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# THE BAWLING BROTHERHOOD

—BY—  
LAURENCE HOUSMAN

IN the country of Happy Parallel the administration of law and justice had lain from time immemorial in the hands of the women. The men laboured in the field, in the fisheries, and the mines; they filled the inferior departments of the great trades and industries—those, that is to say, which required nothing for their performance except mere muscular strength and endurance; all the lowest and worst paid forms of employment were open to them, and there was not a single industry that secured to its employees less than a living wage from which the law excluded them.

The women, on the other hand, occupied—as was considered only natural—all those higher branches of industry and of the more skilled and highly paid professions which involved delicacy of manipulation, sense of proportion, grasp of detail, and an organising or administrative capacity. For as the State was but the home writ large, and as the woman's sphere was the home, it had naturally come to be the especial and exclusive function of



the women to make and to administer all laws which had as their aim the extension of the refining influence and discipline of the home life from the individual to the community. For the same reason the economics of industry remained, with very few exceptions, under the control of the women; for, as all industries existed solely for the supply or the protection of the home, it was evident that those who decided the conditions of the home must also have the directing voice in all matters contributory thereto, or necessary for its defence and preservation.

#### **Different Spheres of Activity.**

Now all this seemed so logical and obvious to the right-minded people who made up the bulk of the community, that for centuries it had gone unquestioned; and as a consequence the men and the women had occupied their respective places in the body politic without seeking to encroach upon each other's domain. The women made no attempt to crowd into the sweated industries or to take up the harder and coarser forms of labour to which the mental limitations of the men confined them, or to which their insatiable longing for hard work impelled them. The men, on their part, made no ridiculous attempts to wrest from the women that control of education, of medicine, of the fine arts, of the courts of justice and the great administrative offices of State which were theirs by right as the supreme representatives of the home. And this

acquiescence of the men in their exclusion from those highly paid forms of labour, for which they were by nature unsuited, was made more easy for them by the fact that for centuries they had been given practically no education at all, and had been taught to confine their interests to mere manual labour, or, in the case of the wealthier classes, to field sports and to fighting. The arts of war and the destruction of life were conceded to man as his speciality—his sphere was the field; and to die fighting for his country was recognised and accepted by every man worthy of the name as the crown of his manhood and the main reason for his existence as a member of the community. It was to men as motherhood was to the women, the ultimate expression of their sex-value to the State. But, of course, this pre-eminence in the arts of war carried, on the very face of it, an argument against their suitability for the arts of peace. It was impossible for one sex to do the work of the other; and if men were to remain efficient fighters, efficient sportsmen, and efficient manual labourers, they could not be allowed to mix themselves up with those fine arts and skilled industries, those intellectual but quiet and sedentary occupations, those minute and complex affairs of internal government, which, as belonging to the domestic side of the State, fell naturally under the control of the women. If they were to remain manly, men must be kept simple; for them the open-air life—their bodies showed it, their great longing for



physical exercise proved it—was the only right and proper one; if they were allowed to use their minds too much they would cease to use their hands; their physical prowess would deteriorate, their fighting instincts would gradually disappear; with the result that in any conflict with a State which had kept its men properly disciplined, the country would fall an easy prey to its enemy.

These arguments may be said to have lain instinctively in the general mind of the community, expressed only by its laws and customs; and they need never have emerged into actual statement, had not the government of that country—in an evil hour, as some thought—decided on compulsory education, the education not only of its women but of its men. And, as the result of that education the men, finding that their brains, when applied to the same task, were very similar to the women's—that they were able, at all events, to pass and sometimes to come out first in the same examinations—began to demand admission to the higher branches of learning and of skilled industry, and even to those positions of dignity and authority which had hitherto been reserved as the special perquisite of the women. In certain departments the demand could not be resisted; for, by an oversight in the constitution, unmarried men were allowed to hold property; and there was, therefore, nothing to prevent them converting that property to their own devices and starting in business upon their own account. Some, for instance, built

schools for the higher education of boys, some started factories in which men were given equal wages with women, some set up places of business independent of women altogether, and many of these pioneers of the "male movement," as it was called, were most incomprehensibly successful. There were, however, other quarters in which a firm stand was made against them. They were kept out of the colleges and out of the professions, both the legal and medical; and even when, as a concession, in course of time and after a hard struggle, they were admitted to some of the examinations, they were still refused the scholarships and the degrees, and were entirely debarred from professional appointments.

Thus matters stood—as far as they could be made to stand while subject to considerable propulsion from the rear—when a fresh and hitherto almost unheard-of demand was raised—namely, that to men also should be given the parliamentary vote on the same terms as it was or should be hereafter granted to women.

But no sooner had that demand been uttered than there arose throughout the country a most terrible uproar. The men who had dared to make it became known as "The Bawling Brotherhood"—"effeminate," "unmanly," "betrayers of their sex," were some of the epithets which were hurled against them. When they endeavoured to speak in public, anti-suffragists went out and pelted them with rotten eggs, accompanied by the apposite



advice to "go home and make an omelette"—a piece of symbolism intended to suggest what sort of omelettes men would make if they were ever allowed to take a hand in the domestic and economic affairs of the community. And when men-suffragists endeavoured to show how they, too, had to obey the laws affecting the home, and that those laws must in consequence affect them, they were constantly met with the stereotyped cry of "Be off and clean your rifles!" or "Get along and make bull's-eyes!" and this, whatever their age or occupation might happen to be.

But when, in spite of this sort of argument, the men-suffragists persisted in their demand, and began gradually to gain supporters, a great number of men and women, many of them highly influential people, banded themselves together to resist it: and all these people, especially those who were themselves in comfortable circumstances, or who held Government appointments, and positions from which men were at present excluded either by law or by custom—the lawyers, the doctors, the Royal Academicians, and such like—all these declared that such a demand was ridiculous, unmanly, and a danger to the State. For it was argued that if men were allowed an equal share in the government, they might before long force through some law which the majority of women would not approve of; and rather than allow such laws to be promulgated women might refuse to become mothers, and where would the State be then? Then

again, if men were allowed to administer justice, they would bring to that administration all those ferocious and bloodthirsty instincts which at present found a natural outlet in their addiction to sport and their love of fighting. If allowed to serve on a jury, the same instincts would prevail; while their dislike of sedentary occupation, and their natural hankering for an open-air life would prevent their devoting to each case that time and patience which women naturally gave to it. The law, in consequence, would be administered with undue severity and miscarriages of justice would be frequent. But the main reason given by the opponents for men not being granted the vote was that they could not be mothers of children; and as they could not risk their lives in giving citizens to the State, they must necessarily be regarded and treated as "the irresponsible sex."

### **The Cry of the Men.**

To that objection the suffragists made what their opponents regarded as a very trivial and inconclusive answer: "It is true," they said, "that we cannot be the mothers of children, but we are the fathers of them; and though we do not risk our lives in bringing them into the world, we contribute our share to the maintenance of the home; for though our wives have a legal right to our wages, and are only bound to give us sufficient maintenance to keep us from being chargeable to the rates, still if we did not work there would often



be no wages at all, and what, then, would become of the home? And, furthermore, we have an actual life-and-death interest in the welfare of the State; for though we cannot die in producing citizens, we do risk our lives in defending the home from hostile invasion. We pay rates and taxes just as the women do; we have brains—in many things other than domestic as good as theirs; and we have our own interests and points of view, which are not properly represented in a State which is ruled only by women.”

The answer to that was: “The men are already represented by the women; for as, by a provision of Nature, they are born and reared of women, so at no time of their lives can that divinely ordained relationship ever be said to cease—a point sufficiently proved by the fact that directly they are ill the men come to the women to be nursed, and are daily dependent upon them for the making of their beds, the cooking of their food, and the mending of their clothes. As for the rest, we quite recognise that men, following their natural instincts, risk their lives in war: that is their nature—they can’t help it. If war were not provided as an outlet to their energies, they would fall to fighting among themselves, and illegitimate bloodshed would ensue. To die for his country is a man’s highest and noblest function; but that very fact disqualifies him from taking part in the peaceful concerns of the home and the administration of the State; for his military duties take him, often for months at a time, right

away from the industrial life of the community; frequently he has to go into savage countries where his character is inevitably affected by the manners and customs of those whom he is sent to conquer; also fighting itself, though noble and necessary, has in certain directions a deteriorating effect upon the mind and character; for when a man’s blood is up he cannot be expected to have that cool and domesticated outlook which is necessary for deciding upon matters which concern the internal welfare of the State.”

