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The Common Cause,

The Organ of the National Union of

Women's Suffrage

Societies.

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AUGUST 3, 1911.

ONE PENNY.



West Somerset By-Election.

Suffrage Stall in Taunton, opened by the Western Federation. Miss Norma-Smith (N.U.W.S.S. Organizer) in the car.



Middleton By-Election.

Central Committee Room of the Middleton W.S.S. Miss Leadley Brown and Miss Margaret Robertson (Manchester Fed. Organizing Secretary) in the car.

Putting it before the Country.

Notes and Comments.

The Big Bill in the Distant Future.

No full report has been published of the very interesting meeting which the Liberal Suffragist Members of Parliament held the other day to hear Mr. Lloyd George's views. But one all-important point emerged clearly from the discussion, and it cannot be too widely known. Mr. Lloyd George declared himself, as he has consistently done, in favour of a widening amendment to the Conciliation Bill, which will add to its million women householders some five or six million householders' wives. He intimated that his support would be withdrawn from the Bill unless this amendment were carried. He also pledged himself to use all his influence to get the Bill carried, if this amendment were passed. He even threw out vague but magnificent hints to the effect that he might manage to convert Mr. Asquith, and that the Bill would then become a Government measure. It was altogether a most alluring and even dazzling picture. But there was one depressing detail. All these great things are to happen not in 1912, but in some future session which he did not even attempt to date. He made it perfectly clear that, in his opinion, if a coalition of adultists and anti-suffragists succeeds in widening the Bill in 1912, it will go no further in that session. The great democratic adventure is still in that dim and speculative future, where it has floated for so many years. When once this programme is grasped sincere suffragists can hardly hesitate. They will rally to defeat the wreckers and pass the moderate Bill next year. When that is safely done we can afford to wait patiently until Mr. Lloyd George is ready to execute his generous designs. We do not despair of the conversion even of Mr. Asquith—when women are voters.

The Unholy Alliance Exemplified.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton and Mr. Holford Knight have been writing to the "Daily News" in favour of a "democratic measure." Suffragists ought to be much obliged to them for showing the type of "support" by which alone "widening amendments" could be carried.

Mr. Lloyd George and the N.U.W.W.

We are glad indeed to record that Mr. Lloyd George on the 27th received a deputation organized by the National Union of Women Workers with reference to the position of women in the Insurance Bill. Lady Laura Ridding, Miss Constance Smith and Miss Clementina Black spoke upon various points relating to the presence of Women on the Insurance Commission, the Advisory and Health Committees, to reduced contributions for women earning 9s. a week and to the inclusion of married women as voluntary contributors. It is pointed out in a leaflet issued by the N.U.W.W. that the State pays 2d. a head in respect of all male workers, but in the Bill women working in and for the home are refused this contribution. If the State helped all married working women in the same way as it proposes to help all working men, 2½ millions would be added to the women's fund.

Mr. George promised to give careful consideration to the points raised; he expressed his approval of the representation of women on the administrative bodies and said the question of there being a fixed proportion of them would have to be determined. With regard to midwives, he thought they ought to be represented on the Advisory Board, but not on Health Committees. Women should have free choice as to being attended by a man or woman doctor or a midwife.

The Women's Local Government Society is also pressing for the inclusion of women on the committees.

The Same, or Equivalent?

In a long letter addressed to Sir Ryland Adkins, Mr. George makes various points which would, we venture to think, be very differently received according as they were read to an audience of men or an audience of women. He says for instance that "the contributions in respect of all insured workmen are the same, and as in the case of those who receive low wages the employers contribute

a greater proportion, the actual burden on the workman is lightest upon the poor and heavier upon the well-to-do. But, as Professor Hewins correctly states, 'The benefits they receive are the same, or at any rate equivalent.' That does seem fair and indeed generous."

Now the women complain that, not only are their benefits not "the same" but they are not "equivalent." The 7s. 6d. which women are to get in return for their 3d. is not the "equivalent" of the 10s. the men get.

Increasing Efficiency.

