before them that night not to stand in the way of women seeking their own improvement, in seeking to open a career, and in choosing their own line of life for developing their character. (Cheers.) If they agreed with him in what he had already said they had no right to go doing that which they had long done, namely, of putting woman into a secondary rank, and to settle for her that which was right for her to settle herself. (Hear, hear.) They had no right to divide the business of life into halves, and say one shall be done by men and the other by women. The hon. chairman then went on to claim perfect freedom for women in Parliamentary affairs, even as they enjoyed the power of election on school boards, and were able to elect a woman as overseer, and trust her in municipal matters. He claimed this freedom also on all social matters. He claimed that they should make every individual feel the responsibility of his or her own life. And he thought they should not in any

way qualify the matter by putting a power into the hands of a man to be exercised by him towards a woman. In the first place there were very few of us who could afford to have power of such a kind placed in their hands, very few were fit to have it because of a probability of abusing it. And, secondly, he thought it a bad thing for any man or woman not to take upon his or her shoulders their full share of responsibility. He ventured also to think that in industrial concerns the position of women must be altered. A very large number of women in this country were engaged in various pursuits of industry. They had seen that men had organised themselves for their own protection; for the sake of their own independence they had formed themselves into great bodies or organisations. By doing that they had protected their own interests; they had rendered themselves independent. He urged the women to emulate that example of the men in respect of organization, and called upon the men not to stand in their way. He had seen too many instances in which a good and prosperous condition of labour had been dragged down by the fact of their being outside that particular rank of labour, a large body of unorganized men driven by necessity to accept such striking rewards for their labour, as interfered with the prices which had hitherto been paid by the old rates, and which had been common in the markets. In conclusion, he asked them not to be too selfish in the matter, believing selfishness often prevented them from seeing the truth of a question. He wished them also not to be stupid in the matter. From selfishness came stupidity, a stupidity which constantly prevented our seeing the light that was often shining in our eyes. It had been said that we had all of us got a certain amount of donkey mind in us. (Laughter.) He wished the men to look at the question in a new light altogether, and if they freed themselves from the obligation which habit imposed on them, they would see no reason why those privileges should not be extended to the opposite sex. (Cheers.)

Miss LYDIA BECKER, who was heartily received, then read her paper, and on resuming her seat was loudly applauded.

Mr. ELLIS, in moving a vote of thanks to Miss Becker, offered a few remarks, showing the reasonableness of the claims of women.

Mr. DOWSON, solicitor, in seconding the resolution, endorsed the remarks of the preceding speaker.

The CHAIRMAN, in putting the vote, expressed a hope that the ladies would begin to exercise their power by voting on that occasion.

On the motion of Mr. JACOBY, seconded by the Sheriff of Nottingham, a vote of thanks was accorded to the Chairman. The meeting was then brought to a close.

PONTEFRACI.

On February 7th a public meeting was held at the Town Hall, Pontefract, when an address was delivered by Mrs. Ronniger, who was deputed by the London National Society for Women's Suffrage. The chair was taken by the Rev. E. Potter.

After a few remarks by the CHAIRMAN, Mrs. RONNIGER read her address, which was received with cheers.

Mr. JOHN A. PHILIPS rose to move a resolution which affirmed the principle advocated in the lecture, and adopted a petition in favour of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill.

Mr. R. S. BLACKBURN seconded the resolution, which was supported by Mr. JOSEPH TAYLOR, and carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks to Mrs. Ronniger was proposed by Mrs. Cawthorne, and seconded by Miss Blackburn, for the very able and instructive lecture with which she had favoured the meeting.

WAKEFIELD.

Mrs. Ronniger lectured on February 8th, in the Music Saloon, Wakefield. The Rev. Goodwyn Barmby in the chair. A petition in favour of the Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women was adopted by the meeting.

LONDON.

On the 23rd January, Miss Beedy, at the request of the London National Society for Women's Suffrage, delivered a lecture at St. Andrew's Schoolroom, Commercial Road. The Rev. Mr. Seton took the chair. The audience was crowded, and chiefly composed of working people. Miss Beedy was listened to with great attention, and those portions of her lecture which especially touched upon the position of women in the poorer classes, were loudly applauded. After dwelling at great length upon the good effects which might be expected to result from an improved system of education, a higher rate of wages, and a better social position for women, Miss Beedy proceeded to show that these could only be hoped for through the means of Parliamentary representation. A vote of thanks to the lecturer terminated the proceedings.