“But,” answered the men, “we do not all of us fight, for some are too old and some are prevented by infirmity, and even for those who are physically fit there is not enough fighting to go round, since even your biggest wars only require the services of about one man in twenty. Yet the rest of us who are left at home do not turn to bloodshed and civil warfare, but remain quiet and law-abiding citizens. So, even if you feel it necessary to withhold the vote from the army while it is on active service, just as women are debarred by nature while actually performing the supreme function of maternity—still, there is no reason why you should not extend it to those who are forced to remain non-fighters.”

“That,” replied their opponents, “would never do at all; for as fighting is man’s highest function in the State, it would be clearly unjust to the fighters to grant to the non-fighters a mark of citizenship which was withheld from them. Fighting is man’s



sphere; and as it is his misfortune if he has to be out of it, it must not be converted into a privilege."

But the most fundamental objection upon that side of the question was the "physical force" argument. Men, it was pointed out, were physically stronger than women; they were by nature fighting animals, and if once admitted to legislative power they would inevitably attempt to override justice by physical violence, and the result would be "red ruin and the breaking up of laws"; for if physical force were allowed to dictate its terms, trust and confidence in the justice of the laws would disappear, and men would tend more and more only to do that which was right in their own eyes. Men suffragists answered that the superior physical power of men had always existed, but had not prevented just laws from being passed and carried into practice, and why should it do so any more when men had an equal share in the responsibility for their enactment?

"Because," said the other side, "they would then discover for the first time what power they possessed; with the result that, following their natural instincts, they would before long be declaring that physical force was the ultimate basis of government; and the fighting side of the human race being in the ascendant, highly civilised States would in consequence be driven into spending from one-half to three-quarters of their public revenue on naval and military armaments: so that in the end the only limit to the competition of

state against state would be manhood conscription and the entire nation under arms."

"That," replied the suffragists, "might possibly happen in states ruled by men alone; but that is not what we are proposing. What we do propose is that those who do all the fighting and so much of the labour, which you consider necessary for the protection and welfare of the State, should have an equal voice in deciding those political questions which lead either to peace or war."

"But," said the anti-suffragists, "that would be the most dangerous thing of all; to allow the fighting sex a voice in politics would entirely destroy the predominating influence of the home; for if the army happened, at any time, to be tired of fighting it might vote for a peace that would be ruinous to the interest of the nation; or, if, on the other hand, it were spoiling for a fight, it would endeavour to force the State into conflicts for which there was no justification whatever; and as a result the interests and welfare of the home, of morality and of religion would no longer form as at present the pivot of the national policy."

"As for that," answered the suffragists, "though we have not votes, we have always had the power, if we did not like fighting, to turn tail and run away; and you have yourselves admitted that if we wanted to fight we could do it among ourselves just for the joke of it; but neither of these things have happened except on rare occasions and among a disreputable minority. Do you think that the vote is going to alter human nature?"



That is exactly what the anti-suffragists did think, and they proclaimed it with no uncertain voice. They declared that if men once got the vote they would never rest till they had entirely supplanted the women; they would then seize on all the quiet and indoor occupations—the shop-keeping, the higher branches of domestic service, the nursing in hospitals, the weaving, tailoring, dressmaking, the baking, the cooking, the confectionery, the directorships, the civil service, the clerkships, and all those posts of emolument and ease which required for their proper fulfilment the dignity and prestige of woman. On the other hand, they would leave field-labour, dairy-work, and country life in general either to the women or to the lowest and most unintelligent of their own sex, with the result that agricultural industry and prosperity would diminish, and the country would be forced to look for its most necessary food supplies from abroad, entailing danger to the State in time of war which even the meanest mind could appreciate. Moreover, with all the indoor and sedentary careers thrown open to them, men would become soft and effeminate; they would cease to care for sport and would lose that manly bloom and vigour from open-air life which gave them their chief attraction for women. They would grow uncombative and peaceable, and with the loss of their military efficiency would deteriorate into such bad marksmanship that the amount of ammunition expended in war, instead of being as now commensurate to the number of the enemy killed or

wounded, would be so vast as to arouse the derision of surrounding nations, and result in wastage so enormous as to constitute a staggering burden for the community.

Many people not unfavourable to male suffrage claims felt that some of these evils might indeed come about if men obtained the entire control of the State, and they were anxious, therefore, to extend the franchise in a form which did not give to the men a superiority or even an equality of numbers. But the objection to that was that once started there would be no stopping them, and that before long, from wanting the vote they would go on to wanting to become Members of Parliament. That, it was agreed, was unthinkable. For men, who were by habit hard swearers and hard drinkers, smokers, spitters, and makers of unclean jokes, to be admitted to the legislature, reeking of the pothouse and the smoking-saloon, was felt to be inconsistent with the dignity of the Mother of Parliaments; how could a sex addicted to such habits be given a voice in the councils of the nation? Moreover, men did not care about politics, and would, therefore, be ready to sell their votes, whether as electors or as Members of Parliament, for a pot of beer. Suffragists said: "Any man who gets into Parliament must get there by election; and is it reasonable to suppose that candidates who indulge to excess in such proclivities, or who have no interest in politics, will stand any chance of election when women themselves form half of the electorate?" But opponents said:



“Men in standing for Parliament will rely on their sex-charm, and, when they get there, upon their physical strength. They will, in consequence, ignore the authority of the Speaker; when they get hot in argument they will fall to fisticuffs, and Parliament, instead of being a deliberative assembly, will become a bear-garden.” Others said: “Fancy a man in a pair of trousers, a cut-away coat, and mutton-chop whiskers sitting upon the Woolsack!” And having fancied it to themselves, they laughed consumedly, and considered that they had provided for their own side an absolutely knock-down argument.

#### **A Moderate Demand.**

But while the more extreme claims of “the Bawling Brotherhood” were thus providing a whetstone for the wit and satire of their opponents, there were others in the male movement who made milder and more moderate demands. Some, indeed, did not want a vote at all in legislative matters, if in the professions and the industries they might be allowed to stand on the same footing as the women. But when they came to particulars, they were met by just as much opposition and hostility as their more extreme brethren. Some of them wanted to have men doctors, so that men might, if they wished, have the chance of being attended by their own sex. There were some, it was contended, who shrank from submitting themselves to medical treatment from instincts of modesty, and, in

consequence, many physical evils, which might be cured if taken in time, went unremedied with much consequent harm to the health of the community. The answer to these was that such a pandering to morbid tastes was undesirable; from their infancy men had been accustomed to be in the hands of women to be bathed, dressed, and attended to; women were the natural nurses of the race, and were, therefore, its natural doctors as well. If men were admitted to the medical profession their sporting and bloodthirsty instincts would get the better of them: vivisection and desperate surgical operations would be indulged in to a dangerous extent, experiment for experiment's sake would become the rule, and men would think far more of making a great reputation by the sensational daring of their operations than of securing the alleviation of suffering by safer and more humdrum methods.

As for those who claimed for men a share in the higher branches of education, they were frankly told that it could do them no possible good. Nature had shown clearly, by giving them big muscles, that they were meant to be hewers of wood and drawers of water; and was it likely that, by any amount of training, they could develop that fineness and subtlety of intellect which was the woman's speciality? “The Bawling Brotherhood” answered: “We can but try. How can we discover our limits or our qualifications until you give us the same advantages in education, in



administration, and in authority which have belonged to women in this country from time immemorial?"

Thus, in these and other points which have not been touched on, the controversy stood; and gradually, in the various branches of the professions and industries—in spite of the disabling enactments of the Legislature—the men were winning their way to economic independence. But when it came to the granting of the Parliamentary vote the ruling powers were as adamant. They had, they said, so many more important things to attend to, about which they were in more general agreement, and so year after year, and decade after decade, the question when brought before Parliament was defeated with ridicule or shelved with fair and plausible arguments; and meanwhile the "Men's Movement went on."