Mr. George goes on to say: "I am absolutely confident that the whole of the employer's contribution, and I dare say in the long run part of the workman's contribution too, will be paid for by the sheer increase in efficiency and decrease of waste which will result from the operation of the bill." How strange, how very strange that this increase in efficiency and decrease of waste should not appear in treating the home-keeping woman too! Is a healthy woman not more efficient than a sick one?

The Anti-Suffragists' Memorial.

The Anti-Suffragists have sent an admirable memorial to the Prime Minister protesting against the treatment of women in the Bill. It will be interesting to note, if really the Bill is pushed through this year, how many of their recommendations will be followed. They say the Bill would "in effect compel the unmarried to insure the married against the loss of their husbands, upon whom no part of the cost would fall." This is a witty and trenchant statement which it would be hard to beat. They suggest that annuities would be better than some of the benefits proposed; "it would be preferable to substitute the insurance which is needed for that which is not needed."

The anti-suffragists claim that they are at least as interested in the needs of women as suffragists are, and we willingly concede this to the signatories of this letter. The pity of it is that they cannot see that lack of direct representation encourages in many women inertia and torpidity, whereas the suffrage propaganda has awakened thousands of women to a patriotic sense of their responsibilities.

The Scene in the House.

Whatever may be one's views of the present crisis with regard to the veto bill, we cannot but regret the outburst in the House last week. Whether it was premeditated or spontaneous, it was indefensible. It is amusing to see the "Times" and other newspapers which have been so very pious about the women who disturbed meetings (and who, being voteless, had far more excuse) apologizing for the Opposition and saying their conduct was "human." So, we submit, was the conduct of the militant suffragists and to err is human. If men as well as women were refused the vote because they were human and therefore erred,—none but the angels would vote.

A Human, not a Party Question.

The following appeared in the "Manchester Guardian" of July 24th:

The Birmingham Women's Liberal Association recently decided by a majority of two-thirds at a representative meeting to retain as a part of its constitution a rule pledging its members to use their best endeavours to promote the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women. A protest against "such a policy of intolerance and exclusion," urging that "women's suffrage is not, and has never been, a party question, and an attempt to make it so can only lead to the weakening of the party organisation," has been signed by Mr. E. F. M. McCarthy, chairman of the Management Committee of the Birmingham Liberal Association, and thirteen other local Liberals, and by a few who are not local Liberals, including Lord and Lady Haversham and Lord and Lady Charnwood.

It is true, women's suffrage is not a mere party question; it ought to be the first article of every women's political organization in the country.

The A. B. C. of Women's Suffrage.

ALL OR SOME
OR
SOME OR NONE ?

To those supporters of Women's Suffrage who are also advocates of ADULT SUFFRAGE!

We ask those of you who sincerely believe that sex should not disqualify a person from voting in Parliamentary Elections to support the Conciliation Bill as the **only immediately practicable measure.**

It is of course possible to quote many arguments in favour of Adult Suffrage; moreover, the Conciliation Bill is a compromise, and, as such, **open to criticism.** But the women's choice does not lie between the Conciliation Bill and Adult Suffrage, but between the **Conciliation Bill and nothing!** The Conciliation Bill passed its Second Reading on May 5 by a majority of 167. But there is not even a bare majority in the House of Commons in favour of Adult Suffrage. When an appeal was issued to all M.P.'s asking them to sign a memorial in favour of Adult Suffrage, in two months only 100 signatures (out of a possible 670) were obtained.

Moreover, Mr. Philip Snowden has pointed out that of the 310 men who voted or paired for Sir George Kemp's Bill, 78 are Unionists **who would all vote against an Adult Suffrage measure.** Also of the 170 Liberals who voted or paired for the Bill **a large number are opposed to Adult Suffrage** (for instance, Mr. Birrell declared to a meeting of his constituents at Bristol in January, 1910, that he would only support a Bill to enfranchise women householders and would vote **against** Adult Suffrage). It follows that an Adult Suffrage Bill, if introduced, would be overwhelmingly defeated.

The Conciliation Bill is small, but it is democratic.

The qualification is not **property**, but **residence.** Every woman householder, however small her rental, will be enfranchised, and no woman will be able to have more than one vote.

