

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW

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Telegraphic Address: "Adversaria, London."
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We should like to remind our men friends of the rapidly spreading influence of our Men's League: *Secretary*, MR. F. W. RAFFETY; *Address*, Palace Chambers, Bridge Street, Westminster, S.W.

CHEAPENING REVOLUTION

ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS have this month much matter for encouragement, and can well afford to spare a little sympathy for the discouraged host who see their cause steadily receding before the enemies within their own camp. Nothing that their opponents could urge by way of argument would have made half the impression upon the popular imagination that was made in a few hours by the violence at Birmingham. No stronger proof of this could be found than the absolute failure of the attempt to work up popular sympathy for the victims of forcible feeding. True, Mr. Nevinson and Mr. Brailsford, as they inform us in the course of a very long letter to the *Times*, have resigned their posts as leaders-writers to an esteemed contemporary, but we fear that both Fleet Street and the world at large will receive the information with equanimity. Mr. Keir Hardie has been moved to tears by the levity and "brutality" of an unfeeling House of Commons, but the country displays no emotion, even when the militant leaders indulge in language almost biblical.

Still, though the situation cannot but make the cynic smile, it must also make the judicious grieve. There are no finer pages in the story of humanity than those that record the indomitable war waged by the spirit of man against degradation and tyranny. Think of England during the Civil War, of France before the Revolution, of Poland, of Italy, of Russia even in our own days, of the

countless men and women who have laid down their lives for the right to live, the right to think, the power to protect those nearest and dearest to them from unspeakable outrages, and compare their efforts in the sacred name of liberty with the struggles of a few petulant women to shout down a Cabinet Minister. Think of the women in Russian prisons dying to save their honour, and then turn to Mrs. Pankhurst's talk of "violated bodies," because a few refractory prisoners, convicted of common assault, are not allowed to endanger their health by silly starvation. It is not the least of the crimes recorded against the Suffragettes that they have cheapened and vulgarised the very name of revolution. Their proper place is in Madame Tussaud's, and they deserve to have their exploits chronicled only in the half-penny press.

Unfortunately, however, there remains the element of danger, inseparable from hysteria and love of notoriety. As soon as silly shouting and senseless starvation cease to attract any particular attention, there is the risk that some excited girl, or possibly some woman of the criminal type, may go to greater lengths than were reached at Birmingham. Even there the discovery of mops soaked in petroleum showed the gravity of the danger which had been averted, and rumour, more or less well substantiated, hints at other suggested acts of violence. If serious mischief should follow upon inflammatory speeches, the country will know whom to hold responsible. It is well

for the Suffragist leaders that they have spoken out betimes. It is not improbable that Miss Christabel Pankhurst may one day regret her open advocacy of violence, and may find that when she calls upon the world to witness that the responsibility for it rests upon the Government, the world is not at all disposed to take her view.

NOTES AND NEWS.

In our last number we were compelled to refer to the gross personal attack to which the Prime Minister was subjected by some "brazen" women at his country house in Kent. So far from being ashamed of the disgraceful proceedings, the advanced Suffragist wing is inexpressibly tickled at the notion of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Gladstone being compelled to play golf under police protection. To the ordinary unbiased mind, these physical assaults on men by women are not only revolting in themselves, but cowardly to the last degree. A man cannot strike back, whether he be a Cabinet Minister or a mere policeman. The deliberate attempts, however, on the 17th of September, to inflict serious injury on the Premier, and on any Birmingham citizen who might get in the way of slates and "metal missiles," belong to a different category. They understand the art of organising and keeping order at political meetings in Birmingham better, perhaps, than anywhere in England, and the attempts at disturbance ended in ignominious failure. But the deliberate policy which allows a woman to throw a dangerous missile at a railway carriage window, on the chance of the Prime Minister being inside, and to stone a motor car which may or may not contain him, introduces a danger into daily life which society cannot and will not tolerate. The suffrage fanatics are approximating day by day to the methods of continental anarchists, and we are threatened with developments of an even more sinister character. Fortunately for itself, Birmingham possesses a stipendiary magistrate of firmness and wide experience in the practice and administration of the criminal law. There has been far too

much deference paid to the feelings and motives of those who, after all, are only common rioters.

