

MANCHESTER
NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
Journal.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

No. 4.—PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

JUNE 1, 1870.

DOUBLE NUMBER.—PRICE ONE PENNY.

SINCE we last addressed our readers the parliamentary campaign has begun and ended for this session. The events have been surprising both to the friends and opponents of the cause. There were some among the supporters of the Women's Disabilities Bill who thought that as its principle was identical with that of the clause conferring the municipal franchise on women, the legislature which had granted this could not logically refuse the parliamentary vote; and that the government which had lent the weight of its official sanction to Mr. Jacob Bright's proposal of last year would not now turn round and oppose him in the completion of his task. It did seem, therefore, from one point of view, not altogether impossible that the Bill might be unopposed and become law with as little demur as the corresponding measure of last session. This view derives some countenance from the fact that almost every speaker who opposed the Bill took occasion to say that the grant of the municipal franchise to women had been a mistake, thereby confirming our proposition that the two questions go hand in hand, and that the right to the one vote implies a just claim to the other.

But those who contemplated the possibility of the Bill passing unopposed, did not for one moment imagine that if serious opposition were raised the question could be settled in a single session. It would have been little short of a miracle if women could have risen from a condition of political non-existence, in one year to the acquisition of the Municipal, and in the next to that of the Parliamentary vote. Such celerity would have savoured of the magical, and would have been totally at variance with the manner in which grave questions have been hitherto discussed and made their way in this country. No one need feel in the least discouraged because this rapid consummation has not been attained.

The Women's Disabilities Bill is not only a Reform Bill on a great scale, but involves a momentous change in the political status of sixteen millions of Her Majesty's subjects; therefore it would not be reasonable to suppose that so grave a measure could become law without a much more thorough and searching discussion than it has hitherto received. The question is a novel one in the House of Commons; it raises, in an unusual degree, the host of prejudices and sentiments always ready to array themselves against any proposed departure from

the accustomed order of things; and it is involved in the imagination of its opponents with a number of extraneous considerations which do not properly belong to it. Taking all these circumstances into account, the utmost that could have been reasonably expected from the events of the session was a substantial addition to the number of our parliamentary supporters, and a considerable advance in public attention and recognition of the importance of our claim. This result has been unquestionably attained, and the vicissitudes which have attended the fortunes of the Bill have caused an amount of discussion which could hardly have been secured by any other means.

The events of the past month may be thus briefly summed up. The opponents of the Bill in the first instance encountered the proposal for the second reading with a motion of the "previous question," a mode of action usually adopted when the House wishes to get rid of a question without pronouncing an opinion on its merits, and which occasionally has its advantages, but of which it is difficult to conceive the reason or appropriateness here. On the fourth of May Mr. Jacob Bright rose to move the second reading of the Bill. In an able and comprehensive speech of about an hour's duration he laid the case before the House, and set forth the arguments for the claim with a force and persuasiveness which left nothing to be desired. It was a speech to encourage friends and disarm opponents, and it did actually accomplish this. With no less force of logic and earnestness Dr. Lyon Playfair and Sir Chas. Dilke supported him; and Colonel Sykes, Sir George Jenkinson, and Mr. Muntz, each made valuable contributions to the debate on the same side. No attempt was made by the opponents to meet the arguments adduced for the Bill; they had plenty of sentimental objections, but did not condescend to reason—unless that may be called a reason which the mover of the opposition offered as an explanation of his course, namely, that he did not like to see women enter into competition with dancing dogs. After the debate had thus proceeded—all the reason being seemingly on the one side and all the unreason on the other—Mr. Secretary Bruce rose on behalf of the government. After explaining that there were occasions when a member of the government felt with great regret that he could not give an independent vote, he said that it was a most im-

portant question, to which his colleagues had not had not time to give full consideration, and that they therefore asked the House to delay the consideration of the measure; but he desired it to be understood that neither for himself individually, nor on behalf of the government, was he expressing any opinion on the principle of the Bill.

The members of the government were left free to vote according to their convictions, but none of them were permitted to compromise the attitude of neutrality by taking part in the debate.

In the course of his brief reply at the close, Mr. Jacob Bright announced that a telegram had just reached him, to the effect that the town council of Manchester had, by a majority of 42 to 12, adopted a petition in favour of the Bill. The division was then taken, when the numbers appeared for the second reading 124, against 91. The result was received with loud cheers.

The fruits of the victory thus obtained have been snatched from us by subsequent events, but the significance of the fight which was then won has not been destroyed. The House which so emphatically accepted our principle was by no means a thin one, and it contained the representatives of some of the most important constituencies in the empire. All the members for Manchester, Leeds, Edinburgh, Bristol, Birmingham, Brighton, Bolton, Oldham, Penryn and Falmouth, North Wiltshire, Sheffield, and Chelsea, supported the Bill. The neutral attitude of the government allowed free play to the arguments on both sides, and after a full debate and patient hearing, the unbiassed judgment of the House which had heard the arguments, was pronounced in favour of the Bill.

The verdict thus delivered was free from pressure of any kind, even from that of constituents. It was given in favour of a class which could not muster a vote among them, which had nothing but justice and reason wherewith to support its claim. No member could have believed that his seat would either be endangered or strengthened by the vote which he then gave; there was no disturbing force to obscure the merits of the case.

The second division was taken under widely different conditions. For some reason, best known to itself, so soon as the government learned that the House had accepted the principle of the Bill, it changed its attitude of neutrality to one of deadly hostility to the measure. Instead of the previous question, the opponents now moved the direct negative to the motion for going into committee. Instead of permitting freedom of action to his colleagues, Mr. Gladstone forbade all of them who were in favour of the Bill to vote with Mr. Bright, while not only were those members of government who opposed it allowed to vote, but every man within reach of the treasury whip received an urgent summons to attend and vote us down. This course was taken by the first minister of the crown, in the deplorable

absence of the most illustrious of his colleagues, whose own vote had been recorded in favour of the principle, and whose brother was leading the movement which the government sought to crush. Under these circumstances, a House assembled at one o'clock in the morning, not to hear reason, but to vote according to the word of command, rejected the Bill by 220 to 94. It is therefore lost for this session. But it will be heard of again.

We cannot accept the vote of that Friday morning as a reversal of the verdict of the previous week. The conditions under which the decision was given were entirely altered. So long as the scales of judgment were weighted with reason and argument alone, the balance was declared in our favour. Then the weight of executive power was thrown into the scale against us, and like the sword of the barbarian king it overpowered everything else by arbitrary force.

There is much in the analysis of the division list to afford encouragement to the friends of the cause. In the division on the second reading, 124 voted for the Bill, including the following members of the government, Right Hon. J. Stansfeld, the Solicitor-General, the Solicitor-General for Ireland, and the Right Hon. Lord Otho Fitzgerald. Of this number, 65 were new supporters. 58 of those who voted with us on Wednesday afternoon were absent from the next division at two o'clock in the morning. But if we add to the 96 votes (including tellers) 23 who paired, we shall have 119, a number not far short of our original force, in spite of the loss of every member of the government, and of every one whom the government could possibly influence. Of the 94 who voted on Thursday, 29 did not vote in the previous division, and of these 17 were absolutely new recruits, members who had never previously voted or declared themselves in favour of our principle. 10 of these new comers were Conservatives, and in spite of the government pressure, 7 were Liberals. Of the 124 who voted on Wednesday, 65 were new supporters. Therefore, the two divisions have added 82 to our party in the House of Commons, that is, they have nearly doubled the number of known adherents.

Three members who voted with Mr. Mill in 1867, vote against us now, namely, Mr. Eykyn, Mr. G. O. Trevelyan, and Mr. Guildford Onslow. Eleven members who voted against Mr. Mill's amendment voted for Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill.

The majority of 124 in favour of the Bill contained 93 Liberals, and 31 Conservatives; the minority of 91 against the Bill contained 52 Liberals, and 39 Tories; the majority of 220, which threw out the Bill, contained 137 Liberals, and 83 Tories; the 94 who voted for going into committee comprised 60 Liberals, and 34 Conservatives. Neither Mr. Disraeli nor Mr. G. Hardy voted on the Bill. The members of the late government generally abstained from voting. The number of members who recorded their votes in favour of the Bill in the

two divisions was 156, more than double the number who followed Mr. Mill into the lobby three years ago. This affords evidence of substantial progress, and should encourage us to renewed effort.

A conference of the friends of the movement was held in London on Saturday, May 21, to consider the course of action for next session, at which the leaders and representatives of the various societies were present. It was unanimously resolved that the Women's Disabilities Bill should be re-introduced next year, and Mr. Jacob Bright expressed his readiness again to take charge of it.

We have now to call on our friends for support in our effort to promote this great and beneficial reform. Most arduous labour will be needed; and we earnestly appeal to those who sympathise with us to show their sympathy by active help in the way of personal work or of subscription to our funds. The zeal of our fellow-labourers and the justice of our cause have enabled us to accomplish great results at a very small cost as regards money. Compared to the outlay involved in ordinary political agitation, the cost of our movement is almost ludicrously small. The total expenditure of the Manchester Society in 1869 was under £400, and with this we carried the Municipal Franchise Bill. The work has been mainly done by women as a labour of love. But we need increased material aid, and we earnestly trust that our appeal to our countrymen for such aid will not be made in vain.

We have received permission from Captain Parry, M.P., to publish the subjoined note. It was written in reply to one reminding him that he had, both during his candidature and since his election, positively promised to vote for a measure giving the franchise to women otherwise legally qualified, and asking why, notwithstanding these pledges, his name appears in the list of Mr. Bouverie's majority against going into committee on the Women's Disabilities Bill.

How far the motives so frankly avowed by the hon. member for Carnarvonshire may have influenced other members of the Liberal party to vote against a measure of enfranchisement it is of course impossible to conjecture; but, since these considerations were strong enough in one instance to cause the violation of distinct pledges, it is not unreasonable to imagine that they may have prevailed with others not so bound. Perhaps they may afford some explanation of the determined though tardy opposition of the government, and of the apparently capricious rejection by the House of Commons of a measure the principle of which had been accepted, after a full debate, on the second reading. Both friends and opponents of this Bill will doubtless agree that in a question of justice in regard to them, women have a right to expect that the votes of members of the Legislature should be given on the merits of the case and not from party considerations:

(Copy.)

“House of Commons, May 18th, 1870.

“Dear Madam,—In the county I represent (Carnarvonshire), the women are all Liberal in politics and Non-conformists in religion—that is, the vast majority of them; and this may be said of all North Wales.

“On the other hand, in England, and particularly in boroughs, such as Bath, women are Conservative under great clerical influence, which always tends to fetter freedom of thought.

“I reluctantly, for these reasons, voted (against my own interests) to prevent women being made capable of doing what I consider political wrong, in many places, *i.e.*, voting against the Liberal party.—Yours faithfully,

“Miss Becker.”

“LOVE JONES PARRY.

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

House of Commons, Wednesday, May 4.

A number of petitions having been presented in favour of this Bill,

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT rose and said: I rise to move that the Bill for the Removal of the Political Disabilities of Women be now read a second time. If that Bill should pass into law, women will have votes in boroughs if they are householders, if their names are on the rate-books, and if they pay their rates. Women will have votes also in counties if they are householders, and if their houses are rated at £12 and upwards, or if they should be possessed of any description of property which now entitles men to vote. The House may desire to know to what extent women would be enfranchised if this Bill became law. I have returns of the number of women on the burgess rolls of a great many municipal towns, and I will just state one or two facts from that list. I notice that the largest proportion of women who are municipal voters is to be found in Bath, where there is one woman to 3·8 men. I notice that the smallest proportion is to be found in the town of Walsall. There I only find one woman to 22·9 men. The peculiar circumstances of these boroughs would, I have no doubt, easily explain that great difference. But I may mention two or three other towns, as showing what I believe would be about the average number of votes of women in proportion to men in the other boroughs of England. In the town of Bristol there is one to every seven men; in Manchester one to six; in Newcastle-on-Tyne one to eight; in Northampton one to thirteen; in York one to seven. When we last discussed in this house the question of the extension of the franchise, there was a great fear entertained by those who were within the political pale lest, by admitting those who wanted to get in, they would be swamped. I think that was the term that was then generally in vogue. Even the hon. member for Penbroke will admit that the number of persons we propose to enfranchise by this Bill is relatively so small that no fear need be entertained on the present occasion. The aristocratic sex—that sex in whose hands are nearly all the material privileges of life—would still be dominant in the government of the kingdom. (Hear.) I advocate this claim of women to the franchise on the grounds of public justice and practical necessity; and I may say in passing that unless I thought that this matter was one of great practical importance, I should certainly have left it in other hands. The difficulties in the way of legislation on the part of private members in this House are so great, that no one would undertake it unless moved by a strong sense of justice. Now, it should be remembered, that parliament does not give votes either to men or women. There are thousands of men who have no votes. There are men in every position of life—and of every degree of intelligence and education, who have no votes. Parliament applies a certain test and gives votes to all those men who can submit to that test. If a man is on the rate book and pays his rates, then, though he belong to the fraternity of London thieves, though he be an habitual drunkard, or a returned convict, though he may belong to the class of those who are so ignorant that they scarcely know the name of the sovereign who sits upon the throne—yet, if a man be able to submit to the test, whatever his position or character may be, he is at that moment admitted to the rank of voter, and enabled to influence the proceedings of this House. It does seem a strange anomaly that this test—that this qualification—which works such magic with men, is wholly inoperative with women, and that no matter what a woman's position may be—how much property she may have—how much intelligence she may possess, she is still excluded from the franchise, though able to come and submit to every test which parliament has established. If there were any burdens from which they escaped which fall upon men, I might suppose that there was some kind of answer to be given to this claim. But I know of no such burden, and the only attempt of which I have ever heard to make it appear that women don't share all the obligations of men, is the attempt to show that women take no part in defending their country. It must be remembered, however, that no man is compelled to defend his country. It is a voluntary matter. We hire those who defend the country, and if women as well as men pay the taxes into the exchequer which enable us to pay those who defend the country, that is a sufficient answer to the argument. I think Florence Nightingale could tell of the services of women who have