It is calculated that 82 per cent. of the million women enfranchised will be **working women**—i.e., 820,000 of the new voters will be **working women** and only 180,000 will not.

Do not oppose this small measure of justice **which is all that the House of Commons and the country are yet prepared to give.**

Once the disability of sex is removed, it will lie with you to see that women are included in any further extension of the franchise to men.

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CORRESPONDENTS ARE REQUESTED TO NOTE that this paper goes to press on Tuesday. The latest news, notices, and reports should, therefore, reach the Editor by first post on Monday. The Editor reminds correspondents, however, that the work is made much easier if news is sent in as long beforehand as possible. Monday is only mentioned as the last possible day, not as the one upon which all news should arrive.

NOTICE.—This paper should be obtainable at newsagents and bookstalls by mid-day on Thursday. If people have any difficulty in getting it locally they should write to the Manager, 64, Deansgate Arcade, Manchester, giving the name and address of the newsagent or bookstall from which they wish to be supplied.

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A Discreditable Manoeuvre.

I du believe in bein' this
Or thet, ez it may happen
One way or t'other hendiest is
To ketch the people nappin'.

We are glad to publish this week another letter from Mrs. Acland because we are in entire agreement with her in her desire for a better understanding. We have been unable to find any of the "abusive" terms to which she takes exception and until she comes to the rescue and indicates the page upon which they occurred, we must perforce confine ourselves to the one phrase which we undoubtedly used, in "Notes and Comments" last week and which we are prepared to defend as amply justified by the facts of the case. We characterized Mr. Lloyd George's attempt to evade the Prime Minister's pledge as a "discreditable manoeuvre" and far from admitting that this is "abusive", we hold that it was language of extreme moderation when applied to his conduct. We have no desire whatever to emulate Mr. George himself in the picturesque latitude of his rhetoric. No one would, we presume, deny that most members of governments do "manoeuvre" constantly to secure what they wish, and the question at issue is whether Mr. George's various "manoeuvres" on this question have been to his "credit" and to the credit of the Liberal party. We think Mrs. Acland would find that such undoubted Liberals as Sir Edward Grey and Sir Alfred Mond would not wish to claim any share in whatever "credit" she would give Mr. George for his conduct of negotiations. There are manoeuvres which are legitimate, which are merely the wise marshalling of forces and the clever handling of them. These, even if they are directed against our aims, we should regard as reflecting no discredit upon the user. But, when a great advantage has been gained by our party (as in the majority of 167 for

Sir George Kemp's Bill) and when the urgent pressure all over the country for further facilities this year is met by a Government pledge for such facilities next year; when Suffragists all over the country have, in view of the constitutional crisis, consented to hold over their great and unquestioned claim for nine months and devote the whole of the interval to patient, orderly, educational work; when even those who have hitherto warred with the Government because the Government stood in the way, have accepted the pledge and abandoned their war, because the Government no longer stands in the way; when all suffragists of every party have treated Mr. Asquith as an honourable man, to be believed on his publicly spoken and written word, then we say that to attempt to put on Mr. Asquith's pledge an interpretation it will not bear, in order to foist upon the House a Bill for which it will not vote reflects little credit upon either the mental or moral condition of the man who makes the attempt.

We wish to be clearly understood. We do not object—how could we?—to Mr. George's professed wish to give the vote to more women. We do not object—how could we?—to the enfranchising of married women. After nearly fifty years of steady propaganda and six years of a national campaign which we venture to say has no precedent for force, fire and truth,—a campaign in which Mr. Lloyd George has done nothing whatever to help us—we have, through the medium of an organisation of Members of Parliament drawn from all parties, (the Conciliation Committee) secured agreement within the House for a practicable measure of immediate enfranchisement. A large number of men who desire a wider measure (including such men as Mr. Philip Snowden, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Ponsonby) are willing to vote for this practicable measure in order to secure the early recognition of women, leaving it to Parliament to extend or not, in the future. We have done this, be it noted, with no help whatever from any party, as a party, and with very little help from politicians. If the party in power were to take up the question as a party question they might dictate terms, and though we might think them unwise, we should not think them unfair. Until the party does this, even a member of the Government, since he acts only as an individual, can not command a majority for a Bill much wider than the Conciliation Bill. Mrs. Acland says Liberals are "thinking hard" as to which Bill (the Conciliation Bill or the Bill known as "Dickinson II.") has the better chance! We commend hard thinking. When their thinking has resulted in a "firm offer" of a majority of over 100, we may believe that, whatever may be the case in the constituencies, the House of Commons is prepared for a wider Bill. Till then we prefer facts to aspirations.