But the rising tide of hooliganism is producing the inevitable though long-delayed revolt. A day or two before Mr. Asquith's Birmingham meeting, Mr. Forbes Robertson went down to Bristol to give an address to the members of the local Women's Suffrage Society. The chair was to have been taken by Miss Marian Pease, but when the time came, one of the gentlemen present had to announce that Miss Pease regretted her inability to fulfil her engagement. Whether her letter was read to the gathering does not appear from the newspaper report, but it saw the light in the *Bristol Times and Mirror* the following day. Since she had accepted the invitation, wrote Miss Pease, her attention had been called to a letter signed by Mr. Forbes Robertson, amongst others, in defence of the actions of the imprisoned members of the Women's Social and Political Union. "Mr. Forbes Robertson and the other writers express views with which I entirely disagree, and condone actions which I believe it to be the duty of every supporter of the constitutional agitation for granting the vote to women to condemn." Holding such opinions, Miss Pease found it impossible to be present, still less to take the chair, and beneath her signature followed a letter from another Bristol lady. "I withdrew my support from the suffrage meeting at which Mr. Forbes Robertson was good enough to speak because I found that he had, by speech elsewhere and public letter, appeared, as it seemed to me, to palliate the conduct of those who belong to what are called the militant societies." We are not surprised to hear from a Bristol correspondent that two branches of the Suffrage Society out of three have had to be closed in that city.

The long-demanded repudiation of the anarchical tactics of the extreme suffragettes at the hands of their more sober sisters has at last made its appearance. In the *Times* of October 4th there is a letter bearing the joint signatures of Lady Frances Balfour and Mrs. Fawcett. From this we learn that the Executive Committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies had, a day or two earlier, unanimously approved a resolution "which reiterated our circular letter of Novem-

ber last, and expressed once more our deep and abiding disapproval of the tactics of violence and petty annoyance." There was no difference of opinion in the Committee as to the propriety of the resolution, but there was some discussion upon the point whether the Committee should publish their condemnation of methods of violence immediately or wait until it could be submitted to the council which was to meet in the course of a few days. "The additional authority and publicity which our resolution would gain if endorsed by our entire body, consisting of about a hundred societies, carried the day, and the motion will be submitted to our council and, we hope, communicated to the Press in a few days." By the time this number of the REVIEW is in the hands of our readers, the full text of the resolution will probably have appeared. No one can accuse the National Union and their Committee of undue haste in this matter. The circular to which reference is made by Lady Frances Balfour and Mrs. Fawcett was issued twelve months ago, at a time when the methods of violence were of comparatively moderate dimensions, and it has needed a long series of disgraceful incidents, of which the Bingley Hall outrages were the climax, to elicit their formal condemnation.

COMPARISON of dates makes it unfair to suggest that the hands of the Committee of the National Union were forced by the very remarkable letter from Miss Ethel Arnold, which provoked the response quoted in the preceding paragraph. Indeed, the *Manchester Guardian* of September 30th contained a clear and strong protest from the North of England Suffrage Society against the militant Suffragettes, which had been drawn up some days before the appeal, in which Miss Arnold called upon the leaders of the constitutional movement "to put the crown upon their great service to a great cause by a definite pronouncement of their views at this time of grave and acute crisis." Hitherto, she complained, they had all, without exception, kept silence and allowed judgment to go by default. "We have come to the parting of the ways. It is no longer possible for myself and for those who think as I do to have part or lot in an agitation conducted on such lines as have led to the recent personal assaults upon Mr. Asquith and received the imprimatur of the Women's Social and Political Union. . . . When the

militant agitation began, though to many of us its methods and tactics were, both in theory and practice, distasteful, we were perfectly ready to admit that the movement needed an infusion of new life, and to give full credit and honour to those who had brought it out of the somewhat academic shades in which it had reposed for nearly forty years into the light of a more strenuous day; and so no doubt Mrs. Fawcett felt and thought when she gave her partial endorsement to the militant party. But the performances of the last few months, beginning with the break up of the Albert Hall meeting in February last, have filled the majority of the suffrage party, both here and in America, with dismay—dismay which has deepened into disgust. . . . The devoted women who for the last forty years have borne the burden and heat of the day are forced sadly to look on and see the tide recede steadily before their eyes. . . . The Anti-Suffrage League flourishes, and will flourish, upon the mistakes of its opponents." With the concluding paragraph of Miss Arnold's letter we are, of course, in entire disagreement. The Suffrage is by no means "bound to come." We have probably seen the turn of the tide, at any rate for some years; and to talk of the vote as women's only protection in the modern State, is simply to ignore the whole course of social history and Parliamentary legislation during the last half century.

The remonstrances of the saner suffrage societies have not as yet apparently had any effect in the quarters to which they were directed. The Pankhurst family declare war to the knife against the Ministry, and incidentally against society at large; the war-chest of the Women's Social and Political Union is being amply replenished for the campaign, and the ingenuity of the conspirators is being strained to the utmost in devising fresh methods of attack. The "moderates" have at last delivered their consciences and may now even claim our sympathies, but they have lost whatever control of the movement they may have originally possessed. A leading article in the *Daily News*, published on the same day on which the letters of Lady Frances Balfour and Mrs. Fawcett appeared in the *Times*, complained bitterly of the difficulty of detaching the question of women's suffrage from

the actions of a small body of extremists. "The issue is lost in a cloud of contending passions. It would be idle to deny that the effect upon the cause in Parliament has been disastrous." Moderate opinion has been driven into a position of silence or hostility. "The militant movement, it is true, has made many captures outside the House. It has charged its supporters with the passion of a crusade. They are no longer men and women. They are a whirlwind. They are bent not on persuading the country but on destroying government. This policy would be effective if the country were won. But . . . it takes a people to change a constitution by force, and the militants have forgotten the people. They have forgotten that the true strategy is to capture that large body of indifferent or open-minded opinion which is open to persuasion but is repulsed by a virulence it does not understand. It ceases to distinguish between the cause and the extravagances which are offensive to it, and in this frame of mind turns with weariness from the whole subject."