And at last some of the more advanced and determined spirits among them said: "What is the use of listening to all this soothing flattery which our rulers are constantly pouring into our ears—this talk about our manliness and our chivalry and the admiration that women feel for us? They have given to these a definition of their own which only serves to bind us to their will; let us show that we feel we have just as much right as they to say what is manly and what is chivalrous; you cannot have true manliness without independence, and there is no chivalry worth having where there is not freedom."

So the "Bawling Brotherhood" set to work and began to make things very uncomfortable for the ruling powers; for they began to interrupt at public meetings and to hold meetings of their own, and even to go where they were told not to go—and, as a consequence of that, to go where they were made to go—namely, to prison. And all this they did to show that they had just as much right as women to the vote, and how very real and deep was their need for it. And all the anti-suffragists—especially the sportsmen, and the military men, and those with comfortable incomes and comfortable wives who gave them everything they asked for—lifted up their hands in horror against them and cried, "Oh, you unmanly creatures! How you make us blush for our sex!"

#### **How Wisdom Came in a Ship.**

Now what, at that particular moment, would have been the result of the struggle thus begun, we have no means of knowing, for just then a very extraordinary thing happened which gave quite a new and unexpected turn to events. For there came to that country, driven by a great storm, a ship which had on board four or five hundred women with marks upon their bodies of bruises and of chains. They were all clothed in purple, or white, or green; and, in spite of their battered condition, they were all of exceedingly cheerful countenance and of a strangely uplifted spirit.

As the ship came to land, the five hundred



women stood up in the rigging and cried with one voice: "Votes for Women!" Everybody who heard them laughed: the proposition in that country was so self-evident; and it seemed a strange thing for a ship's crew which had just escaped from the perils of the deep to cry in the moment of their safe deliverance something that everybody knew as well as their A B C. So when, a few moments later, the five hundred women stepped to land, everybody was very eager to hear who such amusing people might be, and where they had come from. But before long, as they listened to the story of these new arrivals, their curiosity and amusement were changed to wonder and indignation. For the travellers told how in the land they had come from women were without the vote and were, in consequence, subject to many indignities and to much injustice, permitted both by law and custom. And because they had fought for their rights of citizenship they had been subjected to imprisonment and ridicule, and when that proved of no avail, then a new law was passed under which they were sentenced to exile and transportation, so that the Government of that country might no longer be troubled by them or have to listen to arguments which it could not answer. And so five hundred leaders of the movement had been taken, and without trial by jury—for in the new law it had been carefully provided that the trial was to be before magistrates only—had been sentenced to banishment and immediate transportation.

Now when the people of Happy Parallel heard how these things happened in a country where men had the vote, they welcomed the newcomers as a godsend to the cause for which they themselves were contending; for here, they cried triumphantly, you have an example of what men do with the vote when they get it. We have only to bring these women to speak at our meetings and to show their wounds and the marks of their imprisonment, and "the Bawling Brotherhood" will be routed and put to shame and silence for ever.

When the newcomers heard that, they inquired: "Who are the 'Bawling Brotherhood'?" They sound as if they were very important people."

But the people of Happy Parallel answered confidently: "Indeed, they are of no importance whatever; they are only a ridiculous set of unmanly and effeminate creatures who, to the disgrace of their sex, think that man ought to have the vote. Some of them are quite unteachable, but to the few who have any sense left in their heads you will be able to tell a story that will convince them for ever of their folly."

But no sooner had the travellers heard that answer than they cried, to the amazement of all the people: "But 'the Bawling Brotherhood' are right, and you are wrong; and no one can show you why better than we, for we in our own country have been called the 'Shrieking Sisterhood,' and you in this country have been doing just as the men in our country have been doing, and are no



wiser and no juster than they. We knew that men, if they kept power all to themselves, could be stupid; but we never imagined that women could be as stupid as they could be. So when we go back in triumph to our own country—as we mean to do soon—we shall be all the better able to forgive them for what they have done to us; for we see now that under like circumstances women might do very much the same things; and men have very much the same difficulties to get over. And now we know that when the storm carried us to your shores, it was that we might help ‘the Bawling Brotherhood’ to win from you their right to equal citizenship. That we are now prepared to do; and when we have done so, then they and you shall come along and help us to win the same rights which have been denied to us in our own country.”

So the “Shrieking Sisterhood” went to the help of the “Bawling Brotherhood,” and wherever they went they had only to tell their story for the people of Happy Parallel to realise at once that it was indeed only their own case reversed and made plain; and the result was what anyone who has taken the trouble to follow the argument of my story will be able to guess. For which reason there is no occasion for me to write it.

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## MY FAITH IN WOMAN SUFFRAGE

By JOHN MASEFIELD

*A Speech delivered in the Queen's Hall, Feb. 14th, 1910.*

You have done me the honour to ask me to confess my faith in the cause of Woman's Suffrage.

Before I begin I must confess the faith by which I live.

I am a writer, which is, as you all know, as much as to say an extremely bad citizen. It is an unhappy thing that artists should have come to think that they have a right to be bad citizens. It is one of the stupidities which have helped to make the world a bad place for women. An artist's first duty is to be a worthy lantern for the flame within him. Art can wait. Art is a mighty long thing.



But the world cannot wait. We cannot wait. We have to better the world now. Tomorrow we shall be gone. And if the people who care intensely for ideas and things of beauty take no care to apply them to life, then life must suffer. The management of life will be handed over to people without that fineness—to those practical, sober-headed men of affairs who have made life hideous throughout the ages. That is what has happened in England here. That is why women, who have always cared for a fineness of life, are trying now to do what the poets and the artists should have done for them had they been worthy of the flame which burned in them.

I spend my time in creating fictitious characters to express certain moral ideas. I am bound by sacred unwritten traditions to take care that the little mirror which I hold up to life be not distorted by any narrowness or prejudice or party feeling. Writers have to render to God an account of the soul of the world.

As Ibsen said: "To write is to hang the Day of Judgment over you."

You have never all been together before. You will never be all together again. For this little moment of eternity I am responsible for your states of mind.

Let me, then, speak to you as one who can

have nothing to do with party, but who cares intensely for the world's soul, and for what that soul can do to perfect life.

### **The Verdict of Posterity.**

Let me say at the beginning that I am very proud and glad to be asked to speak to you. I stand here for my sex to tell you that when I lie awake, thinking of the future, thinking of the world which will be

"When all the breathers of this world are dead,"

I blush for what our grandchildren will say of the men of my generation. I once knew what is called a man of the world, who had a number of old journals written by an ancestor a hundred and fifty years ago. This ancestor had travelled all over Europe during the drums and trappings of the Seven Years' War. He had seen much, and noted much which we here could only see and know through him. And these records of what life was to him descended to that practical man of affairs of whom I spoke. Some weeks later I asked him if he had read them, thinking that I might get them published. He answered that he had read them, and "they were only a lot of old-fashioned stuff about travelling in coaches. There was a lot of talk in them about wigs and packet-boats and Frederick of Prussia. And," my friend



concluded, "it seems so silly now." So he had burnt the lot of them—lock, stock, and barrel. And that little window into the past, that little record of a life, was gone. It was as though all that labour had existed so that I might speak of its futility to-day. And, looking ahead to a saner, more spiritual England, to our grandsons, to the men whose souls are being made by our strivings here, by your striving far more surely than by mine, I see such men taking up the journals of this generation and reading such entries as the following:—

JUNE 1.—On this day a Suffragette lying ill in bed in prison was pumped on for refusing food. Such actions redound to the credit of humanity. They link us to the stars.

Or perhaps this:—

JUNE 2.—On this day a manly Briton spat at some unsexed women who were asking for the vote.

Or perhaps this:—

JUNE 3.—On this day twenty ladies were man-handled and dragged to prison for trying to present a petition. And serve them right, for woman's place is the home.

Or perhaps this:—

JUNE 4.—On this day our great wise Parliament, the envy of the civilised world, consisting, as it does, of men who are born great and of men who have greatness thrust upon them, decided to vote money for a war. They did this without reference to the women who had made the

bodies which that war blew to pieces. For our Parliament is still, we are proud to say, like the Senate of old Rome, a house of men, free, luckily, from any puling womanly sentiment about mercy and justice and common sense.