done something even in defence of their country. The services in the hospital are almost as necessary as those which are performed in the camp; and women are always ready for that or any other kind of service. (Hear, hear.) There has always been great anxiety on the part of men to possess the franchise. From the time that I was a boy I remember associations of various kinds, differing in strength, but always laboriously at work to procure the parliamentary vote for men. We know very well that men have sacrificed their liberty and perilled their lives in pursuit of this object. In our own generation this has been the case over and over again. Does the House suppose that these men have been misguided, that they have been following a phantom, and that that which they have desired has been of no use to them. On what ground have men always displayed this great anxiety to vote for members of parliament? Why, they have told us that an equal share of taxation fell upon them, and, therefore, that they ought to have some control over the expenditure of this taxation. They have told us that it was not within the power of this House either to enact a law or to repeal a law without affecting advantageously or disadvantageously the whole people of the country. (Hear, hear.) The non-electors made another statement. They said, "Your exclusion of us from the political pale is tantamount to a declaration of our moral and intellectual inferiority. It diminishes our own self-respect; it takes away from us the respect of the other portions of the community; and it necessarily makes our career in life far harder and less successful." Is there any one of these reasons which men have so persistently urged for admission to the franchise which does not apply with equal, and even with greater, force to women? Is there a single tax which men pay which women don't pay also? Is the ability to pay on the part of men and women equal? There is not a male and female rate of taxation, but there is a male and female rate of wages and earnings. Women everywhere, with a few remarkable exceptions, are getting far less money than men; they have to work much longer for the same money; and they are even paid much less when they are doing precisely the same work. Taxation must therefore fall somewhat more heavily upon women than upon men. (Hear, hear.) Are there any laws imposing restrictions and obligations on men—any laws of a penal character—from which women escape? No; but are there not laws of recent origin which fall with terrible harshness upon women, and which place their peace and security in peril? (Hear, hear.) Are there not such laws—laws from which men wholly escape? These laws may be just and necessary. It is not for me to discuss them at the present moment. My hon. friend, the member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler), will give the House an opportunity of defending them in a short time, but I have a right to say that the fact that one sex legislates for another, and imposes burdens upon an unrepresented portion of the people which it does not take upon itself, forms an additional reason why women should ask for the suffrage, and strengthens the claim which I am urging at the present moment. If it be true that men felt when they were excluded from the franchise that it was a mark of great disrespect and injurious to their position, will not women have the same feeling. There are inferior men in every rank of life. They have no objection to degrade women and keep them in degradation. So long as Parliament legislates in this way, so long as it puts them in an inferior position politically, it gives considerable support to the course taken by the class of men to whom I have referred. At the present moment what does Parliament say to women who are occupiers and owners of property? It says to them you are fitted to vote in local matters—in small concerns which don't greatly affect you you are entitled to have your vote, but when we come to imperial affairs, then you are disqualified, and we refuse to admit you. But I am told that the theoretical arguments on this subject cannot be answered; that theoretically women undoubtedly have a right to that which they claim; and the advocates of this measure are asked to deal with it practically. We are asked to show of what injustice women complain, and what changes they would propose to make in case they were admitted to political privileges? All these questions were put to the non-electors of England previous to the Reform Bill of 1867, and I believe they were not unsatisfactorily answered. But I undertake to say that the inequality of the law betwixt voters and non-voters prior to 1867, was as nothing compared with that which now exists between men and women. Allow me, then, to call attention to some of these inequalities

which may be urged by women. I am not going to say how they should be altered; but I have a right to point out that they exist, and that they have been made by that portion of society having power against that portion which has no power. Take the law as it affects married women. I may be told that this Bill would not give the franchise to married women. That is quite true. This is a practical measure. It is only in our power to give votes to those who can submit to the tests which have been established by Parliament; but we propose to give the franchise to those who have been married and are widows, and to spinners who are yet to be married. I contend that this would give adequate security to the whole sex. Look for a moment at the law with regard to the property of married women. According to the common law of England, a married woman, in regard to the rights of property, is in the position of the negro in the Southern States of America before the American revolution. She cannot control her property, and she has not the possession of one farthing of her earnings. According to my view, the possession of property is necessary for education and for the proper development of character. Be the woman ever so prudent, be the man ever so imprudent—be the woman ever so sagacious, and be the husband ever so imbecile, still he has absolute control, not only of his own but of hers. Sir, the House is agreed upon this question, and is unanimous upon the injustice of the present law. The hon. member for Chester (Mr. Cecil Raikes) is of the same opinion as the right hon. member for Southampton (Mr. Russell Gurney). I may then be asked why need women have votes if they can obtain redress without them? It is one thing to acknowledge an evil another to find a remedy for it. We legislate in the following order—First, for those who can make themselves dangerous; next, for those who exercise a pressure at the polling booth; and lastly, or not at all, for those who have no votes, and therefore no constitutional influence. The Married Women's Property Bill has three times received the sanction of this House, and it has been twice before a select committee, but he would be a very imprudent man who would undertake to say when it will become law, or, further, that it will become law without greater mutilations than it has yet received. But that is not the way in which the class which has the franchise is treated. Look at what has been done with regard to the working classes since the passing of the Reform Act of 1867. I have seen members of this house sit here till daylight in order to defeat the Married Women's Property Bill, which seeks to prevent the confiscation of the property of a vast number of persons, and I have been glad to see the same hon. members competing in this House in their desire to protect the funds of trades unionists and to protect the trades unions themselves. That is the effect of the franchise. Last session the government brought in a Bill to protect the funds of trades unions, and this year they propose to introduce another Bill to put these associations on a more satisfactory footing; but I am afraid it will be a long time before the government undertake to deal with these questions which belong to a portion of society among whom the franchise does not exist. But let us look a little further at these inequalities of the law. Look at the position of a woman who loses her husband. If he die intestate, the law protects her and gives her a certain portion of the income arising from his property, whatever that property may be; but if he choose to make a will, she is left entirely to his justice and mercy. I do not deny that the majority of widows are fairly treated in this respect, but it must be remembered that when we pass laws we do not legislate for the majority; we legislate because of the existence of that minority who possess neither justice nor mercy. (Cheers.) I have known many cases of this sort. Take the case of a couple just entering life in one of the industrial districts of England. They begin life often with nothing but good character and intelligence. The man works at his business; the woman attends to him and to the family; and the man often becomes rich. If the law were equal, the wife would have some kind of security with regard to that wealth which she had helped to make. As I said before, I do not propose to say what changes should be made in these matters: I merely point to an inequality, and I may remind the house that these inequalities have been made by a section of the community. It is required that a woman should receive ten times the provocation that a man receives before she can obtain a divorce. A woman has no control over her children when they become seven years of age: the husband may part them from her

when they reach that age. I know the case of a lady who was deserted by her husband when she had one child. Amidst much suffering she had to get a living for herself and her child, and when the child was seven years old, because she imported her husband for some assistance, he threatened to take away the child, and she had to conceal both herself and her child in order to escape the danger. I might say something also in regard to education. It is to me a very painful thing to see the difficulties which women have to contend against in order to get anything like a high education in this country. Women are charged with being frivolous, but that charge is very often made with great frivolity, and it is too often made by those who look at women through the medium of what they call society. So long as it is the custom of the country for women only to be admitted to the frivolous occupations of men, it is likely that that charge will continue to be made. Men and women may mix at the dance, the pic-nic, and the theatre, but when they go to the lecture room it is considered improper. However, there is a class of men growing up who consider these things, and they believe that the morality of this country will be greatly improved when the lecture rooms are opened to all. (Hear, hear.) I might even go to the primary schools, in order to show what is the influence of those above upon those below. There is a great free school in Manchester—an admirable school—which takes children out of the gutter; but it only takes in the male children, and the girls are left in the streets. Surely such a thing must have a very bad influence upon those boys and girls. I am glad that in this proposition which I now make to the House there is nothing of a party character, though I must say that this is the first proposition for the extension of the parliamentary franchise which has ever been free from party conflict, and from the passions arising out of that conflict. When this proposition was made to the House in 1867, by Mr. John Stuart Mill, it received a very general support. Five of the members of this House who supported that proposition are now members of the present government, and that does not exhaust the members of the government who are in favour of this Bill. There were also many eminent members on the opposite side of the house who supported the proposition. The opinions of the leader of the opposite party are of course no secret. I am sorry the right honourable gentleman the member for Buckinghamshire is not now in his place, because if he had been, I think he would have supported this measure. I have an extract here from one of his published speeches, in which he says: "In a country governed by a woman, where you allow women to form part of one of the estates of the realm—I allude to the peeresses in their own right—and where they have power to hold manorial courts, and may be elected as churchwardens or overseers of the poor, I do not see, where a woman has so much to do with the church and with the state, on what reason, if you come to right, she has not a right to vote." (Cheers.) But the right hon. gentleman made a still more direct avowal of his opinions in a debate in this house in April, 1866, when he said: "I have always been of opinion that, if there is to be universal suffrage, women have as much right to vote as men; and, more than that, a woman having property ought now to have a vote, in a country in which she may hold manorial courts and sometimes acts as churchwarden." But, whatever claim I may have on the support of hon. members on that side of the House, I feel that I have a stronger claim upon the great Liberal party to which I have the honour to belong. I do not know what meaning we are accustomed to attach to that word, "liberal," on this side of the house; but to-day I do not ask for liberality—I ask only for the barest justice. (Hear, hear.) According to our professions on every hustings, we have certainly said that if justice does not require that every individual should have a vote, it does require that every class should be represented; and we have established it as a political axiom, that no class ever will receive legislative equality at the hands of another class. We have always said that those who are called on to obey the laws should have some voice in making the laws, and that representation should follow taxation. I have been met by this argument from some of my political friends: They have said, "Our principles do not require that we should support your Bill. We are in favour of good government; that is our only aim. We will enfranchise those who are fitted to be enfranchised, but we deny that women are fit, and we shall therefore oppose your Bill." Now let me examine that argument for a moment. In the first place it strikes one as not being

very new. No class has ever asked to be admitted within the political pale in this or in any other country without receiving that answer; and, in this country at any rate, no class has ever been admitted to the franchise without great advantage to itself and the country. In the Southern States of America almost invariably, in the Northern States to a very large extent, and in this country to a great extent also, the people were told before the American war that the negro was not fit for freedom. People never are fit for freedom or for constitutional rights until they obtain them—(cheers)—but now there is not a man in America who would like to go back to the terrible state of things which existed before the civil war broke out. It was commonly said in America that the negro was not fit for a vote, but a negro population of four millions has now become enfranchised, and no one will deny that the peace and prosperity of these Southern States have been secured by that great legislative change. I confess I am surprised when I am told that women, as a class, are unfit for the franchise. Women who are the subjects of a female sovereign, who are engaged in many literary pursuits, who are at the head of educational establishments, who are managing factories and farms, and controlling thousands of businesses throughout this country! If I am told that many women are not fitted for the franchise, I am bound to admit it, but then the same thing may be said of many men. Any one who says that women generally are not fitted in point of intelligence for the franchise knows very little of the agitation which has produced this Bill. There has never been an agitation more ably conducted by the various ladies who have taken part in it, and considering the small means at the disposal of women, there never was a question which made such rapid progress in so short a space of time. (Hear, hear.) I have been told, also, that if this Bill were to pass, the government would be handed over to the Conservative party in the very crisis of the country's fate—these are the very words I have heard used. Well, I take consolation from the fact that this country has sometimes even survived a Conservative administration—(laughter)—but if there be any meaning in an argument of that kind it is this, that if the country were properly and justly represented, we should be sitting on the other side of the house. Now, I do not believe a word of it. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I have paid some attention to this question, and I have considered the objections raised against the possession of the franchise by women on the ground that they would be Conservative, but I will not enter into a discussion of that point now, because I think every man will vote according to what he takes to be the justice and reason of the case, and not ask whether women are Conservative or Liberal. I will, however, undertake to say that there would be no change in the balance of parties. There would be one great change, which would be this—from the moment women obtained the franchise, even though an election might not take place for several years to come, whenever a question affecting their interests came to the front, it would receive an amount of attention and consideration which it would not and could not receive now. I have heard both in the lobbies of this house, and in other places, many things said in opposition to this Bill, and some of the objections are very peculiar. I have been told that women are too religious, that they have too much respect for the clergy and for religious teachers in general, and that therefore they should be subject to political disabilities. We have had in this House some earnest discussions, to be followed by many more, on the question of education; and there is a predominant feeling in favour of giving, in some way or other, a religious education to children. I hope, if the fact of being religious is to be followed by political disabilities, that we shall not succeed too well in that task. (Laughter.) It is true that the religious sentiment is stronger in women than in men; their path in life is a harder one, and law and custom, instead of coming in aid of their weakness, too often trample upon it, and bestow their favours on the stronger sex. That being so, it is not remarkable that women more than men should habitually seek consolation and strength from that Power before whom at least all human beings are equal. I have also been told that women should not be political, or in other words, that it is the duty of women to be politically ignorant. I might as well be told that grass should not be green; and, no doubt, if you sufficiently excluded air and light and moisture it would no longer be so. Women are political, and they cannot fail to be so in the circumstances in which they are placed. They are born in a free country, where public meetings are held on every variety of subject, those meetings being open to every-