THE *Daily News*, needless to say, is a staunch supporter of Female Suffrage in the abstract, and so is our contemporary the *Nation*. But the latter has been goaded by the exploits of the women at Birmingham into something which, on the face of it, looks like desertion and despair. "The suffragettes," it is pointed out in a leading article of September 25th, "thought that women could use force effectively, when it was clear they could not so use it. And they hoped to frighten men when they have merely irritated them into a blank denial of women's capacity to act with discretion in public life, or into a more rational refusal to concede a great change of political power in response to a calculated resort to violence. What are the evidences of a change of opinion on this subject, in a sense unfavourable to the women's cause? We can only judge by the feeling in the House of Commons. The election of 1906 yielded a majority of votes—for the most part a careless and unthinking majority—for some kind of a Suffrage Bill on democratic lines. Where is that majority now? A shrewd Member of the House of Commons, personally favourable to the suffrage, assured the writer of this article that he did not know more than half a dozen of his colleagues who both

believed in and would press a Suffrage Bill. The Tories have drawn back from their earlier coquetting with the movement. The Liberals have been scandalised and affronted by the persecution of their leader. The Labour men disagree as a body with the limited Bill, and for the most part dislike its propaganda. As practical politics the cause has gone back, and the mere willingness of enthusiastic young women to endure great physical privations, in the hope that they may win converts to their cause, will not advance that special phase of the women's movement. It will cause the State some inconvenience, and it will give pain and regret to individuals. But it will not alter the fact that the question of the women's vote is submitted to a jury of men, which has been so handled by the women's counsel that small hope remains of a favourable verdict."

No wonder that such plain speaking has called down a chorus of indignant expostulation. But of the truth of the article there can be no doubt on the part of those who are brought into touch with the actualities of daily life. The set-back of the Suffrage movement since its advocates took to assaulting Cabinet Ministers, to slapping policemen, and to indulging in the pastime of bottle hurling, is one of the most striking and most satisfactory features in modern politics. A remarkable illustration of the hardening of responsible opinion against the fanatics and the cause behind them was supplied by a correspondent of the *Times* a day or two ago. In a certain Parliamentary constituency a meeting of a political council was being held, in order to interview a recommended candidate. It was known privately to a few persons beforehand that the candidate was opposed to the enfranchisement of women, and some anxiety was felt lest on this score his candidature should be prejudiced. In due course, at the meeting, the candidate was asked the question, "Are you in favour of votes for women?" "No, I am not," was the reply. The reply was greeted with prolonged and universal applause, and the candidate was unanimously adopted. Neither the name of the constituency nor the political complexion of the Committee are stated, but the anecdote tallies exactly with the information which reaches us from all quarters. The good-humoured tolerance which originally greeted the suffragettes in working-class constituencies is rapidly

giving way to a feeling of passionate anger. The working man has the greatest detestation of "nagging"; he sometimes knows what it is from experience—possibly well deserved—at home; at any rate, the victims of it are always sure of sympathy and commiseration at his hands. The peculiar form of "nagging" which the suffragettes have introduced into public life is little calculated to prepossess him, and the next young lady who tries to silence a Cabinet Minister with a hand-bell will have a rough time of it.

* * *

INDEED, it is impossible not to look forward to the General Election, which seems drawing nearer every day, without something like a shudder. The contest, when it comes, is likely to be one of extreme bitterness, in which party feeling on both sides will be exasperated to the highest pitch. Into this arena a body of young and middle-aged women are about to descend, not only, in the famous words of Lord Beaconsfield, "intoxicated with the exuberance of their own verbosity," but avowedly prepared to stick at nothing in their determination to take vengeance on the Ministry who have refused to grant "votes for women." Miss Pankhurst writes to the *Times* that stones are "time-honoured political weapons," and declares that until "political liberty" is accorded to her countrywomen, conscience will not allow her or her friends to give up the fight. The rule of "no physical violence," writes Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, is to be abandoned. And we are told that "militant tactics" are to be pursued, "no matter though social order and harmony be for a time destroyed." We are threatened with a sex war on a scale which has never yet been witnessed out of fiction, and in which the weakest must inevitably go to the wall. What that may mean is horrible to think of. English mobs at election time are not unchivalrous at heart, but they are a dangerous body to rouse. A heavy responsibility will rest on those who urge women and girls into a fray where their own conduct has deprived them in advance of their traditional claim to deference and gentle treatment.