Lectures have been delivered under the auspices of the London National Society for Women's Suffrage, on February 15th, at the Temperance Hall, Commercial-road, by Mr. John Macdonnell, the Rev. Charles Stowel in the chair; and, on February 21st, by Miss Blind, in the hall of the Christian Association, Marylebone, the Rev. J. O. Fellowes in the chair. A large number of those present signed the petition in favour of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill.

ISLINGTON.

The Rev. Gordon Calthrop lectured on February 20th to a very large audience at Myddleton Hall, on behalf of the Church of England Young Men's Society, when he gave an exposition of his views on the now widely-discussed topic "Women's Rights." Mr. Calthrop proved himself an earnest and eloquent champion of the cause. Mr. Sarr, who presided, tendered a vote of thanks to the lecturer at the close of the proceedings. *Abridged from the Islington Gazette.*

SCOTLAND.

PERTH.

On February 20, Miss Taylour delivered a lecture on Women's Suffrage, in the City Hall, Perth. The Rev. W. D. Knowles, in the chair. Resolutions adopting a petition were moved by Rev. Mr. Wallace, and seconded by Bailie Jamieson, and carried with applause.

CRIEFF.

Miss Taylour addressed a meeting in the Masons' Hall, Crieff, on February 19. Mr. D. W. Williamson in the chair. The Hall was quite filled by a large and intelligent audience. Resolutions affirming the principle of Women's Suffrage, and adopting a petition for the Bill, were moved and supported by Dr. Meikle, Mr. McLeod, and Mr. Ironside, and carried with applause.

LOCHMABEN.

A public meeting was held in the Town Hall, Lochmaben, on the evening of Friday, January 26, in favour of the Women's Suffrage movement. The place of meeting was crowded some time before the hour fixed, and a good number failed to obtain admittance. Provost Dinwoodie occupied the chair. Miss Taylour of Belmont was the lecturer. The lecture was eloquent, able, and persuasive, appearing to many a complete reply to the objections urged by Mr. Bouverie and others against the claims of women to the exercise of the franchise. At the close of the lecture, Mr. Macdonald moved, and Mr. Craik, Esq., supported the following motion—"That the exclusion of women

householders and ratepayers, legally qualified in every respect but that of sex, from the power of voting in the election of Members of Parliament, by depriving a considerable portion of the property, the industry, and the intelligence of the country of all direct representation, is injurious both to the persons excluded and to the community at large; therefore, this meeting resolve to petition Parliament in favour of Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill, which is about to be introduced, and instruct the Chairman to sign and forward the same to both Houses of Parliament." The resolution was unanimously adopted. Thereafter, Mr. Common, Bridgemuir, moved, and Mr. Johnstone, Nut Cottage, seconded, a vote of thanks to Miss Taylour for her admirable lecture. Mr. Watson moved a vote of thanks to the Provost for presiding. This meeting was in numbers a success. The attention of the audience was well sustained, and the reception given the lecturer most courteous. A committee is being formed to obtain signatures in Lochmaben and the adjoining parishes.—Mr. William Lockerbie, of Cumrue has taken charge of Kirkmichael.

Miss Craigen has addressed meetings at Ardrossan and Dalry, from each of which petitions in favour of the Bill have been presented to the House of Commons.

IRISH SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

A general meeting of the members of the above society was held on Wednesday, at St. James's Place, Blackrock; Lord Talbot de Malahide in the chair. It was announced that many ladies and gentlemen had become members of the society since the last meeting, among whom were—Lord Montague, the Hon. Mrs. Knox, Mrs. Murray Ker, Francis A. Tarleton, Esq., Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and Mrs. Tarleton, &c. Miss Anne I. Robertson delivered an address. The Rev. John Newenham Hoare, A.M., proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Robertson for her clear and eloquent address, which was seconded by Major-General Sir Arthur Phayre, K.C.B.; and Emanuel Hutchins, Esq., J.P., having moved a vote of thanks to the chairman (Lord Talbot de Malahide) which was seconded by Mrs. Gelstone, the meeting, which was large and fashionable, separated.—*Irish Times.*