body, where we have a daily press which is the ablest, the most interesting, and the cheapest which the world has ever known. We were told some time ago by the right hon. gentleman the First Minister of the Crown, that eviction notices fell like snowflakes in some parts of Ireland. The daily papers fall like snowflakes in all our houses; and if we are not to make women political we must shut the doors against the press. To tell me that women should not be political is to tell me that they should have no care for the future of their children, no interest in the greatness and progress of their country. (Hear, hear.) If it be true that women are not to be political, then we ought logically to take away from them the only shred of privilege which connects them with this House—the privilege of petitioning this House. Tens of thousands of women's names have been sent to this House in petitions this year. We are supposed [here the hon. gentleman pointed up to the ladies' gallery] not to know that there is a gallery behind that screen, but I have noticed that it rarely happens that an hon. gentleman comes down to make an important speech without his having some one or more of the female members of his family in that gallery. (Laughter.) If women be deteriorated by political knowledge, I think the families of members of parliament must be in a very deplorable state. (Laughter.) I have visited them at their own homes, but I have never found that deterioration: on the contrary, I have found with larger knowledge, more vivacity and interest, in short an intellectual flavour not always to be found elsewhere. An objection considered to be a very great one with regard to the franchise is that women themselves do not care for it, and would not use it if they had it. But no one who has paid any attention to the facts of the case would raise that objection. Before the Municipal Franchise Bill gave municipal rights to women—I know this to be a fact because I made the inquiry in the neighbourhood with which I am most acquainted in Lancashire—where women had the power of local voting they used that power in the same proportion as men; and I have found that since the Bill of last year came into operation, in many municipalities they have voted in nearly an equal proportion with the men, while there are cases in which the polling of women has exceeded the polling of men. But it should be borne in mind that by passing this Bill we do not compel women to vote. There are a great many men who have no interest in politics at all, and who do not wish to vote, and unless we had organised associations to arrange the matter for them, many of them would never be upon the register. Let me state what is the present position of women with regard to the power of voting in this country. They vote in all local matters: they have every parochial vote; they have votes in corporate and non-corporate towns. In the non-corporate towns and in parishes they vote under the conditions of what is known as Sturges Bourne's Act, according to the property they are rated for. Thus, a lady of property may have as many as six votes, while her servant—her gardener or her labourer—has only one. But is it not an absurdity that a woman can have six votes and her manservant only one in parochial matters, while in parliamentary elections the poor man retains his one vote, while the woman, who is in a high position and owns large property, has absolutely none? (Hear, hear.) Last year's legislation appeared to me as if it should settle this question of the parliamentary franchise for women. Without any division in either house of parliament, and with only one single voice raised, and that not with any earnestness, against it, women were admitted to vote in all our municipal elections. Women go up to the poll, they do not vote with the quiet of the ballot, but they go up openly and give their votes once a year, not once in four or five years, and it must be borne in mind that these municipal elections have become as completely political as any parliamentary election could possibly be. I do not know how or on what argument we can now say to women; "No; you have come so far, but you shall not come any further." I should like to read a single sentence from the speech of Lord Cairns, made in the other house of parliament when the Bill of last year passed, and when the Earl of Kimberley spoke on one side and Lord Cairns on the other. Lord Cairns said: "As an unmarried woman could dispose of her property and deal with it, he did not see why she should not have a voice in controlling the municipal expenditure to which that property contributed." Does anyone dissent from that statement? But if it be just and right that a woman should be able to control the municipal expenditure to which

her property contributes, should she not have a right to control the parliamentary expenditure to which her property contributes? The local expenditure of the country amounts to about £20,000,000, and the imperial expenditure to about £70,000,000; if justice requires that she should have the opportunity of controlling the expenditure of the smaller sum, is it not unjust to deprive her of the means of controlling the expenditure of the larger? But women want votes for something else than merely to control the expenditure of our money. Parliament can confiscate the property of women, and it does so to a large extent. It can deal with liberty and life, and pass laws affecting the happiness of people in the remotest cottages of the land—matters of far greater importance than anything connected with expenditure. I see that an hon. gentleman opposite has put a notice on the paper for opposing my Bill, by moving the previous question. When I first saw that notice I asked a member of great influence in the House what he thought of it, and he replied that it was rather a shabby way of meeting the question. (Hear, hear.) I will not apply that or any other epithet to it. One remembers occasions where it was both justifiable and intelligible to take such a course as that which the hon. gentleman proposes to adopt; and, for anything I know, that course may be justifiable now, but it is unintelligible to me, and therefore I cannot decide the point. I could suggest a more manly course; and we should remember that, up to now at any rate, this house is the creation of masculine constituencies. (Hear, hear.) If the proposition that I make is not founded in justice and reason, it would, I should think, be more agreeable to the feelings of hon. members who oppose me to give a distinct "No" to this proposition. But if, on the other hand, the claim women make upon this House be founded in justice and in reason, then let us freely concede it. I have been told that the government are to stand neutral on this question. Well, unfortunately it is the characteristic of all governments to be so engrossed in attending to the wants of the powerful that they can seldom give any kind of consideration to the claims of the weak. (Cheers.) I shall forbear quoting from the speeches of the Prime Minister, but I do remember burning periods of his in speeches which he delivered in this House and elsewhere—sentences which did much to create enthusiasm in the country, and to place him high in the hearts of the people, that are as applicable to the case now before us as to the occasions on which they were uttered. There is, however, one thing which consoles me when I reflect upon this. There is nobody more open to conviction in this House than the First Minister of the Crown, and, when he is once convinced, there is nobody more resolute in carrying out his convictions. One word more, and I will no longer trespass on the kindness and forbearance of the House. There is a very general movement in favour of this Bill, a movement which exists in almost every part of the three kingdoms. There have been many petitions during the past three sessions in favour of it. During the three short months we have already sat here this year, 130,000 names have come up asking us to pass this Bill. The persons who sign these petitions only ask from a household-suffrage parliament a Bill that will establish real household suffrage. They complain that it is not fair that a house should be passed over because a woman happens to be at the head of it. The women who are interested in the subject are only acting in the spirit of one of the noblest proverbs of our language: "God helps those who help themselves." Is it a matter of regret to us that they should have these aspirations? Ought it not rather to be a subject of satisfaction and of pride? That this Bill will become law no one, who has observed the character of the agitation, and who knows the love of justice of the British people, can doubt. I hope it will become law soon, for I have a desire which will receive the sympathy of many in this House; I have a strong desire that when our children come to read the story of their country's fame it may be written there that the British Parliament was the first great legislative assembly in the world, which, in conferring its franchises, knew nothing of the distinctions of strong and weak, of male and female, of rich and poor. (Cheers.) I beg to move the second reading of this Bill.

Col. SYKES: Sir, I shall not detain the house long, but I desire to express my opinion of this measure, not by indulging in sentimentalities on the rights of women, but viewing the matter simply as a practical question. It resolves itself into a matter of

money—a mere question of money. The payment of certain rates entitles persons to vote for a member of parliament, those persons being the rated occupiers of any dwelling house, or the rated occupiers of any premises other than a dwelling house of the annual value of £10, and lodgers of the annual value of £10, so that it is a mere question of money, having nothing whatever to do with sex. There are in my city of Aberdeen 185 women householders, from each of whom I have presented a petition to the House. They have fulfilled the legal conditions imposed by Act of Parliament, and therefore they are as much entitled to vote as any of the other 14,000 voters in Aberdeen. What does it matter, so long as a party fulfils the conditions of the law, whether that party wears petticoats or a pair of breeches? (Laughter.) Of the petitions presented to us in favour of this Bill, 21 have been petitions under seal, and 230 others contain 94,760 signatures, and that is a good proof that the feeling is pretty extensive throughout the whole kingdom. It is not the women themselves who have done this, for 21 of the petitions are under seal, and come therefore from corporations and municipalities. It may be said that if we grant the privilege to women they would probably affect the returns at contested elections. But what would be the total amount of the influence that could be brought to bear in that way? In my city there would only be 185 women out of 14,000 voters. In a small borough the women might probably turn the scale, in case they all voted on the same side, an event not very likely; but these are exceptional instances, having nothing to do with the principle. I will tell the House what the India Company did. For a hundred years they granted to women having the money qualification a right to vote. And for whom? Why, for 24 men who, in position, dignity, and power, were at all events equal to any members of this House, for they had to govern 200,000,000 of people, whereas each of us here represents only the 658th part of a legislature for governing only 30,000,000. Under these circumstances, I do feel that we are doing a great deal of injustice to the female community. They are as capable of exercising the franchise as we are, and they have a full right and title to exercise it. (Cheers.)

NOTE.—On the 10th of May the number of petitions that had been presented to the House of Commons was 29 under seal, and 377 petitions with 126,760 signatures.

Mr. SCOURFIELD rose to move the previous question as an amendment to the second reading of the Bill. He said: Sir,—Some reference has been made to the mode in which I have endeavoured to meet this question. I can only say that whatever the advantages or disadvantages of it may be, it will at all events have this great merit, that it will not make it necessary for me to address the house at any great length. I will not go into the question of the rights and dignities of women, or their relative inferiority or superiority to man,—I omit all that at once—but the main proposition which I wish to maintain is this, that we have no sufficient evidence that it is the wish of the women of England to have this privilege conferred upon them, and there is very strong presumptive evidence that they consider it to be a possession something like what is known to the lawyers as *damnsa hereditas*. (Laughter.) I protest even as a man against being supposed to live in a state of perpetual affirmation or denial, and if that is true with regard to men, it applies with much greater force in the case of women. If women object to have this franchise conferred upon them the same reason that prevents them from openly opposing it, prevents them from getting up an agitation in opposition. We are bound to look not only at the express declarations contained in the form of petitions, but also upon whatever other evidence may guide us, so far as we can be guided, to form a conclusion as to what their real wishes are. I have asked the question of many women, and almost invariably the answer I have received has been that they would much rather not have these privileges conferred upon them. I have asked other persons the result of their inquiries, and it has uniformly been the same. That is a better mode of getting at the real feeling of the people than by the presentation of petitions. We know how petitions are got up; and I think we cannot do better in such a question as this than follow the advice, in ascertaining the real feelings of the people, of one of the greatest men who ever lived—and it is a piece of advice which throws much light on the character of that extraordinary man. Amongst the invaluable pieces of advice which Napoleon gave to his brother, he said: "Collect opinions one by one, but not in councils." The hon.