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We have referred in another column to the repellent topic of the forcible feeding of suffragette prisoners in Winsor Green Prison, but we cannot refrain from quoting the essen-

tially common-sense views expressed by a writer in the *Law Journal* of October 2nd. "It is painful to have to use force to a woman to prevent her from committing suicide; and frenzied, hysterical resistance only makes the task more painful. There may be a good deal to be said in favour of letting obstinate prisoners make an end of themselves in their own way, but as the law now stands with regard to suicide, we cannot see that the prison authorities have any option but to prevent self-starvation by the most effectual methods which medical science has discovered. The authorities deserve more sympathy from the dispassionate public than the persons who are loudly complaining of indignities which their misguided recalcitrance has brought on themselves. It is difficult for a biting and kicking termagant to wear the halo of political martyrdom with due impressiveness." The Birmingham stipendiary has dismissed the summonses for assault which have been taken out against the prison authorities, and it is difficult to see by what process of logic the suffragette ladies can hope to set the law in operation against doctors and wardresses for keeping them alive. We can only dimly imagine the fury and indignation which would be excited if the prisoners were allowed to carry their hunger strike to a fatal termination.

We have a letter from one of the branch secretaries of the National Union of Women Workers of Great Britain and Ireland, which we commend to the notice of those of our readers who may be members of that body. At the meeting which is shortly to be held at Southsea a resolution is to be proposed to the following effect: "Without the firm foundation of the Parliamentary Franchise for Women there is no permanence for any advance gained by them." Our correspondent is strongly opposed to "votes for women," and she objects most decidedly to this attempt to "capture the machine." The National Union of Women Workers is a practical, philanthropic body, which embraces women who differ most profoundly on the burning question of the Suffrage, and the obligation of neutrality with regard thereto is essential to its practical usefulness. There are only too many signs that a process of "boycotting" is in preparation, by which, if successful, women who are non-suffragists will be removed from all the movements on behalf of woman's work. It is essen-

tial that this tendency should be combated wherever it makes itself manifest.

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An editorial note in the October number of the *Englishwoman* suggests that because no mention was made in these columns of an article on the social evil which had appeared in the September number, we had not read it. The writer is mistaken: we did read it, and we refrained from mentioning it because it appeared to us to be in no way relevant to the question of Female Suffrage. The writer pointed out "the need of greater protection for young girls under our law, a protection which is afforded by the statutes of those countries where women exercise the franchise, but which will never be adequate in a land where the framing and administration of the laws are in the hands of men alone." This claim on behalf of "the statutes of those countries where women exercise the franchise" is wholly baseless, as a comparison of the four suffrage States in the American Union with the non-suffrage States would soon show. But if the writer really believes that men are indifferent to the most grave and painful question of the protection of young girls, she can have only the most imperfect acquaintance with modern legislation. Twenty-four years ago the passage of what is known as the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 brought about a series of most necessary and desirable amendments in the existing state of affairs: it was the work of a man's Parliament, and it was carried with practical unanimity. It was generally recognised that it had gone as far as public opinion, the opinion of the class from which juries are drawn, would follow. If the law is to be strengthened, public opinion must first be converted, and the possession of the franchise by women is not likely to help in that direction. It is a gross libel on the male elector, to which all who have worked in this painful field will testify, to assert that he is indifferent to the protection of young girls, but he knows that zeal is not always according to knowledge.

PLEASE NOTE.

THE "Ideal Woman" Calendar, "A Calendar for all the Years," has been issued by the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, and can be obtained direct from Caxton House for half a crown; or by post 2s. 8d.

OUR BRANCH NEWS-LETTER.

THOUGH our winter campaign, which, by the way, is to be a very vigorous one, has not yet commenced in earnest, there has been all through September a healthy stir throughout all our branches. Many excellent meetings have been held, and some new branches formed, others being planned to come into being in the near future. The motor campaign of Mr. and Mrs. H. Norris and Mr. A. Maconachie throughout the North has been responsible for many of the September meetings. A special report of the campaign, however, and all the meetings in connection with it, appears in other columns of the REVIEW, so it is unnecessary to give further details here. The recent amazing tactics of militant Suffragists have turned public attention throughout the provinces towards the Anti-Suffrage League, and as a consequence our branch organisation is rapidly increasing. There is a demand for a branch of our League anywhere the public have had the misfortune to experience militant suffragism and its attendant anarchy. It has also been very noticeable lately that "debates" between ourselves and our opponents have been fruitful of victory for the Anti-Suffrage League. A particularly interesting recent debate was one which took place between Mrs. Archibald Colquhoun and Miss Edith Palliser at Portsdown Road, Maida Vale, at the residence of a sympathiser with the Suffrage movement, on September 30th. Mrs. Colquhoun's arguments were triumphantly victorious, and Miss Palliser's points were in nearly every case ruthlessly shorn of their effect by Mrs. Colquhoun's merciless logic.