Or perhaps this last extract:—

JUNE 5.—On this day Rhoda Fleming was condemned to death at the Old Bailey for the murder of her illegitimate child. On this same day Tom Jones, the father of that child, was married at St. Margaret's, Westminster, the service being fully choral. At the breakfast after the ceremony, the bridegroom, in a voice broken with emotion and champagne, was understood to say that the love of a pure woman is an elevating factor in human life.

Reading such extracts as those, I think that our grandsons and granddaughters will burn the journals and say, not as my friend said, "It seems so silly now," but "It seems despicable. It seems incredible. Were they sane in those days? Were they human beings? Were they not crazy and blinded? What was it in them? They cried out and raged and stormed upon those who burned Joan of Arc. They honoured those Spartans who combed their hair for death before going up into the Pass. They put up statues to the martyrs who drew the sword, and told the truth, and held up shaking hands in the fire. Yet when they had Joan of Arc among them they lacked the living eyes to see her. They



thrust her into prison with the rest as an unsexed, shrieking sister. When Thermopylæ was nobly played out again before them, they took the side of the Persians and the big battalions. They sent their troops against the Spartans with a great deal of brag about the bull-dog breed. And when the martyrs were among them—in the dock, in the gaol-yard, in the gaol hospital, speaking in the parks among horseplay, or selling papers in the street amid chaff, the men of that generation took no heed. They were so dead to the old spirit of England that a struggle for liberty, a struggle for justice, a struggle to make whiter the spotted old rags in which life walks among us was nothing to those men but an opportunity for insult.”

#### **An Oriental Point of View.**

There is another thing: Women have suffered a good deal, and still suffer, from the fact that our religion, being mainly Oriental, has imposed on men much of the Oriental point of view about women. We have the view that women should be subject; that they should keep silent; that they should not have lives of their own, but exist for certain episodes in man's life. Men have overlaid these views with a veneer of manners, but that they hold them in their hearts may be

known from their attitude when they see them questioned. Consciously or unconsciously, on those occasions men refer not to common sense, not to modern ideas, or natural analogy, but to the books and records of an Oriental race, for which they have no liking and about which they have no exact critical knowledge. When English teachers have settled whether Greek and cricket are to be compulsory I trust that they may take steps to exclude that old harem point of view from the liberal education of young men. But probably by the time that happens women, who have the most to suffer from deficiencies in male education, will have taken over from men the ordering of our youth's equipment for life.

And that will be a fine thing, for boys and young men are brought up as though they would always be boys, as though the world consisted of a playing field and a tuck-shop, from which, when very weary, or very bilious, they may go home to be contemptuous of their sisters.

They are taught how to deal with certain kinds of men, and how to make empty verses in dead tongues. And they learn (by the way) a great deal of grossness about some of the sacred things of life. They learn to have a great and vulgar curiosity about women.



It is an extraordinary thing to me that they are not taught to have a great reverence.

Now, the direct result of stupidity is unpleasantness of some kind to the stupid person. The indirect result is a putting back of Time's clock. I will try to examine the results of this particular stupidity as I see them in the world about us.

Woman has never been, and is not now, publicly accepted as man's equal. In ancient Germany she was considered man's superior. In modern Britain, where the beastly figure of John Bull has long supplanted the St. George who rescued women, she is considered as an inferior mind, as a bodily possession, as a nurse in sickness, or as a domestic drudge. Never, or almost never, as a natural ally in the great war with Nature, which the female began when she first gave her body to feed her young.

Woman is partly responsible for man's low opinion of her. She has played up (though, I dare say, with her tongue in her cheek) to his assumption of superiority; she has made herself supremely attractive as a possession, and her genius for self-sacrifice has made her an unselfish nurse and an excellent orderer of homes.

Many think that those things make up the complete duty of woman. Self-effacement is

not the complete duty of any human being. The complete duty of a human being is to perfect the world. And woman's self-effacement has helped to emphasise and to widen that gulf between the sexes, which makes the two halves of the human race utter mysteries, utter strangers, often bitter enemies, to each other, instead of understanding friends and comrades, fellow pilgrims under the stars. I will not abuse man. I come neither to bury Cæsar nor to praise him. Men and women are shut up together for a few years in a world which gives nothing for the asking. And man says that woman shall serve him, not serve the world, nor try to improve the world.

It is the more tragical, because man, who pronounces thus light-heartedly, is not concerned with life at all. Only with the affairs of life. Woman, on the other hand, is occupied with life until she dies; largely with the creation of life; still more largely with the conduct of life. As far as the world's conduct has any tone at all, she is responsible for it.

If you come to look closely at them you will see that most of the tragedies of life are due to stupidity. The stupidity may be merely dulness of perception or wilfulness of ignorance, or lowness of character; but it is the something not quite illuminated, not quite alive, not quite genuine in us, which wrecks



the world. Not fate. Not destiny. Merely a want of understanding in ourselves and others.

Life is a great play, and the world a marvellous theatre. There are many wonderful things in both. But the women here who have fought this divine heart-breaking battle against prejudice will not need to be told that the rarest thing is understanding, imagination, imaginative sympathy.

We know that the world is wide, but we also know that it is a little dust under our feet, ready to grow us fruit or to build us palaces as our will directs. We know that life is short. But we also know that the human mind can make it perfect. And it is one of the strangest and most tragical things in human destiny that man, whose joy has built the ship and the engine, should deny to woman, whose suffering has built the human body and the human soul, the justice of an equal share in the task of perfecting our common heritage. Life needs perfecting.

### **Magna est Veritas.**

I have only to go out from this room to enter the richest street in the richest town in the richest country of the world. And I shall see Englishmen starving there, going in stinking rags, going shoeless to their poison-

ous hovels in the slums. I shall see English people denied the possibility of everything which makes life rapturous to myself. I shall see English women forced, by man's lust, or man's cruelty, to a life which disgraces man even as an animal. I shall see little children (born of foul parents) growing up from the gutter to be wild beasts and plague spots. You will perfect all that. Men and women do not differ in anything so much as in their standards of life. When you have the vote I think that the great result will be seen, not in international, nor in party politics, but in a raising of the national life, a lifting of the stupid donkey of humanity out of the mud, so that he may see the stars and grope towards a juicier thistle.

You will have the vote. Truth is great and will prevail.

“The utter truth will slay the utter lie.”

In this rich, peaceful land, where the men have forgotten, you have remembered that it is not by peace and wealth that the life of a great nation is maintained, but by that quality of virtue which casts aside such things as the comfortable, clogging things which blind us to reality. You have seen that a life is judged by what its virtue makes it dare. You have seen that a generation which does not re-make its



own soul after a finer image is a dying generation. You have flung into the world a blazing torch of beauty. You have proclaimed for the first time that the old rule of sex is dead. And that the new rule of human beings, of comrades, may begin, to make this world liker a star and life something liker what God breathed into the clay.

“As I see through a mist,  
One with inexpressible completeness, sanity,  
beauty . . . the Female I see.”

WALT WHITMAN.



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## The Majestic Unity of Woman

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THE recent National mourning unloosened and brought into prominence certain ideas which had lain by neglected—ideas upon the close ties of sisterhood and brotherhood which knit a people into a nation, which in reality give the nationality and form the nation. In tube, train or tram one felt the vibrations of nationality, awakened into life by the chord of sympathy evinced by the universal prevalence of the colour black which we choose as our emblem of grieving. One's thoughts leaped forth to the majestic circle of our empire, to the carrying of the badge of black, in countries wide and distant, and to us women it gave a thrill of magnitude, of wide-spreading power, of wonderful world-embracing power. The Kingdom of King Edward loomed large, etched with its border of black, as they mourned his loss.