gentleman who introduced this Bill appeared to some extent to almost cut the ground away from under him when he said that nine-tenths of the people who vote would not do so if it were not for registration associations. The privilege cannot be so very important or calculated to give such great satisfaction to women, if the people who possess it are so indifferent to it. But I will just touch upon the general subject for a moment, and I think the house will see what a good reason women have for not wanting the franchise. One of the inexorable conditions on which life is given to us is that of not having two opposite chances. We cannot be on one side of a question and on the other at the same time. The extension of privileges confers an extension of responsibility. If women are to have these extended privileges, many immunities which they now enjoy must be removed. That is the inexorable condition on which life is maintained. If they are to extend their political influence, I think they cannot expect to assert so much of their social influence. If their social influence is maintained in the way it has been maintained throughout England, considerable amount of political influence must follow; but if they fix their minds exclusively on political things their social influence may be weakened. Influences may be distinct and divided without assigning a relative position of superiority and inferiority. It does not follow when the two influences are perfectly distinct that what is good for the one is necessarily good for the other. To use an illustration, it seems to me that men and women are travelling in the same direction on different yet parallel lines, charged with the freight of human happiness, and they may have much happiness as long as each party keeps on its separate line, but if one or the other gets into the wrong groove I am afraid their stock of happiness is likely to be greatly reduced. An example occurs to my mind at the present moment which is to be found in "Boswell's Life of Johnson." Boswell asked Dr. Johnson his opinion of the merits of a woman's preaching. Dr. Johnson's reply was, "I consider a woman preaching like a dog standing on its hind legs; it was not done well, but the wonder is to find it done at all." (Loud laughter.) I don't wish women to enter into competition with dancing dogs and to show their wonderful powers in doing things which it is not expected they will do, and which there are many disadvantages to their executing in a proper manner, and in a manner equally efficient with men who perform them under totally different circumstances. Their vocation is a high one. Their vocation is to make life enduring. The prospects of society in regard to the diffusion of general education without much originality or deep thinking, is one of the darkest clouds which hangs on the horizon. There is a predominance of persons who wish to lecture and talk over those who wish to listen. We are threatened with the universal dominion of talkers and bores, and among the influences which frustrate that alarming tendency—that of women—is one of the most effective; but if they go into the same line of business as the men, there is nothing left for us but to pray for an early consummation of Dr. Cumming's prophecy. I protest against being accused of making any allegation of their inferiority. I have no doubt that their vote would be given on as good and pure principles as any of the men; but I wish to remind honourable members of one circumstance. The House, by a decisive majority—I am not sure that it was not unanimous—refused to grant voting papers at elections. If voting papers had been allowed, women might have recorded their votes without being under the necessity of giving personal attendance at the poll; but now they must give their votes by personal attendance, and be exposed to all the annoyances to which everyone who has taken part in a contested election knows very well that persons who engage in these matters are invariably subjected. It is said that they need not vote if they don't like; but we know that when a district becomes excited election agents would hunt out the name of every person who could vote, and careful inquiry would be made as to every influence that could be brought to bear in order to get them to vote in favour of a particular candidate. In this way women would be subject to an amount of annoyance and persecution of which they have little idea at the present moment. I wish to see women continue in that vocation in which they are engaged, and doing all that is admirable, amiable, and delightful; but I have no wish to see them engaged in the line of the exceptional and the wonderful. I beg to move the previous question.

Mr. W. FOWLER—If there can be any man who has a right to second this motion it is I, because I have shown my desire to help the cause of the women of England in a way which I think very

few other members have ventured to do in the motion of which I have given notice for the 24th of this month. But sir, while I have the strongest feeling with regard to the injustice which has been done them by particular laws in this country as they now stand, I am not prepared to say that they should enter into political life. I quarrel with the title of this Bill. I don't think it a disability of women that they have no votes. I consider it rather a privilege that they have no votes, because they are therefore not expected to enter into that arena in which some of us are actively engaged. I entirely agree with the honourable member for Manchester that they have the same interest in the goodness of the laws which we have, and that the laws affect their happiness just as much as ours, but I say that they should take care to influence their husbands and their friends to put right-minded men into this House, and then their interests would be properly looked after. It is an entire delusion to say that they have no great political influence. I believe women have immense political influence. I saw a good deal of it in the contested election of 1868. I maintain that their influence is extremely powerful in this country, and I am not prepared to say that it would be much more powerful if this Bill were passed. I am one of those who have the highest possible opinion of the capacity of women. I have, from a variety of circumstances, been brought into contact with women of the highest intellect and the highest character, and I will yield to no man in my estimate of their powers and their abilities. I consider that the sphere of their influence is at home. I consider that they have a duty to perform as important, if not more important than the duties that fall to men. They have to educate their children; they have to adorn the sphere in which they live, and to perform duties with regard not merely to the rising generation but with regard to their husbands, their brothers, and all their friends which are of an importance that cannot be exaggerated. I think myself, if honourable members will excuse me for saying so, that their powers, although very great, are in some respects very different from the powers of men. We no doubt find cases in which a woman is able to express herself in public with wonderful eloquence and skill; but speaking generally, I must say that I think that position is not a natural position for women. Then again, I think that their powers, with regard to political matters, are rather powers of reflection than of action. They are perfectly well able to think about these things, they are perfectly well able to influence those whom they know, but it does not thence follow that they should rush to the polling booths, and be actually engaged as men are in these matters. I think their powers point to a different vocation and a different sphere. Now, with regard to that, I want to ask hon. members where this is to stop. It appears to me that if the argument that has been used is good, there is no reason on earth why women should not be elected members of parliament. (Hear, hear.) There is not a single argument which has been used that does not end in that. If they have equal powers, and equal capacities, and equal rights before the law, and if therefore they are to have votes, and ought to enter into the political arena, where does that end? In this House. If I gave my vote for this Bill, I should feel bound to give my vote to admit them as members of this House. I defy any one to find out a logical standing place between the two. It has been said that we have given them the municipal vote. My impression is that we have gone too far in giving them the municipal vote; but it does not follow that we should go further in a wrong direction. The argument is plausible, but I think there is no weight in it, unless we are prepared to give up the whole question, and admit that there is no kind of difference of vocation between men and women. The more I think of the Bill of last year, the more clear I am that it sanctioned no such principle. We have been told a great deal about the rights of women being neglected. I agree very much with what my hon. friend said upon that point. I consider the state of the law with regard to the property of married women to be a scandal and disgrace to this country, and I think that nothing can exceed the harshness and injustice of that law. I know the case of a woman who has been sent from affluence to penury merely because her life interest in her property was not settled upon her at the time of her marriage; and I do hope that the Bill of the right hon. gentleman the Recorder of the City will be passed in this house by a large majority. But it does not follow that women must necessarily have a vote. All that follows is that we should have right men sent here, who will do justice to all classes of society.

The hon. member says that women will never have justice until they have direct representation. I dispute that proposition. I think there are numbers of men in this House who are anxious and desirous to do justice to every class. A vast number of men in this country have, in fact, no votes, and are we to be told that they are treated with injustice systematically because they do not possess the franchise? I am not prepared to say that the time may not come when we may extend the franchise further; but, so far as I can see, we have not had a conclusive argument to show that women must be in the number of the included. I must say that I was a little surprised at the great stress which had been laid upon the question about money. It has been said that taxation and representation go together, and that if you pay taxation you ought to have a voice in its expenditure. That is a plausible argument, but it seems to me that a vote means a great deal more than a question about money. Honourable members will admit, I think, that we deal with questions of far greater interest, and affecting us more in our daily life, than even the question of the payment of taxation. Therefore, the mere fact that a woman has a vote with regard to the expenditure of the taxes of the neighbourhood in which she lives, is no argument that she should have a vote with regard to the large questions which are involved in the proceedings of this House. The whole question is this: Are women or are they not to enter into political strife like men? That is the real point at issue. I confess that I am somewhat surprised at the remarks which have been made about married women. It is said they should have no vote because their husbands have votes. That is an argument which is not to me conclusive. A married woman is an existing entity, although she is married. She very often differs *in toto* from her husband in political matters, but, except in some cases where she has the influence described in a vulgar proverb, she is unable to influence the vote of her husband as she wishes. It may fairly be argued that she has the right to vote as much as any other woman. It is quite true that she does not pay taxes, but I dispute the proposition altogether that voting for members to serve in this House are to be based entirely on the question whether a man pays taxes or not. When you bring in this question about women's rights, you bring in an argument far higher than that. I consider that a married woman would have a fair right to say that she was unjustly used if you admitted spinsters to have votes. The hon. member has referred to the immense inequalities existing in the law. My answer to that is all the same. What is wanted is not that women should be put upon the roll, but that women should use that legitimate influence which they possess, to see that men of right views and feelings are sent to this House. I admit fully that the question has two sides. If you treat a woman as a man—having exactly the same powers and faculties as a man—there is a great deal in the argument which says that she is to have the same political rights. But when we look deeply into the matter, and see all the consequences which are involved in it, the more satisfied I am that we are safer as we are. I don't like to see women mixed up so much in all political questions. It is quite right that they should have their opinions, and that they should state their opinions and act upon them; but I don't desire to see a constant succession of women lecturers going about the country. (Hear, hear.) I have shown, as I said before, my deep sympathy with the wrongs of women, and I am prepared to show it in every possible way that I can. But when I am asked to admit women to the same political privilege as men I find that I am unable to agree to it. I hope that this House will by a decisive vote maintain the position we have hitherto maintained, and that we shall come to the conclusion that it is not a disability that women should not have a vote, but that it is rather a privilege that they should not be mixed up in political strife. On these grounds I am unable to vote with my hon. friend behind me, though I do so with considerable regret, lest it should be thought that I am wanting in sympathy with women. I desire to state and make it most clearly understood, that my motive in doing so is to save them from what would be rather an injury than a blessing. (Hear, hear.)

Sir CHARLES DILKE: Sir, I rise under somewhat peculiar circumstances, because I have to support this Bill against the motion of the previous question, which has not, I think I am justified in saying, been defended by a single word. I do not think that the hon. member who moved the previous question or the hon. member who has just seconded it have either of them said one word in defence of the course to which they have resorted. To treat the

motion for the previous question as a direct negative must therefore be our line of action. It may be necessary for me to answer, before I go into a defence of this Bill, some of the arguments which have been brought forward. I will first deal with one which was used by the hon. member for Cambridge, because in disposing of it we dispose of a considerable number of arguments of the same kind. This is an argument which is used against this particular measure, but which is really directed against the propriety of what would be a much wider measure—the extension of the franchise to all women. It is an argument which is in no way applicable to the measure before the house, when it is said that the proper position for a woman is in her family, educating her children, and I think it was even said attending to her husband. The Bill applies to no woman who has a husband, and in no case can this argument be used against the Bill before us. If you go further, and say that the franchise ought not to be given to a woman who is a widow and has children, and whose time should be taken up with educating and attending to those children, then, sir, my hon. friend, to be consistent, should disfranchise all widowers who have children; for on what possible ground can it be denied that, if it is the duty of a widow to give up the whole of her time to her children, it would be the duty of the widower in similar circumstances to do the same? One argument of the hon. member for Pembroke is that women should not have a vote because of the turmoil of elections; because of the dangers of going to the poll, and because of the possibility of their experiencing insolent treatment at the polling-booth. Women do go to polls at the present moment, and, therefore, the whole argument falls to the ground. We know well that many municipal elections are distinguished by as great political strife as any election of members of this House; and last year there was not a single case of women meeting with anything like violence. But I will take it for granted that the argument is well-founded. Even supposing that women were hindered from going to the polling-booth, they would be hindered by the violence, the roughness, and the rudeness of men; and it seems to me one of the grossest arguments ever used that you should withhold the franchise from them because they would be hindered from exercising it properly by the violence of the very men who prevent them from acquiring it. The strongest argument which was used by the hon. member was that women did not want the franchise, and in the course of his statement of it he laid down one of the most extraordinary propositions ever heard from those benches. He objected to the argument drawn from the fact that petitions had been brought forward in favour of the measure, and said that the proper way for a member of this House to proceed when he wished to ascertain the opinions of the people on a particular subject was to go about and ask individuals one by one what they thought of it. Sir, I am but a young member of this House, but I am an old enough member of it to know that the only constitutional method of addressing this house is by petition. The only means which people have of directly making known their wishes to Parliament is by petitions, against which the hon. member protests. With regard to the general argument that women do not want the franchise, it was answered by anticipation in the speech of the hon. member for Manchester. He said that this Bill did not compel women to vote; but if a particular woman does not wish for the franchise, or even if a majority of women do not wish for the franchise, that is no reason for refusing to those women who would use it if it be just that they should have it. But, further, in reply to that argument, I might argue that a class which has been always excluded from political power does not ask for political power. You will always find that in the case of any class which has been despotically governed—and, though I don't wish to use strong language, it cannot be denied that women have been despotically governed in England, although the despotism has been of a benevolent character—the great majority of that class are content with the system under which they live. You find this the case in Oriental countries. If you applied to the women in India—if you were to go to Bombay, which in these matters is the most enlightened part of India, and if you were in a position to offer them social rights equal to those of men, and propose to break up the system under which they live, I can have no hesitation in saying that the vast majority of those women would sooner be let alone. Is that an answer to those who contend that the system is not just, and that they should not be let alone. I think it is no answer to the argument of my hon. friend, the member for Manchester—that you do not compel those to vote who