Many of our branches have sent in very favourable accounts of the work during September. From Manchester we hear as follows:—"We have been engaged during September (1) in working up the Nurses' Committee, and (2) in the experiment of taking an empty shop, placarded with Anti-Suffragist bills, and giving opportunities for those passing to sign the petition. A petition for men, which will be sent to the local members of Parliament, lay on the table and was largely signed. The results of this experiment were, on the whole, very encouraging. A great deal of interest was aroused, and very many satisfactory conversations were held, the demand for literature being considerable. The committee hope to take shops in other parts of Manchester from time to time. A meeting, attended by many of our members who are or have been professional nurses, was held lately to consider the question of advancing the cause of the League among nurses. It was decided as a beginning to call on the matrons of all the hospitals in Manchester and ask them to allow the petition to remain in the hospital for a short period, in order to give their staffs an opportunity to sign it. The result has been most encouraging, several fully filled up petition lists having been received already. The number of nurses who have signed it is 110, and the lists are not yet all in. During September 2,500 letters, signed by our President, Lady Sheffield, have been sent to leading citizens of Manchester, and new members have been obtained in this manner."

The Hon. Nina Kay-Shuttleworth, presid-

ing at a Penrith meeting on September 14th (in connection with the motor tour) made such an adroit speech that we reproduce some of it here. She said she thought it was coming home to Englishwomen that if they did not want to have the burden of the suffrage thrust upon them they must do something to make their voices heard in the country. The moment when that protest would be most needed was fast approaching. Any day now a General Election might occur, and then all the powers of their organisation would be required to assure candidates that the large majority of Englishwomen were averse from the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to their sex. If the mere vote were all that the franchise meant—the marking of the ballot-paper once in every five or six years—the granting of the franchise to the sex would not be a very serious matter; but that was not the case. The granting of the franchise meant far more. The mania for demonstrating was becoming a great feature of political life, and the women who had the vote would feel that it was their duty to share in that additional burden. For they might be sure that the more extreme-minded of their sex, who were now engaged in making the life of the Prime Minister a burden to him, would continue to agitate for the immediate adoption of their pet measures or candidates.

The Sheffield and District Branch had a very successful meeting at the Cutler's Hall on September 7th to report the work they had done since the branch was established six months ago. Mr. Arthur Balfour presided. The half-year's work has been very satisfactory and encouraging, and it received a warm tribute of appreciation from the chairman, who made a capital speech. Miss Alice Watson moved the adoption of the report, which was seconded by Mrs. C. H. Bingham, and carried with acclamation.

There was an influential attendance at an "At Home" given by Mrs. Stirling at Rockbeare Grange, near Exeter, on September 16th, when an excellent address was given by Miss Lindsay. Colonel Stirling presided, and said Lady Acland, of Killerton, had written: "I am sure if women will only study the whole question of the franchise they will come to the opinion that it is not expedient at the present time for the Parliamentary vote to be granted to women, and that the means that some of the Suffragists employ are a disgrace to their sex. Even if they consider and believe that they are working for heaven's ends, they surely should not break heaven's laws."

Sir Ernest Satow wrote that he hoped that there would be a large gathering, and that another nail would be driven in the coffin of the suffrage movement. Sir Charles Follett wrote: "Though Tariff Reform and the Budget protest are my special subjects, I have very strong views against women's suffrage. I am confident that in claiming to go with men into the rough and tumble of public life the women will lose infinitely more than they could gain; they will lose the sacred honour and respect of men, which is their greatest asset and their supreme power."

Mrs. T. L. Derry, of Exeter, emphasised the belief that any limited vote must eventually lead to the larger one. Some Suffragist questions were cleverly answered and their arguments successfully silenced.

A branch of the League has been established at Reading, under the presidency of Mrs. G. W. Palmer. A strong committee has

been formed representing all shades of political opinion, and there is every prospect of great success for our propaganda in Reading and district.

A very interesting drawing-room meeting was held at Fairhill, Exeter, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. C. T. K. Roberts, on September 11th. Mr. Roberts presided. Miss Lindsay spoke well and forcibly, and Mr. F. J. Newman, of the Men's Anti-Suffrage League, said the Suffragists claimed that they represented the great mass of women, yet, during the last year, in seventeen petitions presented, through the Suffragists, to Parliament, there were 17,000 signatures, whereas in the one Anti-Suffragist petition there were no less than 264,000. The contention that women were subject to outlawry was a deliberate falsehood, for the law was more anxious to protect women from insult than men. Dealing with the argument of taxation without representation, Mr. Newman asked them to consider the great mass of men who paid taxes, but who had no vote whatsoever, and who had to pay, in addition, taxes on nearly all their pleasures. The taxes women paid were wages for the protection which they enjoyed under the law. There was no country in which the laws were so favourable to women as in England. The old chivalry was already losing a little of its force. Women could not have such privileges and possess at the same time the same voting power as men. They could not eat the cake and have it. The very leaders of the Suffragists were incapable of controlling themselves. Suffragists were clever, but it was the cleverness of the advertiser and boomster.