We (women) are too accustomed to think as individuals, we reach out to the family, to a certain class, a university group it may be—a group of philanthropists, a band of teachers, a knot of nurses, etc., etc.—we but think of a part of the nation, rarely of the whole. Only in times such as that of this Spring do we feel what it is to be part of a mighty nation; yet once the feeling has gripped us we can never again quite close ourselves down to the partial, to the incomplete. It is good even for a short space of time to feel our oneness with the nation, to have some glimmering, although but faint, as to what it means. "The living nation around and I a part of its liv-



ingness." Take, for a few minutes, such a thought feel it—feel the life blood of the mighty nation coursing through one's veins—and one catches a glimpse, gets a perception of greater worth, of greater influence. One gasps out "Until to-day I have not known what it means to be a daughter of the Empire, to be a unit in this big Unity." This exclamation of the word Unity made it stand out bold and strong—Unity, the foundation stone of a nation; nay, more, the very walls and coping stone of any group of peoples—Unity, that which woman begins to value, that which she now feels a power, Unity, that which is hers as a divine right, for woman is an integral part of her nation, and the strengthening or the weakening of the nation is hers.

No nation can be truly great which is not at *one with its women*, which is not at one with its women in law, in justice, and in freedom. Once start a thought rolling, as one might a stone down a hill, see how it gains momentum as it goes, how it takes on velocity and force. *Unity*. What does Unity mean to woman? It means that our earth has a great, strong, ever-increasing *force* which girdles our earth. It is wide as is our globe, it is necessary to human life as is the sunshine—it is everywhere present, it is the life essence of all the nations—this Unity of Womanhood. As is this woman unity so is human life in this, or in any age. It is the pulse of the life of man upon the earth. If it beats feebly, so sure is it that further sustenance is needed; if it beats fitfully so sure is it that something is amiss; if it beats at fever pace so sure is it that there is disease which will play havoc with the race if it be not checked. Man would do well sometimes, nay, systematically and

regularly, to feel the pulse of its womenkind that *he may know of his own health or malady*.

How diverse soever the outward showing of the Unity of Woman all over the world, but one *heart* beats for it all, but one blood (the rosy blood of love) circulates through it. It may be the refined mother in our homes, the cultured woman of our university, the strenuous teacher, the lowly domestic help, the factory hand, the brilliant, world-commanding woman of America, the dancing beauty of the music-hall, the courageous woman of Finland, the versatile Russian, the fur-covered Esquimau, the Indian with her jewelled limbs—as is each one so is the whole. You cannot add worth, beauty, genius, learning, or simple, wonderful mother-love to one, but the whole is enriched thereby. Bless one, the whole are blest; curse one, the curse is world-wide; impoverish one, ill-treat one, imprison one, starve one (physically, mentally, or in its finer spiritual parts), limit one, and all suffer, all are the poorer, weaker, or more wretched. (Remember this, ye women who loll in ease in motor cars and say "We are happy, we need no votes, we want nothing further from men than we have to-day"! Gradually are we (women) thinking wider than our want—we seek to think nationally, patriotically—we *must*, and shall ere long, think cosmically.

What knits a nation with bonds of sympathy? Is it not its thoughts? As a nation thinks, so is it in reality. Is it man who alone thinks? He may be of opinion that he alone thinks logically, that his thoughts alone are of value, yet even he cannot deny that a woman has *a* capacity to think, even if it be that she thinks he is lord and master—the great one of the earth—and she a poor creature of his pleasure. He resents *that*



not, but should she dare to think that she has equal rights with him, rights of education, rights of justice, rights of opportunity, then is he wrath and petulantly cries "A woman has no logical powers, she cannot think consistently."

We must again remember that the nation is as it thinks—as its men think, as its women think. The nation's thoughts are its assets, be they of its men or of its women. Let its women be vain, idle or pleasure-seeking, they will form a canker spot in man's side—a cancerous growth which will cause him inevitable and cumulative suffering.

There are teachers of the present day who have great knowledge of the working of the mind and of the spirit who aver that the brain of woman is not as yet so developed as that of man, that she cannot do the intellectual feats of which he is capable, but that the *soul* of woman is finer, is much more highly developed than that of man, and that it is possible for woman to attain far greater heights of *spiritual* power than man. Be this as it may, yet is it a veritable truth which no man dare gainsay, the spirit which worketh in both the male and the female is the same. There are degrees of difference in the whole range of creation, but the *essence* of the mind, of the intellect, is the same in the whole human race.

The world of spirit of thought makes no differentiation of sex. Woman has the same divine possibilities as man, but as a plant she needs space, the necessary environment of the sunshine of opportunity, of the nutriment of wise teaching to cause or make possible to her the best of her growth. A stone wall here to stop the roots from further expansion, a covered-in roof there

to keep off light and air—such do we give our women, and then we rile at them because the product is not perfect.

If we make a retrospect of the woman of England, say, since the early Victorian age, we shall see that she has grown greatly, that her eyes have become capable of seeing a far wider sweep of the horizon. Formerly she was an irresponsible, easily satisfied young creature, with simple pleasures, simple pursuits and few strivings after much else. Then began to stir in her the seeds of discontent. Was life ever to be a round of surface gratifications? There was the dawning of the feeling of soul—a dim consciousness of the "I" within. Ideals grew apace within her; she sought for that which would make for culture, for refinement—her reading was less restricted. Then she began to widen her sympathies—no longer the pity or commiseration could be confined to those in personal contract, varied schemes of philanthropy were attempted and woman learnt much in the carrying on of them. Then came the awakened intellect, the consciousness of the brain-power awaiting to be used, and all the glorious struggles and achievements for education other than the narrow and often pernicious training of a former day. To-day the prospects are even more glorious, and glorious also the wide-extended desire to take advantage of all the educational facilities opened up to women. Gradually her physique improved. What would our foremothers have thought (they prided themselves upon their delicacy and to be delicate was thought to be an honoured passport to refinement) of the women who to-day so deftly manage their own yachts, who skilfully drive their own motors!



Then think of the great awakening of the soul of woman in the present day. How many are setting themselves apart for the studies of the deeper mysteries, not that they may have the satisfaction of the knowledge they gain for their own contentment, but that they may wisely teach or wisely advise those taking active part in life's advance.

To-day is woman feeling that the world needs her—that she is the individual unit of strength, the great Queen to command, the compassionate redeemer of the down-trodden and the weak. To-day does woman recognise that care of herself as an individual is an absolute *duty*. She knows that she forms a cell in the composite body of mankind and that only as each cell is healthy and active can mankind pulse with radiant life. It is dawning upon woman that she is divine, that her time is divine, that she has national duties which await her, which can be done by no one except herself. She feels that she must obtain a strong, capable personality and having attained to that then is it sublime to lose that personality in efforts for the advancement of the whole. That the strength of each individual adds to the cumulative strength of all women. That individual strength, individual compassion, individual love must, to be truly vital, encompass the whole of woman kind, the whole of mankind. It has, by the spirit, been borne in upon her that no weak, unformed soul can truly enter the Kingdom of God.

The resonant chords of a woman's soul are formed by the perfect blending of her nature. Let her make her ideals gigantically majestic, and then act up to them, each day working at some part of the statue till the whole be perfect.

No matter what her present position or environment there is in every position a possibility, a capacity for improvement. No repinings will aid—of no use to say “had I opportunity I would do great things”—just do the little things and it is a law of the universe which no one can break, faithful work in small things leads to greater work on a higher plane. If one must do house-work let it be nobly done. The awakened woman soul can make the humblest home a home of blessing. Let her try! What duty more ennobling, more wonderful, than that of making a home where peace, purity, and love can dwell and where Christ would eternally dwell, not stay only in the passing. Gradually will thousands of highly intellectual, highly evolved women so cherish their homes that they will wean away many “factory hands” from that so-thought easier money-making occupation to the more natural life of domestic service, and the girls themselves will bless them in after years, and the men will say “Thank God for our capable wives,” and the babes will utter their words of thanks in their healthy, beautiful bodies and their joyous spirits in their homes of love and comfort.

When one thinks of our kingdom, the work which woman has to accomplish seems colossal. There is so much to do. But is not the first step to the doing, the consciousness that the work is waiting, that it is in very fact a necessity of our people?

Everywhere is woman beginning to see, to have the *power* to see the wrongs which need righting, the ills which need reform, and her earnestness in looking and her zealousness in active duty are prophetic of what woman will be



in the years to come. Many are calling "how can I help; what can I do?"