do not desire it, but that you permit those to vote who do. The hon. member for Cambridge says that it is a delusion to say that women are not represented or that they have no political influence. He said that it was a mistake to say that justice was not done and could not be done to individuals who were not represented. But I would point out to my hon. friend that when that argument comes to be applied to a whole class, it is precisely the argument by which hon. gentlemen who sit opposite met the proposition for reform in 1866, and which they abandoned in 1867, when they enfranchised a large portion of the working classes. That argument of virtual representation was disposed of in such a way that it could not be stirred again in this house, and if you substitute the word "women" for the word working men, you have a sufficient answer to the argument of virtual representation. The hon. gentleman, the member for Pembroke, asked where we were to stop. My hon. friend the member for Cambridge, said that there was no line to be drawn short of admitting women to Parliament, and argued that there was no standing place between this proposition and the admission of married women to the franchise. With regard to the admission of women to Parliament, I would feel that if there were no other, that that is a matter in the hands of the constituency. If there are those dangers with regard to the admission of women to Parliament, which my hon. friend professes to fear, the question, according to all political rules, ought to be left to the constituencies to decide. There is no need to make a law that people over ninety years of age should not be members of this House. If my hon. friend is right in thinking that women labour under disabilities similar to those of persons of very advanced age in seeking admission to this House, the proper remedy is in the hands of the constituencies, who would not be likely to return them. With regard to the representation of married women, you would, by passing this Bill, be putting yourself in the firmest possible position for answering their claim. Whether it be just or unjust that married women should have a vote, you have at present no intelligible basis on which to rest your franchise. You don't say that the occupier of every house, or that the possessor of every freehold, shall vote, but you say that they shall vote in cases where they are men. But if you make property the absolute test without exception or disqualification of any kind, then you have for the first time an intelligible basis on which you may rest your suffrage, and upon which you can withstand the demand for universal suffrage. But if you should reject the adoption of that basis for any length of time, it will be impossible then to resist the demand which will be generally made upon you for the adoption of universal suffrage in the election of members of this House. The real argument which must lie at the bottom of this question is the alleged intellectual incapacity of women. I will first argue the question against the hon. member (Mr. Scourfield), who seems to approve of the Municipal Franchise Bill of last year—(Mr. Scourfield—"No")—who, at any rate, did not oppose, and then I will argue it against my hon. friend who is opposed to that Bill, because undoubtedly their views rest on different grounds. The franchise at the present moment is considered by some people to be a right, and by others it is not. With regard to the people who consider it to be right, there can be no doubt in their minds that it is just as much the right of women as of men. With regard to those who consider it a matter of expediency, I would point out to them that the legislature has decided that there shall be a property qualification of some kind for the exercise of the franchise. The qualification you have established is, that every person living in a house and paying rates, of full age, shall be entitled to vote. There is only one class of the inhabitants, except the insane, who are passed over in this parliamentary franchise. You don't pass over negroes, for there are negro voters in almost every borough in the country, but you pass over one class—the class of women. It is quite clear that you have passed them over on account of some grave incapacity. If that were not clear from the general nature of the case, it would be clear from what Blackstone says. Blackstone, describing those who are subject to political disability, says that "no vote can be given by lunatics, idiots, minors, aliens, females, persons convicted of perjury, subornation of perjury, bribery, treating or undue influence, or by those attainted of felony, or outlawed in a criminal suit." If you exclude aliens—and no country permits the subjects of a foreign power to exercise the parliamentary franchise—the disabled people divide themselves into two classes—those convicted of crime and those who are under

some incapacity of mind. It is quite clear that no one would propose to rank women among criminals, and it would seem that they are ranked amongst the incapable. Now gentlemen who approved of the municipal franchise Bill of last year are in the most dangerous position possible. They are in the position of the faithful who have to enter into Paradise over a bridge narrow as a sword's edge. They must put themselves within the doctrine of Blackstone, that women are under some grave incapacity for exercising the political franchise, and yet demonstrate that the disability is of such a kind that it in no way applies to municipal elections. On the other hand my hon. friend who sits near me says that he was opposed to the municipal franchise being given to women, and perhaps he will bring in a Bill to repeal that Act. Unless he takes that line, he must say that there is an extraordinary difference between municipal and parliamentary votes. The municipal vote is concerned with taxation chiefly, but the parliamentary vote, as my hon. friend the member of Manchester said, is concerned with taxation and with graver things besides. If we were arguing this question in the time of Walpole or Bolingbroke, if we were arguing at a time when our whole history was filled with records of wars and court intrigues, then some case might be made out for not giving women votes. But at a time when we are legislating upon subjects of a wholly different kind, when we are not legislating upon questions of foreign policy, or of peace and war, when we are not continually mixed up with ministerial and court intrigues, when we are legislating on such matters as pauperism and education, then I think the argument as to the difference of the vote entirely breaks down. I was glad to hear an honourable member say that women should rather confine themselves to deliberation than to action, for a vote is but the expression of an opinion. He said that, though some women possessed great eloquence and great power of expressing their opinions, still it was a monstrosity, and that he disliked such public appearances of women. My hon. friend seemed to forget that the highest office in this country is occupied by a woman. (Cheers.) If he makes out a case for the absence of political capacity in women, how can he reconcile with it the exercise of the highest political functions in this country by a woman—functions which require that she should continually deliver public addresses. If my hon. friend's argument as to political imbecility fails, then he must show that women labour under some other incapacity. He must show that women labour under an incapacity of such a character that, although they may be queen, that is, may exercise the office of king—that although they may be sheriffs of counties, although they may exercise the offices of overseer and churchwarden, although they used (as my hon. friend the member for Aberdeen reminded us) to vote in the election of directors for the East India Company—that disability is such that they cannot vote for members of this House. My hon. friend has not spoken at any length of the results which might be expected to flow from this measure. I don't think we need speak much of them, because the Bill is a small measure, a practical measure of justice; but if for one moment I may address the House upon that subject, I would say that, while we are looking forward to next session, when we shall be dealing with the great evils of ignorance and intemperance, our deliberations would not be the less valuable if women were represented in this House. (Cheers.) What I would point out to hon. members who are exposed to the extreme development of this women's question is, that if I were one of the fiercest opponents of women's rights, on that very ground I should vote in favour of this Bill. I would do so on the ground which I have already stated—that by not passing over persons on the ground of their sex, but resting the franchise upon the basis of householding, you would have an intelligible basis for the franchise, and you might prevent that demand for universal suffrage which you may possibly have some day to meet. (Cheers.)

MR. BERSFORD HOPE: I listened with considerable pleasure to the ingenious and able, though fallacious, speech of the hon. member opposite. But before I go to the main question, I must point out that one or two of his attacks on the hon. member for Pembroke-shire will hardly hold water. He asserted—I think I am not exaggerating his words—that he never heard so extraordinary statement in this House as that made by that hon. member, that petitioning was not a legitimate method of bringing public attention to bear upon any subject. But my hon. friend said nothing of the sort. He was dealing with a particular case, and pointing out its peculiarities. It is so true that it has in point of fact passed into

a truism, that the party which is desirous of a change, good or bad, has a great advantage over the party who is opposed to such change. People who are uneasy under a particular state of things are under a temptation to parade before the public that uneasiness. On the other hand, those who are contented have no such temptation—if they are not politicians or tacticians,—they do not think it necessary to disturb themselves in order to keep themselves in that position in which they are; therefore, it is much more difficult to get petitions from people who do not want a change than from people who do. But then, in the present case, what is the class of persons who are not petitioners? It is that class of persons who are specially unlikely to address themselves to the practice of making their grievances known by means of petitions to Parliament. Their frame of mind and their natural temperament make them look with dislike, not only upon the privilege itself, which is sought for, but upon the very machinery which is resorted to by those women who ask for such a privilege. They are the women who do not want to be enfranchised, and who think it is not very creditable on the part of any individuals of their sex to come forward as political speakers and political agitators, and who look on the very fact of signing their names to a petition, not knowing what a farce sticking petitions in the bag at the table is, with a sort of shame as exposing their names to public notice and discussion. Therefore, I contend, women who do not want to be enfranchised will certainly not petition, and so, to bring forward as an argument the absence of petitioning on the part of women generally is not a very conclusive mode of reasoning, while to point out that a certain number have petitioned is only to say that there is a strong body of patriotic, strong-minded, hard-headed women in the country. (A laugh.) So much for that argument. The hon. baronet has asserted that there are two classes of persons in this country, an enfranchised and an unenfranchised class, and from first to last he has talked about unenfranchised females as a class, and in thus talking of women as a class he has failed in explaining what is the precise meaning which he attaches to the word "class." The general understanding of the word is that it signifies a number of persons banded together in close proximity to each other by common habits of thought, or feeling, or circumstances, but the race of women are as varied in its conditions as the race of men, and in no sense of the word can they be termed a class, except you imply that there are only two classes of human beings in the world, namely, men and women. To term the unenfranchised women a class is neither accurate nor logical. As all men are not of one class, but there is an infinite variety, so, also, all women are not of one class, and to speak of the unenfranchised women, by themselves, as a class, is contrary to the true sense of language. The wealthy class, for instance, comprises both men and women, the intellectual class includes both men and women, and the stupid class, if I may use the term, includes men as well as women. Women, therefore, cannot be said to be a distinct class in any sense of the word. Women may, all of them, be unenfranchised, but they are not an unenfranchised class, for, as I have said, they are not a class at all. Every class to which women belong has its analogous class among men. Then the honourable member called us over the coals, for not opposing the Municipal Franchise Bill of last year. Now, in respect to that, I am quite willing to take my share of the blame. The example of to-day shows how very unwise it was not to oppose that Bill last year. It is a very pretty argument for newspaper writers and platform speakers that because we did not oppose that Bill last year which enfranchised women, so far as municipal elections are concerned, therefore we ought not to oppose a Bill which proposes to enfranchise them with respect to parliamentary elections; but in point of fact the parliamentary session is so hurried, so feverish, and lasts for so limited a portion of the year, and questions of great importance are brought on at such very unseasonable hours of the night, that to cast in our teeth that we allowed that Bill to pass in silence is rather hard, conscious as we all must be that the manner in which much of the business is hurried through is very creditable to Parliament. But whether or not that Bill passed without opposition or discussion I make the hon. baronet a present of it, and both I and every one of those who feel that we ought to have opposed it must plead *mea culpa*. Those who support the Bill in all its inconsistencies, and contend that we ought to give the franchise to widows and spinsters, but not to married women, have no ground whatever on which to base their argument. I am not dealing with the "thin end of the wedge" argument which holds as good here as in the United States; but

I say, arguing from the *a priori* and abstract principles on which you defend the proposed change, that it would be a gross injustice not to enfranchise married women if you enfranchise women who are widows or spinsters. Why do you propose to enfranchise certain women? Is it because they are proprietors, or because they are ratepayers or freeholders, as the case may be; in short, because they are the owners of a certain amount of material property, or what represents material property, which entitles them to vote? But so is a married woman under her settlement. She has her own property. If you regard the words in the sense of having a stake in the country, may not married women have as great a stake in the country as widows and spinsters—will they not have it if the change in the law of married women's property, which is on the notice paper, become law? In fact, to enfranchise one and not the other would be to insult every married woman, and to create a political grievance on the part of every married woman in the country. For my own part, I decline to suppose that the House would accept the Bill in that fragmentary state. This is either a Bill to enfranchise all women, whether married or unmarried, who have a stake in the country, or it is a piece of most illogical legislation. Deal with it as a question of enfranchising all such persons in such a position irrespective of their sex, and what does it mean? To look at the matter in another and a secondary point of view, it is impossible to enfranchise women without giving them the power of obtaining a seat in this House. That is undoubtedly a necessary and logical consequence, and I think that it is a consequence which must have escaped the attention of the hon. members who support the change. There was a time some years ago when the qualification for a seat in this House was the possession of a certain amount of money or money's worth. Up to the year 1858 there was a property qualification which was necessary to render anybody eligible for a seat in Parliament. At that time a Bill was brought in by my right hon. colleague, then Home Secretary, which wiped out that property qualification and made every man in this country eligible for the honour of a seat in Parliament, even if he were not a ratepayer and had no qualification at all. Having thus made the eligibility of members wider than the electoral ability of voters, you cannot now make a great measure of enfranchisement and say that those who are enfranchised should be excluded from a seat in this House. The whole thing is inconsistent and illogical, and will not hold water for a moment. On the other hand, it is an acknowledged constitutional axiom that those who enjoy political privileges, such as that of voting, are correlatively under obligations and responsibilities to take their part in the public service. I do not talk of the direct responsibility of the public defence, which may be limited (though this is illogical) to the male sex alone, but of such obligations as the liability to serve on juries. If you give a woman a vote are you prepared to make a woman liable to serve on juries? and if not where is your consistency? You would at once create a glaring inconsistency, and make of the enfranchised women a privileged class of voters. I do not see why you should while you propose to remedy injustice on the one hand commit a new one on the other; and I put this at once, as a test, how would those who advocate this measure like to make women serve on such juries as those accustomed to deal with matters which come before Lord Penzance. (Hear, hear.) The hon. gentleman accused us of basing our arguments on an assumed intellectual inferiority of women. I repudiate that altogether. My great opposition to the measure is based, not upon an inferiority, but upon a difference of intellect between the sexes, and here I would appeal to common sense as evidence of the fact that although there is no political or intellectual incapacity on the part of women, yet there is a broad and clear physiological difference between women and men which amply justifies the present state of things. The male intellect is logical and judicial, the female instinctive and emotional. The instinctive and emotional has its own duty and its own functions in the progress of things; and that function is to guide to influence, to moderate, to regulate, to suffer—not to govern. Any person who is of liberal mind will at once see that the direct influence of the female mind on the progress of the human mind, and on the progress of human affairs, is immeasurable; but it is by her very weakness, her helplessness, her reliance upon man, that she holds her power; and though it may be technically called restricted power, its ramifications are infinite, but if for this indefinite sway you substitute a hard legal power, and accompany it with all the obligations to which men who exercise it are liable,