Arrangements are being made to form a branch in Liverpool, and a public meeting will shortly be held in the town to inaugurate what it is hoped will be a very strong organisation. Anyone wishing to help in the forming of this branch is invited to write to Mrs. Currie, Coniston, Seabank Road, Liscard.

The Cheltenham Branch had a bright and successful little drawing-room meeting on October 7th at the residence of Mrs. Hardy, president. After tea Mrs. Hardy introduced Mrs. Clement Webb, who had come from Oxford to speak informally, and Mrs. Webb, in an able little speech, dissected the arguments of the Suffragists, and explained the Anti-Suffrage beliefs very clearly to her audience. Miss Geddes, hon. sec. of Cheltenham Branch, made an appeal to the members to help in the League's work at Cheltenham, and enumerated many ways in which they might do so.

OUR MOTOR-CAR TOUR IN THE NORTH.

It lasted just a fortnight, from September 2nd to September 15th, and exactly a dozen meetings—seven indoor and five open-air—were held. They began at Northallerton, and ended at Leeds, the places visited in the interval being Scarborough, Whitby, Castleton, Barnard Castle, Durham, Newcastle, Lockerbie and Penrith. Thus, four English counties (Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, and Cumberland), and one Scottish county (Dumfriesshire) were "sampled" as to their views on Woman Suffrage.

It was Mr. Harold Norris who conceived

the idea of the "new departure." Believing that the time had come for the Anti-Suffrage party to make a forward movement, he asked his wife to agree to sacrificing a fortnight of their summer holiday to this missionary project, and invited Mr. Maconachie to join them in the voluntary gift of time and service to the cause. The Executive Committee of our League promptly closed with the suggestion, and gladly gave the expedition the benefit of its "imprimatur" and its auspices.

Mr. and Mrs. Norris and Mr. Maconachie have presented a report of their experiences to the League, and we subjoin certain passages which will be, we believe, of much interest to our readers:—

CLASSES OF AUDIENCE.

One of the most interesting as well as most useful features of the campaign was the great variety in the class of audience we met. In some meetings of 300 or more there were scarcely a dozen men—these were always indoor meetings, advertised and arranged in the conventional way beforehand. In others, of 300 to 500, scarcely a dozen women. These were in the open air, not pre-arranged at all, but the spontaneous response of the "man in the street," when we paid him a surprise visit in some busy centre, and consisted chiefly of working and business men. Other audiences were almost wholly middle-class—you saw it at once by their hats and bonnets—while one comprised few who did not represent some county family.

A COMMON CHARACTERISTIC.

But, rich or poor, male or female, all had one common characteristic, an intense interest in the question, an open-minded eagerness to hear what we had to say; and, with one exception, all evinced yet another characteristic which, to us, was the most pleasing of all, viz., that they passed a vote against Woman Suffrage by very large and, in most cases, by absolutely overwhelming majorities.

GETTING UP MEETINGS.

It may be difficult to organise meetings on some subjects. There is no difficulty about this one. All you have to do is to send the local town-crier round a couple of hours before; perambulate the town in your motor, which you have previously decked with the colours of the League, bearing placards announcing the time and place of meeting, and, given respectable weather, you will any evening, and in any town, soon have an audience which a Cabinet minister might be proud of at a by-election. Northallerton, Barnard Castle, Durham, and our second meeting at Newcastle are conspicuous illustrations of large and intelligent audiences to be thus got for the asking.

RELATIVE VALUE OF INDOOR AND OPEN AIR.

Between these kinds of meetings there is no comparison; our open-air meetings were, without exception, far and away the most easily organised, the best attended,

the most interesting, and the most successful. At every one of them at least nine-tenths of the people were men (and men have to settle this question), and the vote in our favour was crushing to the other side. Newcastle was a highly significant illustration of this. On Thursday, September 9th, at an indoor "ticket" meeting, attended chiefly by women, the local suffragettes were in strong force, and by wearying the audience with their much, though largely foolish, heckling, half-emptied the hall before the vote was taken, and then outnumbered us. This was the one and only occasion in our tour on which we failed to carry the vote, and the failure was, for the reason just mentioned, wholly artificial and accidental. Still, explicable though it was, we did not like to leave so important a centre as Newcastle with just that taste in the mouth, and, impressed by our previous experiences of open-air gatherings, we determined to cut Carlisle from our programme, in order to make room for an appeal next day to the Newcastle "man in the street." The result was an improvised meeting in the Bigg Market (the recognised place for public open-air meetings in the busiest quarter of the town) of many hundreds of men, and a majority in our favour in the proportion of about twenty to one. We attach the greatest importance to the significance of this experience.