Mrs. Acland talks as if she were the first to attempt Conciliation. But the existence of the Conciliation Committee, the drafting of the Conciliation Bill, the triumphant majorities for practically the same Bill two sessions running are monuments of Conciliation. The women's suffrage societies have always been agreed in their demand and it is the suffrage societies and no other that have carried on the campaign in the country and have created the popular and overwhelming demand. Politicians, out of touch, for the most part, with women, were all at sixes and sevens about the form in which enfranchisement should come and many are the Bills which have been drafted by various sections. It was necessary to unite in the House, as we were united outside, and the Conciliation Committee is formed of men of all parties, each of whom has given up something in order to come to an agreement.

But this is to argue the general position and Mrs. Acland's letter raises the specific issue as to whether the Prime Minister's pledge to give facilities next year refers to the Conciliation Bill or (as Mr. George attempted to maintain) to any Women's Suffrage Bill. We maintain that not only did the Conciliation Committee and all the Suffrage Societies interpret the pledge as being given to the Conciliation Committee for their own Bill, but that no other interpretation is possible. On Monday 29th May in the House, Mr. George said:—

"The position of the Government in regard to this matter was stated on behalf of the Cabinet by the Prime Minister in the last House of Commons on November 22nd, 1910. The exact language used was as follows: 'The Government will, if they are still in power, give facilities in the next Parliament for effectively proceeding with a bill which is so framed as to admit of free amendment.' The Government recognizes that the bill which was read a second time the other day (Conciliation Bill, May 5th) satisfies the last-mentioned condition and that consequently it is their duty in this Parliament to give the promised facilities. . . . They will be prepared next session, when the bill has been again read a second time, either as the result of obtaining a good place in the ballot or (if that does not happen) by the grant of a Government day for the purpose to give a week (which they understand to be the time suggested as reasonable by the promoters) for its further stages."

Objection was raised at the time to the suggestion that a bare week, with no provision for fair debate and voting, was adequate, and these points were subsequently met by Sir Edward Grey (National Liberal Club, June 1st) and confirmed by the Prime Minister himself (Letter to Lord Lytton June 15th). The Prime Minister's pledge was to be fulfilled "not only in the letter but in the spirit" and it remains for a Liberal Cabinet Minister and a section of Liberal Women to throw doubt upon the good faith of their own chief. No one at the time could or did doubt that Mr. George was speaking about the Conciliation Bill on May 29th and in fact, since this is the Bill which "was read a second time the other day" and the only Bill which could be "again read a second time" (since it was the only bill which had once been read a second time) it is evident that Mr. George's statement on July 20th was an afterthought and that he has forgotten the exact terms of the pledge he gave on May 29th. Moreover Mr. Asquith's letter was a reply to Lord Lytton, Chairman of the Conciliation Committee, who had written anxiously asking to be assured upon certain points about his Bill. These assurances were frankly given and frankly accepted. Does Mrs. Acland really ask us to treat respectfully the pretension that Mr. Asquith was pacifying Lord Lytton with pledges for Mr. Lloyd George's castle in the air?

If Mr. George wants to pass a wider measure he must put it before the country. This has never been done. He must stump the country from end to end as we have done; he must make it an issue at every election, as we have done; he must get support in and out of the House sufficient to carry it. If he will do that, we have no word to say. But to attempt to filch our facilities, for which we have toiled and craved and sacrificed, is to show a contempt for the intelligence of the people and a security in their ignorance of the true facts of the case which we believe to be unfounded. Our memories are long enough to cover every step of the concessions yielded by the Government. We do not forget and we do not intend that the electors shall forget. Our movement is alive in a sense of which Mr. George has evidently no conception. If he had, so clever a man would not have attempted so discreditable a manoeuvre.