what would become, not merely of woman's influence, but of her duties at home, her care of the household, her supervision of all those duties and surroundings which make a happy home; all those matters must be neglected if we are to see women coming forward and taking part in the government of the country. Now look at things just as they are. Come down from the philosophical and the abstract, and let us regard this question from a practical point of view, and let us test it first by referring for a moment to the question of elections. It is said, "Oh, you will have the ballot." But even if we do the ballot will not change human nature, it will not change attorneys, it will not do away with stump speeches. What will be the effect upon elections? Quite apart from the temptation to strong-minded women to plunge into the fray, look at the disastrous effect which it might have upon the passive portion of womankind. Imagine half a dozen attorneys swooping down upon a timid spinster; picture the landlords who would turn upon poor struggling widows who were keeping open shops for the support of themselves and their children. Look at the manifold persecutions which may be brought to bear upon female voters, not for any advantage of their own, but to turn the election when it was a struggle between Brown and Jones. Look at the question of bribery. How would it be possible to bring home a case of bribery against a woman. If there were woman voters and unconscientious men, the men would find a way of bribing them, and woman canvassers would even be enlisted. The man in the moon would find his wife, and all the great barriers of bribery would be broken down by the exhibition of a pocket handkerchief and a red pair of bright eyes. A notorious amount of immorality and corruption at present exists, although the natural conscience has been notably awakened. Would it lessen do you think by creating women voters? Would you not rather risk losing the advantage you have so hardly gained? Here I dismiss all reference to the argument which I was sorry to hear raised with reference to the highest position in the state being filled by a woman as altogether inapplicable to the question, whether other smaller powers and obligations and duties should be placed in the hands of women. The hon. and gallant gentleman, the member for Aberdeen, asked whether there was any reason why some persons should be debarred from voting because they wore a different dress from that of the other sex. I must demur to this argument from the representative of a Highland constituency. (Laughter.)

MR. COL. SYKES: I am not the member for a Highland constituency. MR. B. HOPE: However, passing that by, I appeal from the experience of the East India Company which he urged to the more ample experience which we have almost every day in the year of the inconvenience which results from females voting in the elections for our charities. Governed as these are by active committees, yet the elections for those charities had become so thoroughly confused, and so utterly unsatisfactory, that nearly every one of them in succession has adopted a system of cumulative election, because it was found that the single elections which were carried on by female suffrage and female canvassing were carried on in such an impulsive manner, no doubt entirely owing to the good nature of women, that the whole system became absolutely unworkable. If you enfranchise only a few women, you will put them in a most cruel and undesirable position—enfranchise women generally, and make them a power in the country, and you will find yourselves drifting on a sea of impulsive philanthropy and sentimentalism, where you are now at anchor on the principles of political economy. With the highest respect for the female sex, I must say I doubt if such a change as that which is now proposed takes place, whether we could discuss questions in this House or in the country without present calmness, or, whether Parliament would retain the influence which it owes to its reputation for judicial wisdom.

DR. LYON PLAYFAIR: The hon. gentleman who has just spoken against the Bill is obviously in the very uncomfortable position of finding that, having agreed to the principle of the Municipal Franchise Bill of last year, there is very great difficulty in avoiding the extension of the municipal to the parliamentary franchise this year. But having once passed the former with so much unanimity, it is too late now to go back when they are asked to extend the franchise to the election of members of Parliament. So far as local matters of taxation are concerned, the franchise of women existed from time immemorial until we deprived them of it in 1839. Therefore, if there were any unfitness on the part of women to exercise the franchise, it would have become apparent a long time ago, and we might naturally expect that that argument would have been brought forward

on the Bill for restoring to them the municipal franchise was introduced, so as to show conclusively their unfitness to exercise it. No such argument was adduced, although abundant opportunity was afforded, and the franchise was conferred upon women in all municipal boroughs and county towns, and that privilege we now ask you to extend to those voting for the people's representatives. In the speeches which have been made against the Bill, I observe that there has been a great tendency to make it an abstract instead of a purely limited practical question. We do not in this Bill ask you in any way to decide on the question of the abstract rights of women, which is now freely discussed in this country. They claim many things. Rights of property in married women, rights to enter the learned professions, rights to enter and study at the universities, rights on which public opinion is much divided. At the present moment we do not ask the House to give any judgment on a single point in regard to them. All that we ask it to do is this, that you should treat this question in a plain, practical, common-senselike way, such as that in which we legislate. For this proposition, if carried, would not tend in any way to subvert the institutions of the country, but rather to strengthen and give development to them. The arguments of the hon. gentleman the member for the University of Cambridge, and of the hon. member for Pembrokeshire, resolve themselves into the apprehension that if we once put in the thin end of the wedge it will be driven home in an inconvenient direction. Now, sir, I say that that is not the character of the legislation we propose. We have to deal with a specific question brought before us. There are certain things I freely admit in which it would never do for women to compete with men; there are certain professions and occupations into which they could never enter. Take the army, for instance. It would not be expedient for women to enter the army as soldiers, because they would be continually marrying the male soldiers, and a second army of incumbances would soon arise. It is, for instance, a doubtful question whether women should sit in Parliament. I am not lawyer enough to express my opinion upon this point, but I am not aware of any disability which prevents a woman from sitting in Parliament at this very moment; yet it would be a question of great importance whether it would be expedient to have women sitting in Parliament, and if my hon. friend proposed to prevent ladies from sitting in this House, I should probably be found voting in the same lobby with him. But the actual question before us is limited and practical. Shall an independent female proprietor of property, or a breadwinner of substantial qualifications, have a vote for the representatives of the people in this House. Now this question has two broad grounds—those of right and expediency. To argue it on the ground of right is very easy. At present the law admits that a woman is a capable citizen on all points but one. It gives her full control over her own property; it gives her an absolute right to dispose of it; it gives her full power of contract, and the law also enjoins that she shall bear the full burdens of property, because she enjoys most of its rights. We therefore consider her as a capable citizen of this country, and all we ask you to do is to take her out of the only list of incapable persons known to the law, idiots, lunatics, criminals and minors. What does the State consider a political unit of the country? A political unit consists of a citizen who has a certain amount of property. It is of no use to inquire whether the State intends to represent property, or whether it considers property as a rough and ready material test of the capability of its possessors for the enjoyment of political privileges, as an indication that the person who possesses it has a stake in the country, for whatever view we take the application of the principle is as strong in the case of the female as it is in the case of the male citizen. Taking, then, either of those views, I would ask whether it is not desirable that such a large quantity of property as exists in the possession of females, and there is a largely increasing class of female proprietors, should be represented in this House. For centuries we have been preventing the accumulation of property of churches, monasteries, and corporations. We found them extending property outside our political system, and we have, by successful laws of mortmain, kept it out of the grasp of the dead man's hands and have given it to living men who can harmonise it with the political changes which are continually taking place. I appeal to the hon. gentlemen opposite who oppose the Bill, whether if they consider property should have so much influence in this House, so much as is occupied and possessed by females should be kept outside of our political system. I appeal to hon. members

on this side of the House who desire to extend electoral rights whether they can resist the simple extension of the franchise to a capable citizen. They cannot deny that women are capable citizens, and I found their claim for direct representation on two reasons, first, on account of their possession of property and of the municipal franchise; and secondly, on the argument—made light of by the hon. member for the University of Cambridge—that the constitution admits them equally with men as capable to govern; it allows the Queen to occupy the throne of the country, and if she can exercise the highest functions of government, how is it that a woman cannot exercise the lowest by sending members to Parliament—to prevent excessive taxation and preserve her from the effects of bad legislation therein. (Hear, hear.) Next let me notice the objection upon the grounds of expediency which has been brought forward by the hon. gentleman. That divides itself in two parts. Is it expedient in the interest of the women themselves that they should have a vote? Will any hon. gentleman venture to say it is not. Is it inexpedient that they should vote with regard to the interests of their own sex? Our recent legislation gives us a positive answer upon this point. We have been for years trying to take women out of a position of inequality in the eyes of the law. Year after year you are passing laws to render them less and less inferior to man, and therefore as we always know the unrepresented classes of the community have very tardy justice, is it not to the advantage of a class at present politically inferior and not socially equal in the eye of the law that they should possess an interest in the election of members of this House. Surely if they had they would have a far better chance of obtaining justice in respect to many matters than they now have. How slow the inferior classes are in obtaining justice may be seen in the incessant legislation to give rights to women with respect to property and social privileges. If we wish to give her full equality we must first give her full equality. (Hear.) But the objection is less political than social. They say we object to women interfering in politics because it is their natural function to be wives and mothers and to attend to domestic rather than civil concerns. That I understand to be the argument of hon. gentlemen opposite. Wives and mothers may be thus fully occupied, but there are many women who are neither; and when it is remembered that there are 487,000 widows in this country and 1,110,000 spinsters, it is absurd to try to limit all women to their domestic hearth, and to prevent them extending their sympathy beyond them. The world owes much to the sympathies of women, and I need only mention three names as a sufficient answer to the objection that women should only concern themselves with domestic, and do not exhibit any interest in public matters. Those names are Miss Florence Nightingale, Miss Harriet Martineau, and Miss Burdett Coutts. (Cheers.) Then it is said that the education of women does not fit them for these subjects. There is something in that, I admit, but whose fault is it? It is the fault of men, who have monopolised all the higher institutions of the country, and I promise all those who are anxious for the improvement of women, that if they will only pass this Bill and make it an Act of Parliament, they will do a great deal to improve them. Responsibility of power soon enables people to exercise that power. We have extended the suffrage below the educational level of men, and we have had no cause to regret it. When responsibility comes, fitness will soon follow. Then as to expediency, it is asked—is it expedient for the state? The state might receive harm or good, it is said, by the introduction of woman into the political arena. As to harm: in foreign countries women have sometimes indecorously and injuriously interfered in political revolutions, but they have never shown such unfeminine violence in this country. As to the good which it may do, there is good reason to believe that the state would be benefited by it. Will it injure the purity of politics if we introduce a little higher morality into them? In our own generation we have found that the more intimate intercourse with women has very much softened the manners of the men, and we know that it has rendered drunkenness a disgrace in our own day. In politics we may also find great benefit from it. There are subjects to which we do not devote ourselves as we should, and they would be very quickly brought before us if we had female constituencies—subjects, such as the education of the people, the care of the poor, the tending of our sick and infirm in their own homes, and so on. On these questions, if we had women electors, depend on it we should have a large and important attention to these subjects, and they form nine-tenths of our social political economy. Perhaps the most effective arguments against this

question belong to the *laissez faire* school of political economy. Honourable gentlemen have said women do not want the franchise, for that only 100,000 women have petitioned for it. But what is that number compared with the vast mass of the others who have not petitioned? It is true they have not assembled in force yet to pull down the Park railings—(laughter)—but it is equally true that many intellectual women do want it, and have demanded and petitioned for it in this country; and all such reforms do not come from the persons below, but from those above. The extension of the franchise to men did not come from those who received it, in the end, but from those above them, who thought they ought to have it as an act of justice. The fact that women have not demanded this Bill as a mass, is no argument at all. One hundred thousand women have demanded it in the only constitutional way known to them. Finally, I would remark that, although many influential women have aided these movements during the last year or two, I do not think their action has brought the question to the position in which it now is. There is a wave of political opinion with regard to women's rights rising in height and power, and spreading its impulse all over Europe. Italy, Austria, Sweden, and some of the United States have already given political suffrage to women more or less effectually. Our own legislature is continually occupying itself with questions to diminish the inequalities of the law with regard to women. There are movements everywhere, even among our universities themselves. The universities, feeling the injustice of the exclusion which they had hitherto practised, are now in a timid and halting way opening their examinations to half the race who have hitherto been excluded. This is less the consequence of women's agitation than an awakening of the public conscience to the fact that all capable citizens, whatever their sex, and whatever their position, ought to have equal rights. It is because this Bill completes our sense of national justice that I give my hearty support to it. (Cheers.)