PICTURESQUE INCIDENTS.

In a tour like this it was inevitable that there should be not a few incidents of a picturesque kind. They are quite too numerous to mention, but, as illustrations, we may say that we shall not readily forget scenes like those at Barnard Castle, where, at the close of our open-air meeting, under the flickering gaslights of the quaint old town, young working girls with shawls round their heads, and elderly dames, vied with each other in their eagerness to sign the women's petition, one of the latter borrowing glasses from her neighbour to see to write, and another apologising for the frail caligraphy of her aged fingers. They were all so anxious to dissociate themselves from the Suffragettes! At Durham, a lady from Australia, whom we met casually at lunch, begged leave to sign the Women's Petition. "A very bad thing for Australia," she explained, "if England were ever ruled by a majority of women." "It has done little good in the Colony," added her husband; "its chief result has been to add enormously to the power of the Labour Party." Which things are a parable, and may shed a useful sidelight on the reasons for the unanimous support given to Woman Suffrage by the Labour Party in England.

MISTAKEN FOR SUFFRAGISTS.

It frequently happened in driving through villages (where we distributed thousands of leaflets) that the natives, especially the children, not being very familiar with such "classical" English as the word "Anti," at first blush took us for Suffragists. The usual consequence

was scowls and "boos" and shouts of "Mrs. Pankhurst!" at the devoted head of Mrs. Norris. It was quite remarkable to see the change of demeanour, generally ending in welcoming smiles, when it was explained that we were working *against* the Suffragettes.

HECKLING.

At every meeting we made it a point to encourage heckling from all and sundry; and so useful did we find the hecklers for our own purposes that after the first few meetings we made a practice of curtailing our speeches in order to provide more time for the elucidation and enforcement of our case through answers to the often clumsily-framed questions of our opponents. When you have a good case, nothing pays you with an audience like plenty of heckling from the other side. "Truth, like a torch, the more it's shook, it shines."

RESULTS AND IMPRESSIONS.

To sum up our experiences, we have arrived at certain very clear and definite conclusions:—

1. No one, in or out of Parliament, need be afraid to oppose Woman Suffrage. The British public, so far as we were able to sample it (and we speak now from first-hand knowledge) is by a huge preponderance, whether you take men or women, dead against the whole thing. A referendum would kill the proposal for at least a generation out of hand. Any political party which has the pluck to declare against the suffrage, root and branch, would sweep the country on that issue.
2. But the hostility to the suffrage has not yet found adequate expression. At every meeting we found many who had never seriously considered the question at all, but who, though in many cases somewhat predisposed amiably to grant the vote because some women wanted it, on hearing the case against the vote, promptly realised the objections to it, and declared against it. There is a rich harvest to be had for the trouble of gathering it.
3. Resentment at the antics of the Suffragettes—antics which have become anarchy—is intense to a degree which surprised even us, who rejoiced to see it, and is practically ubiquitous. Women, especially, are burning with a deep, latent shame at the behaviour of the unwomanly women who disgrace the sex while purporting to "emancipate" it. Emancipation from the Suffragettes, not by them, is felt to be the need of the present.
4. Above all, our local Branches should take heart of grace. Now is the time to strike, and to strike home. The Suffragettes have placed victory in our grasp. All we have to do is to focus and materialise it, so that it may be seen and known of all men. The militants have succeeded, indeed, in making the public think and talk about the question, but that success has been their undoing.

In conclusion, we desire to express our most cordial thanks for great kindness and hospitality received at the hands of friends of the cause in many of the towns we visited.

BRANCHES.

Will the following subscribing members of Council kindly forward their address to the League's head offices, Caxton House, Westminster: Mrs. M. Hepham, Miss M. F. Moreton, Mrs. Ross, Mrs. Charles Smith, Miss Wilkin, Miss Minet, Mrs. (Ida M.) Roger. Also the following members of League: F. B. J. Barnett, Esq., — Hardcastle, Esq., Andrew Smith, Esq., J. W. Bream, Esq., Mrs. Alston, Mrs. Henley, Mrs. (Charlotte M.) Hillard, Mrs. Hussey, Mrs. Harold Johnson, Nurse Kempster, Mrs. (?) Emily R. C. Malcolm, Miss Amelia Matthews, Mrs. Franklin Richards, Miss F. A. Samen, Mrs. H. Sullivan, Mrs. Sutton, Miss M. E. Waterham, Mrs. F. Watkins, Mrs. Winter. Also the following Associates: Mrs. M. Grey, Miss Griffiths, Mrs. Hamett, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Hoyle, Miss Landur, Miss Leckie, Mrs. G. L. Porter, Mrs. S. Radclyffe, Mrs. Seddon, Miss Talon, Miss Adelaide Tarver (late of 7, Alexandra Road, Croydon).