The Meaning of the Franchise: and the Political Justice of the Demand for Women's Votes.

(By the Vice-Principal of Brasenose College.)

It is likely that at no time in history were so many terms used in common parlance that will not bear definition, so many arguments that cannot stand the test of common sense. Nearly every political speech teems with unmeaning words, which are part of the speaker's stock-in-trade, and with fallacies which no one has time to examine. The vehemence of the general interest in politics is soon spent, and during an election, to which it is really confined, men have not the time to define current terms or search out arguments. They take what is set before them, are excited for the moment, vote with their present party or their forefathers, and straightway turn and forget all about it; for by politics alone no man can live.

It is therefore not amiss to ask, what is the franchise, and why women are justified in asking for it, why Gov-

ernment is unjust in withholding it. The right to vote is not a right inherent in human nature, or in every adult male. It is simply a means of ensuring a general control of the taxation; the man (or woman) who pays taxes has a right to control the amount raised, and the manner of spending it. This, of course, comes to very little in modern days: a man may live his whole life without ever voting for a successful candidate; he may quite well be permanently unrepresented. But he will go to prison, or have his furniture sold up if he refuses to pay local rates of which he disapproves, or Imperial taxes in levying which he had no voice. That is, the limits of personal freedom and control of Government, even in "democratic" days (so-called), are very narrow. The individual is weak, and the State is strong.

But however slender this privilege, it is inseparable from the taxpayer's rights, and those who support the State must be consulted about its levies and the control of its expenditure, growing heavier each year. That is, the old Liberal maxim, Taxation means Representation. If once this principle is allowed to disappear, the whole commonsense basis of government and democracy goes with it. It is a grave pity, and politically a most serious blunder, that the majority of voters do not directly pay taxes and rates. There is not the slightest effort made to teach the workers the duties and responsibility of a voter; the sole topic that is welcome is the rights. When rates are included indirectly in a landlord's rent, and Imperial levies or income-tax not exacted at all, it is impossible to keep in men's minds the natural and indispensable connection between vote and tax; he only has the right to the one because he must pay the other.

A parliament is conceivable in this land with a majority composed of paid delegates of the labouring class, and trade unions; the veto of the Lords on money bills having completely disappeared. Such a majority (it might be of 5 or 10, actually representing a minority of votes) might vote an income-tax of 20s. in the £1, the confiscation of landed property, the secularising of all Church endowments, however recent. Legally, this is possible, and according to the present theory of constitutional government, the Sovereign would be bound to accept the measures of a majority of the Commons, representing a minority in the country. That this is not likely to happen in such an extreme form is due, not to the perfection of our institutions, but to the British character, and the good sense and love of fair play.

But we might get very near this in the excitement of a crisis, and in the unchecked absolutism which would be exercised by the dictators of the party in power. [This applies to both parties alike.] It therefore behoves every man, so far as is possible, to deprecate the divorce of vote and tax, and to insist that all who pay direct rates and taxes should have the (very small) privilege of casting a vote for a representative. There is absolutely no argument against Female Suffrage (on the ground of justice), except the shallowest futilities of a priori reasoners. What has sex to do with the rating and assessment? Why is a woman disqualified for the one if she is not relieved of the other? If she is a householder, she can vote for her borough: why not for the Empire, of which she is no less a paying member?

The Middle Ages, with all their illogicality, would never have adopted a position so anomalous. Parliaments met, that the several orders, peers, clergy, burgesses, might help the king's government with subsidies. Other classes paid nothing directly to the State, and women, not being payers, were like the labourer and serf (who lived largely on charity) not voters either. But the State now directly and immediately confronts every householder and income-tax payer. What conceivable reason is there for picking and choosing on the ground of sex? From the point of view of common fairness, the woman is, in this matter, on exactly the same ground as the man. What would be thought of a franchise restricted to bald men between 35 and 72, or to those who could produce a certificate of vaccination within the last six months? Yet this is no more absurd than to debar the tax-payer from the vote on the ground of sex.