Sir GEORGE JENKINSON: Mr. Speaker,—I shall give my cordial support to this Bill. This question has not been raised so entirely upon its real merits as it deserves to be. It is not so much a question of the personal rights of women, as of the rights of property. Wherever property exists, no matter in whose hands, if the persons holding it are fit according to the laws and the constitution of the country, to hold and administer it, it seems to me that they are also fully and entirely entitled to all the rights and responsibilities which usually accompany it. (Cheers.) I cannot understand for one moment why women in the possession of a large amount or of any amount of property should be denied the right to exercise the usual rights of property, as to representation, any more than any man who owns property. The last speaker has dared to do that which I would not have ventured to do; and he has done it most properly. He has mentioned the names of certain ladies in this country who deserve well of it for their efforts in the cause of humanity. When he names Miss Burdett Coutts, no one will say that a person holding her vast property, and administering it as she does, for the good of humanity, especially for the poorer classes of this country, is not fit to hold the franchise: I cannot understand why the owner of that property should be denied a right to vote for its representation in Parliament, any more than the right of a man in such a case should be denied. It has often been said when I have used this argument—for it is no new theory of mine—I have held this opinion for many years—it has often been said that persons holding property like this are represented by their tenants, and can command that representation through their votes. But the old days when this sort of representation could be relied on are fast passing away, if they have not entirely passed away already. No owner of property would dare in these days to command his tenants how they are to vote, and no lady can have that representation through her tenants, which may in some cases have been exercised hitherto by the owners of property. I do not think the arguments used on this side of the House against the question bear upon it, because I think the real question has been lost sight of very much in the public view. It has been said by the hon. member for Cambridge that if you give this right to women, you must also argue that all men are equally entitled to have votes; but this Bill does not propose to give votes to all women; it only proposes to give votes to all those who possess property. There has been a distinction attempted to be drawn between married women and single women, and it has been said that if you give votes to spinsters you will create an injustice to married women; but I do not see any distinction

made between married women and single women. In this Bill it simply proposes to do away with disabilities. It is intended to give a right of voting to all who possess property, and I think it is a good Bill. I shall support it, and I should like to see all property more directly represented in this House than it is. I really should like to see all payers of income-tax, no matter what their sex, possessing a vote; because I think a direct taxation, and especially a direct taxation of property, is that which ought to be represented throughout the country. I have endeavoured shortly to show why I support the Bill, and I will not detain the House any longer. One strong argument has not been used to-day. No one has imputed to female owners of property that they do not manage it well. Wherever you see women possessed of property, they generally manage it quite as well as in many instances their neighbours do; and I do not think you should place disabilities upon women who own property, any more than upon men. The hon. member for the University of Cambridge has said something about the persecution that female voters will undergo if they have votes. My own experience of women is, that they are quite as fit to take care of themselves in that capacity, and to meet that persecution by counter persecution, as men are—(laughter)—and I do not see why you should fear female voters being created on account of the persecution they would incur. Why should you have any more objection to a widow who keeps a shop having a vote, than to a man who keeps a shop should have one. Both persons keep their shops for their own support and maintenance, and the woman is often quite as able to take her own part as the man. We have heard also of the difficulty in the shape of bribery, and the visits of the "man in the moon," but those who have lately read the investigations which have taken place at various boroughs have heard some instances of a woman in the moon—(laughter)—and I do not think we shall have greater difficulties in the matter of bribery with women than we have now. For these reasons I shall give my cordial support to the measure, and there is also one higher ground upon which I do so. Women are now in a position in which they are enabled to say that men monopolise all the legislation; that they make the laws for women, to which women are subjected, without having any voice directly or indirectly in making them. They appeal to the justice of men, and that is a great reason why we should not ignore that appeal, but should rather show women that they do not appeal in vain to the justice of men, and especially to the justice of the British House of Commons. (Cheers.)

Mr. MUNTZ: Sir,—The tone of this debate has been so peculiar that I should have had great difficulty in deciding which way I would vote, if I had not made up my mind before I came here. (Laughter.) I will not go into all the physiological and other differences between men and women which have been mentioned by the honourable member for Cambridge, nor the question of slavery which formed a great part of the speech of the honourable member for Manchester, who introduced the Bill. That gentleman compares ladies to slaves in the Southern States before the American war broke out. If we are to judge the matter in accordance with what we know, some of us would rather be inclined to say that men were the slaves, and women the masters—(laughter)—for they have an enormous influence over us; but we must do away with all the romantic aspects of this question and bring it down resolutely to the region of common sense; and I want to ask honourable gentlemen why ratepayers worth many thousands a year should be prevented from voting for members of Parliament merely because of their difference of sex. I know a lady worth £70,000 or £80,000 a year, who in the election of members of Parliament has no vote at all, while her gardener, her groom, and other male servants have a vote each. I am not in favour of granting votes to all women, but I think that in some cases they ought to have them. We give them a power to vote for members of town-councils, and we have not only given them the power and right to vote in all local and municipal matters, but we have imposed on them very onerous duties which, to say the least of it, I think have been unfairly imposed upon them. We have imposed on them the duties of overseer, and to bear a great and responsible duty. In my own neighbourhood some years ago an elderly widow was actually appointed an overseer at the age of 71. (Laughter.) If we are to have this sort of thing, I think we cannot do less than allow them on the ground of the property they hold, to vote equally with ourselves, and I shall have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Sir HERBERT CROFT: Sir,—I am sorry I shall be unable to record my vote in favour of this Bill; and, as I seldom address the House I trust honourable gentlemen will give me consideration while I explain the reason why I cannot do so. Certainly, my fair constituents have not sent me a petition on the subject of this Bill, and I conclude they do not wish me to advocate any change in the law. I should not like to see ladies exercising the franchise any more than I like to see ladies going about as lecturers, as when we have Doctor Mary Brown going to deliver a lecture at eight o'clock, attended by her husband. (Laughter.) I do not like ladies going about delivering lectures on the rights of women. I think there is a great deal of truth in what our old friend Punch has recently told us, that those who want woman's rights also want woman's charms. (Laughter.) My constituents are fair, graceful, and feminine—(loud laughter)—therefore they do not want a vote and they have not sent me one single petition on this subject, and therefore I shall vote against the Bill. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. SECRETARY BRUCE: Mr. Speaker,—The occasions are not at all unfrequent when a member of the government feels with great regret that he cannot give an independent vote, or one that will express his own individual opinion. As a member of a government he often has to sink his individual feelings in the position which he occupies. It is often thought that those who undertake the grave responsibilities of government should be those who are prepared to give opinions upon every possible subject, and every possible political problem, however new and however great. Sir, I am bound to make an admission that Her Majesty's Government have not had time to give this subject full consideration in all its bearings. I say this with some feeling, because it is necessary for a minister who occupies the department which I hold to consider questions of this nature, and it has been my earnest desire to obtain the opinions of my colleagues upon this question, but such has been the pressure of business, and the importance of the measures occupying the attention of ministers of all departments, that they have not been able to give to this question that consideration which would enable them to express their opinions upon it in such a manner as to guide the deliberations of this House so far as the House will consent to be guided by them. During the short time I have been present in the House to-day—and I owe an apology to the hon. member for Manchester for my absence, which was, I assure him, entirely owing to the pressure of official business, or otherwise I should gladly have heard his arguments on the question—during the short time I have been in the House I have heard it said that having last year supported a Bill for the extension to women of the municipal franchise, we were bound to give a similar support to this measure; but there is an argument which always carries weight with this House, and which has equal weight on both sides—that we should stand on the ancient lines of the constitution. I consider that in the extension of the municipal franchise to women we were standing in the ancient ways. It was one of the strongest arguments put forward for the Bill of last session, that in all similar cases women had held votes, and that in many cases they had lost the votes which they had already exercised in matters connected with their personal interests. An hon. member has told us that by the adoption of the municipal franchise we have one instance of a form of government under which women can vote. But Her Majesty's government thought they were acting upon a known principle of the constitution in extending the right to vote to women in the case of municipal elections, but the present question is a very much larger one. I am not going to argue against this proposition, on the ground of the political incapacity of women, or because on political subjects their morality may not be equal to the morality of men. The ground I shall take is to ask the House to delay its consideration of the measure, because it is a very large question, and it requires mature consideration. It is a very large extension of the franchise in an entirely new direction, and it is a question in which the utmost deliberation is required as to the manner how women should vote, and at to the consequences—whether it would be possible to stop here. I am not going to use the argument which has been so often abused, but I ask hon. members to consider whether it is logically or politically possible to stop here? If we give women a right to vote, how can we refuse them a seat in this House, when otherwise qualified? (Hear, hear.) I am certain there are vast numbers of members who are prepared to vote for the second reading of this Bill, but who are not prepared to support that consequence; and that, I think, is a strong reason why we

should delay our consideration of the measure. These, then, are the reasons why her Majesty's government are not yet prepared to express an opinion on the subject. They foresee that this is a large subject, and that its consequences are large, but they have not had time or opportunity to come to a deliberate opinion upon it, and for these reasons I cannot give my support to the Bill. At the same time I wish to have it clearly understood that neither personally, nor as a member of the government, do I give any expression of opinion upon the matter.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT: I will only trouble the House with one or two words in reply. I am satisfied with the course which the debate has taken, for the subject has been well debated, and I have no fault to find with the right hon. gentleman who has just sat down. On the contrary, if I may infer anything from that speech, I rather infer that he personally has a very strong sympathy with the Bill. There is only one matter of which he has spoken to which I will allude. He said: "We cannot stop here; and if women have votes you will have to admit them to this House." Now I doubt whether anyone believes that they will be admitted to this House for many long generations to come, unless a total and unforeseen change should take place in the country. But if it be true, as I believe that women are not to come inside this House, the more does justice require that outside of it they should have some kind of control over those who have the privilege of entering it. (Cheers.) To show the feeling of the great constituency which I have the honour to represent, I may state to the House that I have just received a telegram, telling me that the Manchester Town Council have to-day agreed to petition Parliament in favour of this Bill by a majority of 42 to 12. (Cheers.) Before the last election, there were between 5,000 and 6,000 qualified women in Manchester, who asked to be put on the register. I hope the House will be willing to read the Bill a second time. (Cheers.)

The SPEAKER then put the motion, and the House divided:—

For the second reading.....	124
Against	91

Majority in favour of the Bill..... 33

The result was received with loud cheers.

The SPEAKER then put the previous question, and the Bill was read a second time amid renewed cheers.

DIVISION LIST.

Order for Second Reading read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time?"—Whereupon Previous Question put, "That that Question be now put?"—(Mr. Scourfield.)—The House divided; Ayes 124, Noes 91.

AYES.

Allen, W. Shepherd, Newc. U. L.
Amphlett, Richard P.
Anstruther, Sir Robert
Baines, Edward
Bass, Arthur, Staffordsh. E.
Bateson, Sir Thomas
Bazley, Sir Thomas
Birley, Hugh
Brand, Hen. Rob., Herts
Brewer, Dr.
Brodrick, Hon. William
Brown, Alexander H.
Callan, Philip
Campbell, Henry
Carter, Mr. Alderman
Charley, William Thomas
Cholmeley, Captain, Grantham.
Coleridge, Sir John Duke
Cowen, Joseph
Cubitt, George
Dalglish, Robert
D'Arcy, Matthew Peter
Dawson, Robert Peel
Delahunty, James
Denman, Hon. George
Dickinson, Sebastian S.
Dixon, George, Birmingham
Digby, Kenelm Thomas
Dillwyn, Lewis Llewelyn
Dimsdale, Robert
Downing, M'Carthy
Dowse, Richard

Eastwick, Edward B.
Edwardes, Hon. Col. Wm., Havert.
Edwards, Henry, Weymouth
Elphinstone, Sir James D.H.
Fawcett, Henry
Figgins, James
FitzGerald, Rt. Hon. Lord Otho A.
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fletcher, Isaac
French, Right Hon. Colonel
Gavin, Major
Goldney, Gabriel
Goldsmid, Sir Francis H.
Gourley, Edward T.
Grant, Colonel Hon. James
Gray, Lieut.-Colonel, Bolton
Gray, Sir John, Kilkenny
Guest, Arthur E., Poole
Hadfield, George
Herbert, Hon. Auberon E. W., Not.
Herbert, Henry A., Kerry
Hibbert, John Tomlinson
Hick, John
Hill, Alexander Staveley
Hoare, Sir H. Ainslie, Chelsea
Hodgkinson, Grosvenor
Hutt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Illingworth, Alfred
Jenkinson, Sir George S.
Johnston, William, Belfast
Johnstone, Sir Harcourt, Scarbo.
Jones, John

Keown, William
King, Hon. P. Jn. Locke
Kinnaird, Hn. Arthur Fitzgerald
Langton, W. Gore
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lewis, John D., Devonport
Lewis, John Harvey, Marylebone
Liddell, Hon. Henry George
Lloyd, Sir Thomas Davies
Lush, Dr.
M'Combie, William
Macfie, Robert Andrew
M'Lagan, Peter
M'Laren, Duncan
Maguire, John Francis
Maitland, Sir Alex. C. R. Gibson
Mellor, Thomas W.
Melly, George
Miller, John
Morley, Samuel
Mundella, Anthony John
Muntz, Philip Henry
Noel, Hon. Gerard James
Platt, John
Playfair, Lyon
Plimsoll, Samuel
Pollard-Urquhart, William
Potter, Thos. Bayley, Rochdale
Powell, Walter
Power, John Talbot

Reed, Charles, Hackney
Richard, Henry, Merthyr Tydfil
Richards, Evan M., Cardigan Co.
Robertson, David
Robinson, Elisha Smith
Rylands, Peter
Samuelson, Bernhard, Banbury
Sartoris, Edward John
Shaw, William, Bandon
Sherriff, Alexander Clunes
Sidebottom, James
Simon, Mr. Serjeant
Simonds, William Barrow
Sinclair, Sir John G. Tollemache
Smith, John Benjamin, Stockport
Smith, Eustace, Tynemouth
Stacpoole, William
Stansfeld, Rt. Hon. James
Stevenson, James Cochran
Sykes, Col. Wm. Henry, Aberdeen
Talbot, Chris. R. M., Glam.
Taylor, Peter Alfred, Leicester
Trelawny, Sir John Salisbury
Villiers, Rt. Hon. C. Pelham
West, Henry Wyndham
Wheelhouse, William S. J.
Whitworth, Thomas
Williams, Watkin, Denbigh
Wingfield, Sir Charles
Young, Adolph. Wm., Helston

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. Jacob Bright and Sir Charles Dilke.