There is good news from Paris for the advocates of women's rights. The Academy of Fine Arts is about to take into consideration the admission of female members. The less chivalrous "Forty" at the French Academy refused peremptorily to allow the question of the admission of female immortals to be discussed, even when the proposed candidate was George Sand, who, in name at all events, is a man, and surpasses many an Academician in the vigour of her style and the originality of her ideas. Should the Academy of Fine Arts decide to admit female artists, it will after all be no innovation, but only the revival of an extinct privilege; for previously to 1789 there were many women who were members of it. Mdme. Vigée-Lebrun, the well-known portrait painter, was the last of the lady Academicians. Should the decision be favourable, it is believed that Rosa Bonheur, and Mdle. Jacquemart, who has distinguished herself as a painter of portraits, will be brought forward as candidates.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

WOMEN JURORS.—We are informed that the high sheriff of one of the Welsh counties is fully determined that his fair countrywomen shall have their full rights accorded them, and for that purpose intends summoning them upon the panel of the jury of both assizes and sessions. This will be done in order to test the point as to their liability to serve on juries.—*Court Journal.*

PETITIONS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The Women's Disabilities Removal Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on February 7, and it is of the utmost consequence to strengthen the hands of our Parliamentary friends by a formidable array of numerous signed petitions. We earnestly exhort our friends to help the cause by promoting petitions in their several localities, etc. The following is the form recommended:—

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the undersigned

SHEWETH,

That the exclusion of women, otherwise legally qualified, from voting in the election of Members of Parliament, is injurious to those excluded, contrary to the principle of just representation, and to that of the laws now in force regulating the election of municipal, parochial, and all other representative governments.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Honourable House will pass the Bill entitled "A Bill to Remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women."

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Write out the above form without mistakes, as no word may be scratched out or interlined, and sign it on the same piece of paper, obtaining as many signatures as you can to follow. After the written heading is signed extra sheets of paper may be attached to hold more names. The petition may be signed by men and women of full age whether householders or otherwise.

Make up the petition as a book-post packet, write on the cover the words "Parliamentary Petition," and post it, addressed to the member who is to present it, at the House of Commons. No stamp is required, as petitions so forwarded go post free.

Write, and send along with the petition, a note (post paid) asking the member to present it, and support its prayer.

Petitions should be sent in immediately, and a succession should continue without intermission during the interval between the first and second reading of the Bill, which takes place on the first of May.

N.B.—The printed forms issued by the Society are used only for collecting signatures. Printed petitions are not received by Parliament, consequently, in using these forms, the printed part must be cut off, and the names attached to a written and signed copy of the petition.

Written petitions ready for signature, and printed forms for the collection of additional signatures will be supplied on application to Miss BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TAXATION AND NON-REPRESENTATION.

To the Editor of the Women's Suffrage Journal.

Madam,—In accordance with the intention expressed in my letter on the above subject, which you did me the favour to insert in the last number of your journal, I have to-day, on application for the taxes, handed to the collector the subjoined statement:—"I refuse payment of the Queen's taxes as a protest against the injustice which I, in common with all women freeholders and householders, suffer in being excluded from the right of Parliamentary representation, while called upon to bear a full share of State taxation."—I am, Madam, yours respectfully,
A FREEHOLDER AND HOUSEHOLDER.
Feb. 12th, 1872.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions appear in the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons as having been presented in favour of the Bill :—