seek to delay the age of the marriage of boys. This might be done through the native schools, for there was a Hindu precept which disallowed the marriage of men while yet students. The college of Benares had succeeded in excluding married scholars, and if missionaries would follow the example of those bodies under Hindu management, much might be done to check the evil, for on obtaining a maturer age, students themselves objected, on leaving school, to marrying children. Miss Nina Boyle also strongly deprecated the tone of Sister Nivedita's description of Indian life. "It represented too exclusively" she said "the standpoint of men;" and she stated her conviction that the present opinions of advanced women demanded the attention of the Congress. She also reminded her hearers that the recent Congress of Stockholm had shown unmistakably the essential connection between the Suffrage movement and international relationships. The Eastern woman must learn from the Western that her individuality and personal rights are sacred. The Western woman must learn from the Eastern that devotion to the race and the future family demands personal sacrifice. In conclusion she expressed the hope that at the next Congress more pains would be taken to represent adequately the women's point of view, to which all men, even the men of this Congress, must learn to listen patiently. (Loud cheers.)

Mrs. Leim Boon Keng (China), whose speech was greeted with loud cheers, said, "The history of our race has proved to us that when women are in earnest, men will obey." "Women" she said "must be the apostles of universal love and peace, and teach reverence and honour in the home." At the same time there was undeniably in China a tendency towards better education amongst women.

Dr. Rega Tevfik (Turkey) deprecated the idea that women there were merely ignorant and idle. A Musselman woman possessed rights of a social, proprietary, and legal nature. She could receive her guests at home like an English woman, and could go out if she was covered. She was often a good linguist and studied European literature, but he admitted that the great mass of women were ignorant, and before their rights could be claimed with advantage, they must be better educated.

Colonel Maine spoke strongly on a subject of Eastern sex morality. In spite of Miss Noble's championship of Indian life, he strongly deprecated the false impressions regarding this question. Most terrible evils existed in the East under Government supervision, even under its sanction. He was glad however to report that even the Japanese themselves were protesting. In a recent fire which had occurred in one of the worst quarters in a Japanese town known to him, the natives had refused to sanction re-building in the neighbourhood. "They ask our help" he said "to prevent the spread of evils which to some degree at least are having decent burial in the West." The discussion of the women's position ended with a claim from Mr. Tudor Pole that the Western man should place woman on the footing of spiritual equality, and with a protest from Mr. Calderon against Mrs. Besant's condemnation of child marriage. He also expressed his sympathy for the feelings of Lord Weardale, which must have suffered at the prominence given by the Congress that day to the discussion on the subject of Women's Suffrage. He appealed to the audience to form a section within the Congress whose objects should be to preserve race and national distinctions, not to obliterate them, and pointed to the costumes of those present as a melancholy example of the attempt to attain uniformity in dress. The Congress then passed on to the question of Racial Miscegenation.

In the third session in which the subject for discussion was Conditions of Progress in respect of Parliamentary Rule, there was little which bore directly on the Women's Movement. An interesting point, however, was made by Dr. Razon, who put forward, as one reason why the "strong stimulant of civilisation" had not done so much harm in Samoa and Tonga as in others of the Pacific Islands, the fact that in those two islands the woman was the mistress of the home, while in Tonga her position was so favourable that she was usually able to choose her own husband.

One after the other the speakers insisted on the need for justice in the relations between the peoples, and a fair chance in life for one and all; a plea which must appeal with peculiar force to those who are spending their lives in the endeavour to abolish the handicap of sex. The speeches of Mrs. Besant and Mrs. Archibald Little were received with immense applause. One could not but feel that they gave proof of the necessity for the woman's point of view in all the concerns of life. For these two women showed an insight into the feelings of the people for whom they spoke, and a sympathetic understanding of the disadvantages under which they labour, which the men-speakers, interesting as they were, did not possess.

Dr. Du Bois, in opening the discussion on the position of the Negro, compared it to that of women. If you do not intend to crush certain races and classes, you must allow them freedom to expand and develop as their nature prompts them.