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All communications to be addressed to Miss Frost for the present.

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BARCELONA AND VOTES FOR WOMEN.

IN the *Sphere* of August 14 there were pictures (from photographs) of the terrible destruction caused by the rioters at Barcelona; and under one of these—representing a screaming woman waving a flag in front of a tramcar overturned by the rioters—there are these words: "In the fighting and rioting women and children have taken a conspicuous part; for the rioters, when confronted with troops, have placed the children in the front line, the women in the second, and the men themselves have formed the third. Under cover of the women and children the men have attacked the police or soldiers, who have been unable to discharge their rifles against defenceless women and children."

Here is a vivid illustration of the special and natural privilege of women and the misuse that can be made of it. Women can break the law like men, but cannot (as yet, at any rate) be punished like men, because the moral sense of the community would, at present, be outraged by the procedure. Even the apocryphal "punishment" by compulsory feeding has raised a hullabaloo in sentimental or interested quarters. In a word, it is coming to pass that women can break the law almost with impunity. And this is the sex which it is soberly proposed to put into a position to make the law, to shape, it may be, a national policy—possibly, as to the relation between the sexes—and yet to be free from the physical consequences which men would risk in carrying out the policy when there was an uprising against it. Or to go further still: the minority of men siding with the majority of women might make themselves also immune from physical consequences by following the example of the brave rioters of Barcelona.

We wonder how long it will take the advocates of Woman Suffrage to perceive the paradox and the peril of their policy, and to let into their blind pursuit of what they call "justice to women" a little of the daylight shed by an unbiased consideration of a woman's nature as affecting the scope of her just claim. J. M.

LIST OF LEAFLETS.

2. Woman's Suffrage and After. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
3. Mrs. Ward's Speech. Price ½d. each.
4. Queen Victoria and Woman's Suffrage. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
5. Is Woman Suffrage Inevitable? Price 5s. per 1,000.
6. Nature's Reason against Woman Suffrage. Price 5s. per 1,000.
7. Shall Women Receive the Vote? Price 3s. per 1,000.
8. Woman's Suffrage and National Welfare. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
9. Is the Parliamentary Suffrage the best way? Price 10s. per 1,000.
10. Women of Great Britain. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
11. The Latest Phase of the Women's Suffrage Movement. Price 5s. per 1,000.
12. Why Women should not Vote. Price 3s. per 1,000.
13. Women's Position under Laws made by Man. Price 5s. per 1,000.
14. (1) The Franchise for Women of Property. Price 3s. per 1,000.
14. (2) Women and the Representation of Property. Price 3s. per 1,000.
15. (1) Woman's Suffrage and Women's Wages, Price 5s. per 1,000.
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15. (3) Votes and Wages. Price 5s. per 1,000.
16. Look Ahead. Price 4s. per 1,000.
17. Why the Women's Enfranchisement Bill (1908) is unfair to Women. Price 5s. per 1,000.
18. Married Women and the Factory Law. Price 5s. per 1,000.
19. A Suffrage Talk. Price 3s. per 1,000.
20. A Word to Working Women. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
21. Votes for Women (from Mr. F. Harrison's book). Price 10s. per 1,000.
22. "Votes for Women?" Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
23. Anti-Suffragist's Letter. Price 6s. per 1,000.
24. Reasons against Woman Suffrage. Price 4s. per 1,000.
25. Women and the Franchise. Price 5s. per 1,000.
26. Woman Suffrage and India. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
27. The Constitutional Myth. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
28. We are against Female Suffrage. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
29. Mrs. Arthur Somervell's Speech at Queen's Hall. Price 5s. per 1,000.

PAMPHLETS AND BOOKS.

- A. Freedom of Women. Mrs. Harrison. Price 6d.
- B. Woman or Suffragette. Marie Corelli. Price 3d.
- C. Positive Principles. Price 1d.
- D. Sociological Reasons. Price 1d.
- E. Case against Woman Suffrage. Price 1d.
- F. Woman in relation to the State. Price 6d.
- G. Mixed Herbs. M.E.S. Price 2s. net.
- H. "Votes for Women." Mrs. Ivor Maxse. Price 3d.
- I. Letters to a Friend on Votes for Women. Professor Dicey. 1s.
- J. Woman Suffrage—A National Danger. Heber Hart, LL.D. Price 1s.
- K. Points in Professor Dicey's "Letter" on Votes for Women. Price 1d.
- L. An Englishwoman's Home. M.E.S. Price 1s.