Before giving a few suggestions as how help may be given by those in remote distances, or by those with few opportunities of coming in contact with the active workers, or even by those on beds of sickness who repine the loss of their strength which they had hoped to have dedicated to the service of woman; before giving suggestions which would doubtless meet the requirements of all, I wish to draw your thoughts toward the hidden in nature, to the hidden in man (woman, of course, included). The manifest is much, far too much valued to the serious neglect of weighty consideration of the hidden.

That which we see not is the vital, the intrinsically important.

Think for a minute that you are seated in a spacious garden, at your feet "the handkerchief of the Lord," as Walt Whitman calls the grass, before you ramble the roses, hymning out their joy in their pure scent and lovely colouring; beside you thousand fuschia bells, tinkling their delight as the wasps go out and in among them. A little beyond are stately firs, each with its myriad tufts of tender green, the gorse and the bracken make merry the hills, and yonder, across the wide fields with majestic sweep of amazing grace, the sea gulls fly, their plumes glistening and quivering in the sunshine. Whence comes all this beauty? The gardener's care, you say! But what is the secret of the gardener's power? Is there not within him (or her) a *divine something* which is the power? What if it were all surface work? Where, then, your roses, or your fuschia hedge? Your fir trees would then be logs to be propped into place, not living forces, eating

and drinking from the hidden, supporting themselves by clasping with firm hands the hidden. The wonders which you see are but a hundredth part of the mysteries which are hidden at your feet, and all are acted on by *life* (the mystery of mysteries) and all are influenced and guided by innumerable lives which are around us, though we see them not. The ancients spoke of the gods, the country-folk of fairies, but we, to-day, so much do we neglect these unseen workers, have no name for them, and are dubbed fanciful or foolish if we speak of spirits working in or around us. "Call them laws," they say, "*laws* will cover all." But will they? Who made these laws? Who gave the power to use these laws?

Let us call the hidden forces what we will, but admit their power we must, whether it be on earth, in air or sea or in man. These hidden forces have their groups, their methods of working. They cannot work other than to the plan given them, though to man is given the power to harm himself, and others by trying to work contrary to them. Mankind has its hidden powers, its groups, its laws in the subtle realms of thought, and in the still more subtle realms of spirit. A nation is such a group banded together for some great purpose for the development of the race. Woman is such a group, and she now is banded together for great purposes of development—for *freedom* to develop. Long ere we heard of woman's organisations the silent ones were working in her—filling her with aspiration, with desire, with clear-sighted seeing as to action. The cumulated thought of woman worked silently, imperceptible to ordinary modes of seeing until the time of manifestation was ripe and women were led to act and to speak.



This hidden force of thought is mighty and will become an irresistible power. Here is the field where helpers are needed. It is so easy to shout when others are shouting, but to think rightly *what* to shout and *when* to shout it, that is the work of the silent ones, and they will instruct their sisters and whisper to their hearts words of wisdom. "Why," you will say, "words of wisdom? Why should the quiet home-thinkers have easier access to wisdom than the glorious active workers?" The inactivity of the quiescent thinkers creates around them a plastic medium of receptivity, and their thoughts will become veritable heart-words of wisdom when they seek to obtain them direct from the spiritual ones who guide this movement, and all the movements for good among mankind. These invisible helpers require an advance guard to direct and advise, and these they choose amongst the lowly hearts who are earnestly and patiently listening. The thinkers must be brave, they must be unremittingly receptive; they must be unfaltering in their efforts to let their thoughts *of* women and *for* women be of the purest strain. This is not an easy task; no, it is one of the hardest, and to some it is one of disappointment, for the result of the thinking is often long before its coming into manifestation is evident.

Men and women are learning, it may be gradually, but it is surely, that they can guide and help the inner forces of their physical and mental bodies when something has caused a temporary disorganisation in their working. Many know and can testify that there is a force within them which is amenable to the thoughts which are impressed upon it. So is it with womankind. She, collectively, is a mighty being acting generally

quite wisely for good of the whole, but she has the power to correct the social mistakes and rectify the social errors by a wise direction of the "sub-conscious," that is, of the inner. In this work of thought reformation imagination is a powerful factor and the woman who cannot lend her hand to clear out a slum may send so strong a mental picture of the beautiful orderly dwellings she would desire that the working ones will feel the need of such, and work towards the end desired. In this way numerous urgently needed reforms could be effected. The spiritual image, courageously, boldly outlined, still more courageously adhered to *must*, nay, *cannot* fail to purify our land and make our England the land of the noble, and of the blest. Her most intense picture must be—woman with freedom to use her God-given powers.

When our women have learnt rightly the dynamic force of thought they will do well to think greatly, grandly, not for the good of women only, but of man; not for the good of our nation only, but for the good of all the nations of the world.

Another power has woman, co-equal with her thought. One which must be indeed a co-worker with her thought if she would make it vital, this power is that of feeling. When she makes her ideal she will be wise to *feel* that ideal—when she makes her scheme to *feel* that scheme. Let her think and feel the absolute joyousness of that thought winging its way to fruitfulness, let her *feel* the joyousness of the livingness of that thought, let her feel the joyousness of the growth of that thought and let her be faithful and loyal to receive and retain all good which comes her way, that she may add to it and pass it on. To the active worker is given the harvest,



but the silent thinkers prepare the future springs, they hold the key of the hereafter in their hands, but each must make her daily duties her *ideals*, thus will she create within herself living powers.

All women may be soldiers in this fight for freedom. It will not be that all can gather round a tangible banner, but all can have a picture such as this engraven upon her heart, and the lonely one will see it on each wall of her room—a beautiful woman, hastening with a pace so perfect that it suggests *rest* and free as air, carrying in her arms love, purity, and good; and above her, her tender guardian angel. Then as the ages go will it imperceptibly change, and instead of a woman's figure alone there will appear the wondrous two—the man and the woman—one in love, in purity, in good, in freedom, and the guardian angel with outspread wings will envelop both.

“As I see my Soul reflected in Nature,  
As I see through a mist, One with inexpressible completeness, sanity, beauty,  
See the bent head and arms folded over the breast, the Female I see.  
The male is not less the soul nor more; he, too, is in his place.”

## APPENDIX.

Subjects suggested as aids for those who are desirous to give their thought as aims as their contribution to the cause.

(i.) Woman: A power the wide world over. Upon the nature of that power depends the welfare of the world.

(ii.) Woman: A living whole and *I* a part of its livingness.

(iii.) Woman: Tenderly watched over by the great Spirit of Good.

(iv.) Woman: Strong to think, strong to will, strong to do.

(v.) Woman: Strong to love, strong to feel, strong to help, strong to uplift.

(vi.) Woman: A reformer of herself.

(vii.) Woman: A redeemer of the social environment of woman.

Again will she think of:

(i.) Woman in the Home.

(ii.) Woman in the School.

(iii.) Woman in the Industrial Centres.

(iv.) Woman in the Press.

(v.) Woman in the Sick-room as Doctors, as Nurses.

(vi.) Woman in the Prisons.

(vii.) Woman seeking her Freedom.

She will think upon the woman's needs which it is the duty of a nation to see that she has:

(i.) The wherewithal to eat.

(ii.) The wherewithal to drink.

(iii.) Pure air to breathe.

(iv.) Space sufficient for health.

(v.) Warmth in sufficiency.



- (vi.) Light in abundance.
- (vii.) Rest, that she may work.

And that she also has opportunity to obtain the spiritual concomitants of these, which are :

- (i.) Thought.
- (ii.) Faith.
- (iii.) Consciousness.
- (iv.) Realisation.
- (v.) Love.
- (vi.) Intelligence.
- (vii.) Peace.

Or again, will she meditate upon :

- (i.) Woman thinking—tenderly drawing down thought from the Infinite.
- (ii.) Woman nursing—tenderly using the love she culls from the great Heart of Love.
- (iii.) Woman teaching—wisely what she has learnt in life's rough school.
- (iv.) Woman working—wisely that life may be less rough to those who come after her.
- (v.) Woman acting—wisely to use the knowledge granted her.
- (vi.) Woman confidently expectant of the enlargement of her sphere.
- (vii.) Woman loving with a spirituality which has alchemical powers of good.

Thus will woman draw towards her the Christ-spirit which giveth Power, Strength, Love, Compassion, Wisdom, and Unerring Judgment.

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## PAYMENT OF SEAMEN.

### THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

### HOW THE WIVES SUFFER.

By E. MAHLER AND E. F. RATHBONE.

#### I.

Having had their attention called to many cases of hardship incurred by the wives and children of seafaring men during the absence of the husband and father at sea, the Liverpool Women's Industrial Council have made an inquiry into the system by which these men are paid. Visits have been made to the homes of a large number of seafaring men of various grades—sailors, firemen, stewards, cooks, etc.—including men who have sailed for nearly every large shipping firm in Liverpool. The representatives of many of the larger firms have also been interviewed.

The main result of the inquiry has been to show the urgent need for an amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act. It has revealed the extraordinary fact that, under the present law, not only is there no compulsion upon the seaman to make any provision at all for his home and family during his absence, but that the law rather discourages than encourages the shipowner, even if he is willing, from permitting the seaman, even if he desires to do so, to make satisfactory and adequate provision. Under the Acts of 1894 and 1906 the shipowner must, if the seaman wishes it, permit him to obtain an allotment note authorising his wife or other near relative to draw a sum not



exceeding one-half of the wages due to him at intervals of not less than one month.

The clauses bearing on the matter are as follows:—

(1) Any stipulation made by a seaman at the commencement of a voyage for the allotment of any part of his wages during his absence shall be inserted in the agreement with the crew, and shall state the amounts and times of payments to be made.

(2) Where the agreement is required to be made in a form approved by the Board of Trade, the seaman may require that a stipulation be inserted in the agreement for the allotment, by means of an allotment note, of any part (not exceeding one-half) of his wages in favour either of a near relative or of a savings bank.—Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, section 141.

A payment made under an allotment note shall begin at the expiration of one month from the date of the agreement with the crew, and shall be paid at the expiration of every subsequent month after the first month, and shall be paid only in respect of wages earned before the date of payment.—Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, ch. 48, section 62.

#### SHIPOWNERS AND THE ACT.

It used to be held by the Board of Trade that the first of these clauses did not permit the shipowner to grant an allotment for a larger sum than half-pay, and that by the second clause the 1906 Act made it no longer allowable to pay at shorter intervals than monthly. One Liverpool firm, however, well known for its enlightened and liberal treatment of its men, was able to prove to the Board of Trade that this strict interpretation of the law led to such hardships that the Board now, as a concession, allows those Liverpool firms who desire it to grant, at their own risk, allotments to their seamen for sums greater than half-pay, payable at either monthly, fortnightly, or weekly intervals. A few firms have taken advantage of this concession, and a few more agreed to do so, at least with regard to the weekly payments, when the facts were brought before them. As, however, weekly payments of course involve more

clerical work than monthly ones, it is obvious that they are only likely to be made by those firms which are exceptionally considerate of the welfare of their men, the majority considering that if they comply with the requirements of the Act, nothing more can reasonably be expected of them.

Let us, therefore, see how the arrangement which the Merchant Shipping Act not merely permits, but enjoins, works out in the average home of the average seaman. It must be remembered that, as a seaman receives food and lodging while at sea, the amount which the law permits him to leave for the maintenance of his home, wife, and children during his absence, viz., half his money wages, is considerably less than half his total remuneration. For an A.B. half-pay usually means £1 15s. or £2—occasionally £2 5s.—and the same for a fireman and trimmer; for a trimmer only it is about 5s. less, and for a steward it means £1 10s. to £2. If only the allotment has been given, the wife ought to be able to draw this sum one month after her husband has left, i.e., for four weeks she manages as best she can to pay the rent and feed the children, and then receives a sum of something like £2 or less with which she has to carry on the home for another month. In practice, however, it is very often two months instead of one before she sees a penny of her husband's money.

#### ADVANCE NOTES.

In addition to the system of allotment notes, most shipping firms grant their men advance notes of a month's pay, which can be cashed a few days after the ship has sailed (usually as soon as it is clear of all home ports). The seaman, however, in a large proportion of cases needs this money to replenish his outfit of clothing, boots, bedding, utensils, etc., and to pay back-debts before he goes off to sea. He therefore goes to a money-lender or a publican, or to a shop where his wife deals, and gets an advance upon



the security of the note, paying a rate of interest varying from 1s. to 5s. in the £1 for the few days' loan. The lender, of course, cashes the note at the shipping office as soon as it becomes legally due. The wife may consider herself lucky if she gets anything at all out of this advance. Where it has been paid it is usually eight weeks before the first allotment note becomes due. A very large number of seamen indeed do not take the trouble to take out any allotment note, but ask for an advance note only. Thus the representative of one large shipping firm calmly told our investigator that his firm did not like giving allotment notes, and that the men practically never asked for them. They got advance notes for their outfits, but they did not care to let their wives touch any of their money: "The wives are such a drunken lot." When asked how in that case the wives managed to pay the rent and supply the children with food, fire, and clothes, he shrugged his shoulders and said he really could not say. It is clear that as this gentleman's firm does not give allotment notes, he is not likely to see or know much about his seamen's wives, so that this verdict upon their characters is probably merely his version of the excuse some husbands give for the selfish appropriation of the whole of their wages to their personal uses. We reported his remark to the representative of another firm which does give weekly allotments, and is therefore in close touch with the seamen's wives. He remarked that, so far as his experience went, the women made much better use of their money than their husbands. Even if the excuse were true, it would be at best a poor reason for a man's abandoning the whole duty of maintaining his children to a wife whose chances of earning were diminished by habits of drunkenness.

#### EFFECT OF THE SYSTEM.

The truth is, so far as we by our inquiries have been able to gauge it, that the system of payment which we have just

described is responsible for insobriety and many other bad habits on the part of countless seamen, and no doubt, since privation and despondency often lead women to drink, on the part of many seamen's wives also. The system has lasted for so many years that most of those accustomed to it, whether the employers, the men, or their wives, take it as a matter of course, and only the more thoughtful of them seem ever to think of questioning it. Yet surely its inequitable and demoralising character must be plain to everyone who reflects a little. In no other trade or calling does a decent man expect to assign less than half his wages to his wife to maintain the home and children and to keep all the rest for himself. Of course, we do not assert that all or even most seamen do this. Some of them, besides leaving the half-pay allotment, send their wives money home from foreign ports, while others hand over all that they have been able to save upon their return home for the payment of back-debts as a provision for the future. There can be no doubt, however, that the fact that half-pay is the amount suggested by the law and sanctioned by custom as the maximum that a man should leave does make the more thoughtless men feel that they have done their duty when they have left this amount, and that the remainder of their wages, or most of it, is theirs to spend. With the uneducated and unimaginative, out of sight is apt to be to some extent out of mind, and many a man, who, if he had been living and working ashore, would never have dreamt of indulging himself while his children went hungry, will go off to sea leaving an inadequate provision or no provision at all without, as more than one wife has told us, "seeming to give a thought" as to how she is going to manage. The system is as demoralising to the man as it is unfair to his wife and children. When he returns, after a long period of the restrictions and abstinences of life at sea, and receives at the pay-office a substantial



little pile of gold sovereigns, the possession of so much ready money is apt to be too much for his self-control; he falls a ready prey to the harpies and touts who are always on the look-out for the return of a sailor, and reaches home at last with empty pockets.