There were two speakers representing the two sides of a question which cannot fail to rouse the sympathies of women. A South African negro, Dr. Rubasano, and an Englishwoman, Mrs. Macfadyen, spoke of the Black Peril in South Africa. Dr. Rubasano said that there were only isolated cases of misconduct on the part of black men towards white women, and

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that these were due to the example set by white men. Mrs. Macfadyen regarded the danger as more serious, but she too blamed the white men, who for the sake of gain are ready to risk women's honour. Among those races which preserve their own ideas, unstained by the influence of civilisation, a white woman is still safe; the penalty of misconduct on the part of a man to a woman is death; it is only when the black races, in contact with the lowest type of white men, are introduced to the debauchery and evil living of so-called civilised people that women become endangered. The crimes committed by black men on women living in lonely houses are often the result of the harm done to their own women. This question was in danger of being made a political one in South Africa; a fact which was resented alike by English and Dutch women; this was not a matter of race prejudice, but of morality. Mademoiselle de Pissarovsky put in a claim for economic freedom for women, while an American negro woman gave an account of the part which negro women have taken in raising the status of their race.

In a Congress such as this there were of course many subjects of intense and world-wide interest. It is only possible, however, here to touch on those which have a more or less direct bearing on our own question.

M. L. MACKENZIE.

Review.

A SHORT HISTORY OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS, by Eugene A. Hecker. (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London. 6s. net.)

In his preface to a "Short History of Women's Rights," Mr. Hecker says that his purpose in writing the book "will be gained if he induces the reader to reflect for himself on the problem in the light of its historical development." In this object he is likely to be successful. The book is, as it were, the first gropings of an early pioneer in a hitherto neglected region of history. Mr. Hecker has wisely confined himself to the Latin and Anglo-Saxon races, with but a cursory indication of the customs of Germanic tribes, and an investigation, necessarily incomplete, of the influences—Christian, Roman, and Teutonic—that went to build up the position of the Anglo-Saxon woman of to-day.

In putting his case, Mr. Hecker shows a partiality for everything Latin, and is obviously not a dispassionate historian. He compares Roman law, seen by the light of literature, where its occasional brutalities are shown to be modified by public opinion, with Canon law, as interpreted

by theologians, without an illuminating appeal to contemporary literature. The comparison, which is to the disadvantage of Canon law, is hardly fair. In Latin literature Mr. Hecker is obviously an expert, while mediæval literature, when not written in Latin, is evidently a sealed book to him. Whether Mr. Hecker is right in tracing the double standard of morality to the influence of the Early Church and the Pauline doctrine of the inferiority of women, and whether Roman laws about inheritance were altered for the worse so that fathers could disinheritor unorthodox children is a question which might well provoke an endless controversy.

Mr. Hecker's allusions to woman's position in the later Middle Ages are curiously out of focus. He dismisses "chivalry," a most remarkable social phenomenon, in a few contemptuous words, oblivious of the fact that Sir Galahad was the highest ideal of purity that literature ever achieved, and that the Quest of the Holy Grail, with its mystic suggestiveness, has been an inspiration to all subsequent ages. Of the influence of the cult of the Virgin Mary, which permeated mediæval art and literature, and eventually found its most remarkable expression in the writings of Abbé Constant, and how far it modified the monastic notion of woman as the author of evil, Mr. Hecker tells us nothing.

"Of any participation of women in intellectual life there could be no question until the Renaissance," says Mr. Hecker. Nevertheless the literature of mediæval theologians is full of advice to young women about what they shall read, it being nearly always assumed that they can read. Marie de France and Lady Constance Fitz-Gilbert played no inconsiderable part in the development of chivalrous literature.

In his allusions to the East, Mr. Hecker is also inaccurate. "In the Orient woman has from the dawn of history to the present day occupied a position exceedingly low. Indeed, in Mohammedan countries she is not allowed to have even a soul." Nevertheless India's oldest literature (e.g., the Rig-veda) shows woman to have occupied a high position, and her degradation in that country has been a gradual process; and Mohammed's words concerning the souls of women were quite unequivocal: "Whoso doth good works, be he male or female, is a true believer, and shall be admitted into Paradise."