NOES.

Amory, John H.
Arkwright, Richard, Leominster
Ayrton, Rt. Hon. Acton Smea
Baker, Richard B. Wingfield
Barttelot, Colonel
Beaumont, H. F., West Riding, S.
Beaumont, W. B., Northum. S.
Bingham, Lord
Bowring, Edgar A.
Brassey, Thomas, Hastings
Bright, Richard, Somers. E.
Brinckman, Captain
Bruce, Rt. Hon. H. Austin, Renfr.
Buxton, Charles
Candlish, John
Cartwright, Fairfax, Northamp.
Cartwright, William C., Oxfords.
Clay, James
Craufurd, Edw. Henry J., Ayr
Crawford, Rob. Wygram, London
Crichton, Viscount
Croft, Sir Herbert G. D.
Cross, Richard Assheton
Dalrymple, Donald, Bath
Dalrymple, Charles, Buteh.
Davenport, William Bromley
Denison, Christopher Beckett
Dent, John Dent
Dyke, William Hart
Egerton, Hon. Alg. Fulke, Lanc. S.
Fielden, Joshua, Yk. W. R., E. D.
Finnie, William
Foljambe, Francis John Savile
Fowler, William, Camb. Bo.
Gladstone, Wm. Henry, Whitby
Glyn, Hon. George Grenfell
Gore, J. Ralph Ormsby, Salop, N.
Gower, Hn. E. F. Leveson, Bodm.
Grieve, Jas. Johnstone, Greenock
Guest, Montague John, Youghal
Hamilton, Lord Claude, Tyrone
Hamilton, Ld. Claude J., King's L.
Hamilton, Marquis of, Donegal
Hamilton, Lord Geo., Middx.
Hapley, Rt. Hon. J. W., Oxfordsh.
Haley, Lord, Northampton

Howes, Edward
Hyde, Lord
James, Henry
Kavanagh, Arthur, MacM.
Kekewich, Samuel Trehawke
Knatchbull-Hugessen, Edward H.
Lawrence, Sir James C., Lambeth
Leatham, Edward Aldam
Lennox, Lord Geo. Gordon, Lym.
Locke, John, Southwark
Mackintosh, Eneas William
Maxwell, Wellwood Herries
Milles, Hon. Gen. W., Kent, E.
Mitchell, Thomas Alexander
Mitford, William Townley
Monk, Charles James
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. John Robert
Newport, Viscount
Nicol, James Dyce
O'Brien, Sir Patrick
Pease, Joseph Whitwell
Pell, Albert
Phillips, R. Needham
Phipps, Charles Paul
Potter, Edmund, Carlisle
Raikes, Henry Cecil
Ramsden, Sir John W.
Ridley, Matthew White
Russell, Arthur, Tavistock
Salt, Thomas
Seely, Charles, Lincoln
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir Henry J.
Smith, Abel, Herts
Stapleton, John
Strutt, Hon. Henry
Tollemache, John, Chesh. W.
Tollemache, Hn. Fred. J., Granth.
Tracy, Hn. Chas. R. D., Hanbury
Walker, Major George Gustavus
Walpole, Rt. Hn. Spencer H., Cam.
Waterhouse, Samuel
Whalley, George Hammond
Whitwell, John
Williamson, Sir Headworth
Woods, Henry

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Scourfield and Mr. Beresford Hope.

The Italian Chamber of Deputies has resolved to grant to women electoral rights in municipal elections, and has appointed a committee to report upon the best means of giving effect to that concession.—*Manchester Examiner and Times*, May 26, 1870.

The following petition, from the City Council of Manchester, was presented to the House of Commons, by Sir Thomas Bazley, on May 6th, 1870:—

"The petition of the Municipal Corporation of the City of Manchester.

"SHEWETH,—That your petitioners have observed with satisfaction the introduction into your Honourable House of a Bill entitled 'A Bill to Remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women,' and desire to recognise the importance of such a measure as affecting the political status and responsibilities of many thousands of their countrywomen.

"That as a consequence of the Municipal Corporation Amendment Act of 1869 (32 & 33 Vict. c. 55), by which women ratepayers in municipal boroughs are entitled to vote in the election of councillors, the names of 7,187 women have been added to the Burgess roll for this city.

"That a large amount of property, both in the boroughs and counties of the United Kingdom, is owned by women who are now excluded from the parliamentary register.

"Your petitioners believe that the exclusion of so large a body of ratepayers and owners of property from the parliamentary franchise is unjust, and is in opposition to the true principles of popular representation, and pray that the Bill before referred to may receive the sanction of your Honourable House.

"And your petitioners will ever pray, &c."

We have not space this month for more than the following summary of the petitions presented in favour of Women's Suffrage, since February 10th, 1870:—

	No. of Petitions signed officially or under seal.	Total No. of Petitions.	No. of Signatures.
For Extension of the Elective Franchise to Women [2, 99].....	8	180	3,200
Women's Disabilities Bill—In favour [61, 85].....	31	435	130,463
	39	615	133,663

At a conference held at Aubrey House on Saturday last, Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P., in the chair, the condition and prospects of the question as affected by the late division in the House of Commons were fully discussed. Among those who were present, and who took part in the discussion were Sir C. W. Dilke, M.P., Mr. E. B. Eastwick, M.P., Sir Wilfrid Lawson, M.P., Mr. M'Laren, M.P., and Mrs. M'Laren, Dr. Lyon Playfair, M.P., Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P., and Mrs. P. A. Taylor, Miss Becker, Mrs. Fawcett, Mr. Boyd-Kinnear, Mr. and Mrs. Pennington, Miss Wigham, and Mrs. Westlake. Mr. Jacob Bright undertook, at the request of the conference, which represented the London, Manchester, and Edinburgh Committees, to introduce a similar Bill next Session.

MEDICAL EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

As the subject of general medical education is now before Parliament, it is desired to take advantage of this opportunity to secure that such provision shall be made as shall prevent the exclusion of women in future from the medical profession.

It should be widely known that women have never been excluded from the Universities of Italy and Germany, and that lately those of Paris, Vienna, and Zurich, as well as Medical Schools in Sweden and in Russia, have been thrown open to them. In Great Britain women are unable to obtain Medical Education except as a matter of favour, no school being willing to admit them on the ordinary conditions, and it being impossible for them to obtain a Degree except through some Medical School.

A Medical Bill, brought in by Earl De Grey, on the part of the Government, is now before the House of Lords, and will again be discussed the day following the Whitsuntide recess. Petitions to the Upper House should therefore be largely signed, especially by women, and sent up in time to be presented on that day. Seventy-seven such petitions, signed by several thousands of persons, including many of the leaders of the medical profession, have been already presented to their lordships.

Forms for petitions to either House may be had on application to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Kingsley, Morningside, Edinburgh; or to Miss Wolstenholme, Moody Hall, Congleton, Cheshire.

THE PROPERTY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

THE present moment is most critical in regard to the fortunes of this measure. On the 18th of May the obnoxious Bill of Mr. Raikes was rejected by the House of Commons, the division list showing 46 for the second reading, and 208 against it. On the same day Mr. Russell Gurney's Bill was read a second time without a division. It passed through Committee on the 24th of May, and it is now hoped that it will be read a third time and passed by the Commons before Whitsuntide.

In any case, it will be sent up to the Lords very soon after Whitsuntide, and it is of the utmost importance that a strong expression of public opinion should be brought to bear on the Upper House at once. It is necessary to urge their lordships not so to modify the bill as to make it practically useless, but to pass it in its integrity, and thus to relieve, by a measure of simple justice, the sorrows and anxieties of thousands of suffering women.

Petitions to the House of Lords in support of the Married Women's Property Bill are, therefore, urgently needed. Every one who prepares a local petition, or even collects a few signatures, does actually and greatly help this cause.

We must not for one moment relax our efforts till the Bill has actually become law. Petitions should be sent up for presentation at the first sitting of the House of Lords after the Whitsuntide holidays, and a steady supply should be continued till the Bill has safely passed the third reading.

The Committee desire also to make a most urgent appeal to their friends for necessary financial help. Perhaps no political agitation has been conducted more economically. During the three years of the agitation the total receipts of the Committee, up to the present time, have been £277. 2s. 5d.

The Committee have, in their two Reports, shown how much good work can be done by a very small sum judiciously applied; but the work of the present session has been even more arduous and costly than that of the previous sessions. They wish to raise at once the sum of £150, which, they judge, will enable them to discharge all present liabilities, and to carry the campaign to a successful issue. They cannot believe that their friends will allow their work to be stopped for the want of so small a sum, when the interests involved are those, directly or indirectly, of all women.

Cheques and Post Office orders should be made payable to the hon. treasurer, Lydia E. Becker, Manchester.

Pamphlets, petitions, forms, and written headings, can be had from the Hon. Secretary, who will be happy to supply all necessary information.

ELIZABETH C. WOLSTENHOLME, Hon. Sec.,
Moody Hall, Congleton, Cheshire.

We have not space for the list of petitions presented for the Bill, but give the following summary:—

	No. of Petitions signed Officially or under Seal.	Total No. of Petitions.	No. of Signatures.
Married Women's Property Bill (Mr. Gurney's)			
—In favour	3	212	41,620
Married Women's Property Bill (Mr. Raikes')—			
Against	—	34	3,379
Married Women's Property Bill (No. 2, Mr. Raikes')—Against; and Married Women's Property Bill (No. 1, Mr. Gurney's)—In favour	—	13	2,305
Total	3	259	47,304

Not one petition has been presented in favour of Married Women's Property Bill No. 2. Some have been erroneously reported as in favour of this Bill and against Mr. Gurney's, both in the newspapers and in the Parliamentary Report on Public Petitions; but a reference to the Appendix to the Report, where the petitions are printed *in extenso*, shows them to be all against Mr. Raikes' and in favour of Mr. Russell Gurney's Bill.

On Wednesday, May 25th, Lady Amberley gave a lecture at Stroud on "The Claims of Women." There was a large and fashionable attendance, Mr. J. E. Darlington presiding. Lady Amberley was accompanied on the platform by Lord Amberley, and was very enthusiastically received. Want of space prevents our giving a more extended notice of the lecture, the reading of which occupied an hour and a half. After a few remarks from Lord Amberley, a very cordial vote of thanks was passed to her ladyship, and acknowledged by her, and the proceedings ended.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

107, Upper Brook-street, Manchester, May 27, 1870.

My dear Miss Becker,—I annex my monthly list of subscriptions received. Some of our friends may think that as our Bill has been rejected by the House of Commons, there will be no more active work done this season. Will you please let everybody you can know that we are already working for next session, and that working outside the House, which makes no show, is more costly than the actual charges to which we are put while our question is before Parliament. Never did the society require more help than just now. We have made immense progress; but must keep up the pressure, if we would reap the fruits of past labour.—Yours truly,

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED IN THE MONTH OF MAY.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Ernest Myers	0	10	0
Rev. Algernon Kingsford	0	10	6
Mrs. Kingsford	0	10	6
Ditto (collected).....	0	7	6
Mrs. W. Thomas	0	2	6
Miss Rigby.....	3	0	0
Mrs. Layton.....	1	0	0
Miss Lizzie Martin.....	0	1	0
Mr. H. J. Leppoc	1	0	0
Miss C. A. Biggs	0	2	6
Miss Addams	0	1	0
Miss Thacker	0	3	0
Mr. Hampson	0	5	0
Mrs. Hampson	0	2	6
Mrs. Robinson	0	1	0
Mrs. Tom Taylor	0	5	0
Mrs. Jacob Bright.....	20	0	0
Mrs. P. A. Taylor	3	10	0
	£31	12	0

Communications for the Editor of the Journal must be addressed to 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.