Feb. 6	§ Northampton, Meeting at ; M. P. Mansfield, chairman	Mr. Gilpin	Seal
" 8	§ Warrington, Meeting at ; Peter Rylands, chairman	Mr. Rylands	...	1
" 12	§ Rotherham, Meeting at ; J. M. Habersham, chairman	Mr. Beaumont	...	1
" 12	§ Oban, Meeting at	Mr. Craufurd	...	1
" 12	§ Bristol, Meeting at ; Kate Amberley, president	Mr. Morley	...	1
" 12	§ Galston, Meeting at ; Andrew Black, chairman	Mr. M'Laren	...	1
" 12	§ Edinburgh, Meeting at ; R. Anstruther, chairman	Mr. Miller	...	1
" 12	§ Bury, Meeting at ; R. H. Alcock, chairman	Mr. Philips	...	1
" 12	§ Hawick, Meeting at ; Stephen Anderson, chairman	Mr. Trevelyan	...	1
" 12	§ New Cumnock, Meeting at ; David Brown, chairman	Sir David Wedderburn	...	1
" 12	§ Mauchline, Meeting at ; William Stevens, chairman	"	...	1
" 12	§ Catrine, Meeting at ; David Greenhill, chairman	"	...	1
" 12	§ Kilbirmie, Meeting at ; Alexander Lamberton, chairman	"	...	1
" 13	§ Stafford, Meeting at ; William Lloyd, chairman	Mr. Salt	...	1
" 13	§ Leicester, Meeting at ; Archibald Forbes Macdonald, chairman	Mr. Taylor	...	1
" 14	¶ Manchester (St. James's Ward)	Mr. Birley	...	1,202
" 14	¶ Salford (Greengate Ward)	Mr. Charley	...	654
" 14	§ Pontefract, Meeting at ; Edward Potter, chairman	Mr. Childers	...	1
" 15	¶ Saint Andrews, Meeting at ; A. Bethune, chairman	Sir Robert Anstruther	...	1
" 15	¶ Manchester (Exchange Ward)	Sir Thos. Bazley	...	352
" 15	¶ Manchester (Collegiate Church Ward)	"	...	812
" 15	¶ Stirling	Mr. Campbell	...	1,006
" 15	§ Stromness (Orkney)	Mr. Dundas	...	228
" 15	§ Stromness (Orkney), Meeting at ; John Stanger, chairman	"	...	1
" 15	§ Stromness, Members of the Town Council	"	...	9
" 15	§ Ardrossan, Meeting at ; Alex. Cross, chairman	Mr. Finnie	...	1
" 15	§ ¶ Dalry, Meeting at ; William Burt, chairman	"	...	1
" 15	¶ Dublin, Meeting at	Mr. Pim	...	254
" 15	¶ Blackrock	"	...	107
" 16	¶ Manchester (St. John's Ward)	Mr. Jacob Bright	...	1,548
" 16	¶ Manchester (St. Ann's Ward)	"	...	244
" 16	§ Stirling, Meeting at ; Thomas Lowe, chairman	Mr. Campbell	...	1
" 19	§ Newcastle-on-Tyne, Meeting at ; T. Bayfield, chairman	Mr. Cowen	...	1
" 19	¶ Maidenhead	Mr. Walter	...	16
" 20	§ Wakefield, Meeting at ; Goodwyn Barmby, chairman	Mr. S. Beaumont	...	1
" 20	¶ Manchester (St. Luke's Ward)	Mr. Birley	...	561
" 20	¶ Glasgow	Mr. Dalglish	...	3,266
Total number of Petitions 37—Signatures				10,282

The petitions marked ¶ have the addresses of some or all of the petitioners affixed.
The petitions marked § are signed officially.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED DURING FEBRUARY, 1872.

	£	s.	d.
Miss Louisa Boucherett	2	0	0
Mrs. B. Blackburn	0	2	6
Mrs. Carslake	1	0	0
Mrs. Daniell	0	10	0
Mrs. Dehersant	0	10	0
Rev. J. Freeston	0	2	6
Mr. J. Gaunt	0	2	6
Mrs. Haddock	0	5	0
Miss Harwood	1	0	0
Mrs. Hume-Rothery	0	5	0
Mr. James Hill	0	5	0
Mr. Councillor Lee	2	2	0
Mr. James Rhoades	0	5	0
Miss Rigbye	1	1	0
Miss Seddon	1	0	0
Mrs. George Sims	0	5	0
Mrs. S. B. Sutcliffe	0	5	0
Miss Tootal	0	5	0
Mr. T. B. Waters	1	1	0
Mrs. Whitehead	1	0	0
Mrs. Williams	0	10	0
Mrs. S. Winkworth	5	0	0

£18 16 6

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.

Cheques and Post Office Orders should be made payable to the Treasurer, Rev. S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, and may be sent either direct to him at 107, Upper Brook-street; or to the Secretary, Miss BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester. 107, Upper Brook-street, Manchester.

THE ASSOCIATION OF TRAINED NURSES, 34, Davies-street, Berkeley Square, London, W., provides monthly, medical, surgical, fever, and small pox Nurses; Mental Attendants, male and female, who can be engaged at any hour on application, either personal, per letter, or telegram, to Miss HODGES, Superintendent. N.B.—Some of the Nurses are total abstainers.

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL. Edited by LYDIA E. BECKER.—Volume II., 1871.—In coloured cover, price post free, 1s. 10d.

London: Trübner and Co., Paternoster Row.
Manchester: A. Ireland and Co.

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE. In coloured cover, price 6d. Manchester: A. Ireland & Co.

WE beg to acknowledge the receipt, through M. Leon Richer, of a subscription to the *Journal* from Madame C. Chevalier, nee Thomas, Paris.

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

Printed by A. IRELAND & Co., Pall Mall, Manchester, for the MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, and Published by Messrs. Trübner and Co., Paternoster Row, London.—March 1, 1872.