Mr. Hecker's description of the feminist movement in America is fascinating, and he gives us definite, almost exhaustive, information about the laws affecting women in every State. This part of his book supplies a real want in Suffrage literature, and ought to be invaluable to speakers.

Mr. Hecker's inaccuracies will sometimes amuse English readers. He states, in one passage, that "the great leaders of the Woman Suffrage movement from Mrs. Stanton to Mrs. Snowden have in their home circle led lives as beautiful and have raised families as large and as well equipped morally and intellectually as those who are content to sit by the fire to spin!"

L. F. WARING.

Foreign News.

HOLLAND.

The present Government is the result of a coalition of Calvinistic and Roman Catholic clericals, the latter having the majority. It is backed by the remnants of the old Conservative party. The Roman Catholic clergy have not yet openly expressed an opinion on Women's Suffrage, but we have a fair number in the Dutch Bond in favour of it. (Nederlandsche Bond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht.) The Calvinistic party has officially declared itself for granting the vote to widows and other female heads of a family. Among its members there is a tendency to grant it also to unmarried women above thirty years of age who earn their own living. From the present Government no proposal in favour of Women's Suffrage need be expected.

The Liberal party, although in favour of Women's Suffrage, has not definitely decided to whom it intends to offer it.

The Radical and Socialistic parties demand universal suffrage for men and women. The Dutch Bond counts amongst its members men and women belonging to all these parties. If nothing unforeseen happens general elections will take place in 1913.

Summary of Fifth Report of the National Anti-sweating League.

Profound regret is expressed at the recent death of Sir Charles Dilke, to whom the League was indebted for its policy, and a tribute of admiration and gratitude paid to him for his devoted service to the cause of the poorly paid workers.

The Report states that whereas the League was at first concerned with holding meetings and exhibitions and in investigating the passing of the Trades Boards Act gave it more definite employment in watching the workers' interests on the new Boards. Thus the League has allowed its Secretary (J. J. Mallon) to serve upon certain one of the Boards and of their numerous District Committees, and in connection with each of the Boards has done its utmost to bring the workers thereon together and secure them advantage comparable to those enjoyed by the representatives of employers.

The operations of the Trades Boards Act have resulted in minimum rates yielding wages of 11s. 3d. to women and of from 22s. 6d. to 31s. to men being fixed at Cradley, these rates being as much as 80 per cent. in advance of the rates previously paid. Among the lace workers at Nottingham a rate of 2½d. an hour, rising in twelve months to 3d., has been proposed, and the latter rate, yield 13s. a week, is at least 33 per cent. better than the pre-Board rates.

In the paper box trades a rate of 3d. an hour is proposed and it is hoped to secure an improvement of this rate when its effect on the trade has been ascertained. As many thousands of workers in this trade are said to receive less than 10s. a week, it is apparent that the new rates constitute a general advance.

In these three trades the number of workers for whom minimum rates have been proposed is about 40,000. When the rates are fixed also for the wholesale tailoring trades, the total number of workers affected exceed 200,000.

The Report urges that the powers as referred upon the Boards by the Act are in some ways too narrow and foreshadows an amending Bill and an extension of the Act to additional trades.

Letters to the Editor.

Correspondents are requested to send their names and addresses, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith. The Editor is not responsible for any statement made in the correspondence column.

Correspondents are requested to write on one side of the paper only.

"ABUSE."

You ask me to give instances of abuse. I do not need to look far.

On July 20th Mr. Lloyd George was asked by a member of the Liberal Suffrage group: "Did Mr. Asquith's pledge refer specifically to Sir George Kemp's Bill and to no other?" He replied—No.

On May 29th Mr. Lloyd George quoted as the pledge Mr. Asquith's words on the 22nd November. "The Government will give effective facilities for a Bill so framed as to admit of amendment."

On June 1st the Prime Minister also says: "It is the intention of the Government to fulfil the pledge given before the last election."

In Mr. Asquith's letter to Lord Lytton the words "a Woman Suffrage Bill" are again used.

Under the circumstances, to refer to Mr. Lloyd George's answer on July 20th as "a discreditable manoeuvre" is abuse—rather gross abuse.

"Flako" Regd.

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