#### DIFFICULTIES OF THE WOMEN.

In the eyes of the poorer class of seamen's wives, the period at which allotments are paid is quite as serious a question as the amount. As already explained, it is at least four weeks, more often eight weeks, before anything becomes due. How to make two ends meet during the interval is a problem with which they try to cope by various expedients, all more or less unsatisfactory. Many of them seek work at casual occupations, office-cleaning, step-cleaning, hawking, sack-mending, or washing for neighbours. There is not nearly enough of this sort of work to go round, and it is only the strong or the lucky who get a chance of much of it. A few take in work from the wholesale clothiers, and, ill-paid as is the work in this typical "sweated industry," it is perhaps the best resource of the married woman worker, since it saves her from the necessity of leaving her young children to the dangers of the street or the unprotected fireplace. Nearly all the poorer women resort to pawning the superfluities, and frequently also the necessaries of household gear and clothing. The rent runs on until the landlord becomes too restive. Bills are run up at shops which allow credit, and such shops are naturally those which charge high prices to recoup themselves for bad debts. Women complain bitterly of the disadvantage it is to them to be unable to buy cheaply in the market, or to pick up bargains on Saturday nights, because they have not ready money to pay for their purchases. Worst expedient of all, an appalling proportion of these women are deep in the toils of the professional moneylender. The rate of

interest regularly charged by these moneylenders is 2d. per shilling per week. In order to keep the debt dragging on they usually refuse to accept repayment of the principal, except in full, and in this way a debt of 10s. will be prolonged until two or three pounds has been paid in interest. We remember one debt of 14s. which cost the borrower £4 8s. in all. To compel payment, the moneylender often resorts to terrorism and sometimes to personal violence. Not long ago a series of cases in the courts drew the attention of the Liverpool public to the extortions thus practised, and the public held up its hands in pious horror at the revelation. Employers would be somewhat taken aback if they could see this question from the point of view of the seaman's or docker's wife. To her the employer is often the ogre of the piece, and the moneylender the way of escape provided by Providence from the sufferings and privations with the conditions of her husband's employment would otherwise entail upon herself and her children. "I don't know how the poor would manage at all if it wasn't for the moneylenders," is an exclamation we have often heard uttered in various forms by the victims of casual labour or of the cruel and totally unnecessary method of payment which has been described above.

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## ATTITUDE OF LIVERPOOL SHIPOWNERS.

### II.

In the previous article we described the present system of payment of seafaring men as it affects the welfare of their wives and families during their absence at sea. We explained that the plan prescribed by the Merchant Shipping Acts and practised by most firms, of giving allotments of not more than half-pay monthly, was insufficient to meet the needs of the case and led to much discomfort and privation. We stigmatised it as cruel and as totally unnecessary. These are strong words, but we hope that we have proved the truth of the first epithet used, and for the truth of the second we rely upon the testimony of shipowners themselves.

Several of the largest Liverpool firms pay allotments weekly and allow their men to claim them for sums considerably more than half-pay, and those who do this have all assured us that they experience very little inconvenience or loss by doing so. The weekly payments, of course, involve more clerical labour than monthly ones, and are to that extent inconvenient, but surely this is a very trivial matter when placed against the benefit to the seaman's family. The employers of almost every other class of labour belonging to the same social grade as seamen and firemen pay weekly wage sheets, and shipowners themselves are accustomed to do this for the dock labour they employ. The only objection suggested to us to allowing allotments for more than half-pay is that in the case of men deserting at foreign ports, the firms might lose by the arrangement. But in any case we understand that if allotments are given at all, the names of deserters have to be cabled home to stop further payments, and that

under the 1906 Act the cost of this cable can be deducted from the balance to the seaman's credit. If the limit of the allotment were two-thirds or at the outside three-fourths pay, a sufficient sum would be left in hand to cover possible risks. We are assured by two firms which have for over twenty years granted the higher scale of allotment, that they do not think that either of them has in that period lost £5 by doing so. On the other hand, under the present system, some firms seem not infrequently, as a matter of kindness, to make extra advances to their seamen's wives to meet exceptional emergencies, such as sickness or a confinement. These not having been authorised by the seamen, it seems doubtful whether they could be legally deducted from his wage if he chose to repudiate the claim, and it seems probable that employers run more risk by these emergency doles than they would do if an adequate allotment had been granted in the regular way at the outset.

### LIVERPOOL SHIPOWNERS AND AMENDMENT.

We should like to make it plain that we have no intention of imputing any deliberate indifference to the welfare of their men on the part of those employers who have hitherto only done what the law enjoins upon them in the matter of allotments. On the contrary, in nearly every case in which we have been able to interview the representatives of Liverpool firms, our suggestions as to these points have been courteously and favourably considered, and in many it has seemed clear that the main reason why the matter had not been dealt with before was that no one had drawn attention to the evil consequences of the present arrangements. So far, therefore, as our investigations have hitherto gone, we have no reason to believe that there would be any very strong feeling among shipowners against



an amendment of the Merchant Shipping Acts in the direction indicated, except in so far as such strong feeling is invariably aroused in some minds by any suggestion, irrespective of its individual merits, for tightening the demands made upon ship-owners by legislative enactments. It may be asked why it is necessary to make any change in the law if employers have shown themselves favourably disposed to make the changes which are needed without coercion. The answer is that the question is one which does not concern Liverpool only, but the whole country. In a few places and among the best class of employers there may be an enlightened public opinion and a genuine desire to do what is right by their employés, even at the cost of some personal inconvenience. But on the whole it is true in this, as in every other department of industry, that a large proportion, probably it is not too much to say a majority of employers cannot be trusted permanently to concede more to their employés than they are obliged to either by the law or by the employés themselves. In this case, however, the evil is one which presses not upon the men themselves, but upon their wives and families, and these too often need protection against the selfishness or thoughtlessness of the husband and father quite as much as against that of the employer.

It seems, therefore, that what is needed is, first, that a seaman should have a right to claim an allotment up to two-thirds of his wages, and that this allotment should be payable weekly if desired.

#### CHANGE REQUIRED.

In our view, however, a still further change is required. Surely a seaman should be not merely permitted but obliged by the law to make some provision for the maintenance of his wife and young children before he takes himself out of the country for a period of many weeks or months. In theory, he, and not his wife,

is responsible for the maintenance of the children, but if he chooses to neglect this duty she has at present no remedy except to throw herself and her little ones upon the poor-law. If she does this, and enters the workhouse, or gets outdoor relief, the Guardians have power to recover the cost of her maintenance from the shipowner out of the money due to the husband. This, however, is an expedient to which few wives are willing to resort. In the rare cases where a woman does adopt it, it is upon her and her children that the suffering and the ignominy fall, while the husband incurs no penalty except the loss of his vote, and is free to revenge even this loss upon the unhappy woman on his return. We suggest, therefore, that a further alteration of the law should be made, enacting that if a seaman's wife is able to show to a magistrate that her husband has left her without provision for herself and her children she may claim an allotment of from one-half to two-thirds his pay, at the discretion of the magistrate. This would not involve the application to the relieving officer, which is so much dreaded by self-respecting and independent women.

We think that these suggestions will commend themselves to most fairminded people as reasonable. Unfortunately, neither seamen nor their wives are in a strong position for securing redress of their grievances by legislation. The wives of course have no votes, as yet, and seamen are so seldom at home at election times that they are scarcely worthy the attention of politicians. At least, it is difficult otherwise to understand how the anomalies of the law that we have described could have gone on so long unamended.

#### HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS.

In conclusion we give a few jottings from our inquirer's notebook illustrating the way in which the present system works out. They are in no way excep-



tional cases, and might be multiplied indefinitely.

Mrs. A. is the wife of an A.B. (able-bodied seaman) earning £4 a month. She gets an allotment note of £1 fortnightly, and has besides a lodger who brings in 2s. 6d. a week, so that she is better off than many seamen's wives. There are six children, two at school and four little ones at home. When visited she looked pale, thin, and worn; the children are undersized, and looked miserably underfed. She was ready enough to describe the conditions of her husband's pay and to expatiate on the inadequacy of a half-pay allotment:—"Ten shillings a week to pay the rent, find the food, and keep the children in shoes—well, it just can't be done! Just look at these two little ones. They've had measles, and ever since they've been wasting away. The doctor says they are not getting enough food, that they want more nourishment and change of air, but it's easy enough to say that. How can I give it? It's only them that does it that knows what it means to keep body and soul together on 10s. a week where there are six children to feed! And where's the money to come from for their boots alone? They're that delicate I daren't let them out on cold, wet days without something on their feet." It was suggested to her that as she had lived in her house for many years the tradesmen and landlord would surely give her credit. She answered, "It's just because they know him too well that they won't do that. They know as well as I do that it's precious little of his money we shall ever see. There are things he wants on the way, and nearly all the rest goes in drink as soon as he lands."

Mrs. B. is the wife of a steward. Her husband has been two months out of work, and allotments are a sore subject with them both. At last it came out that on his last voyage he had left her the usual note for half-pay, and had besides sent something from abroad. She had, however, had exceptionally heavy expenses owing to the illness of herself and of two

of the children. All her money was swallowed up, and finding herself without coal or food she applied to the poor-law. They advanced her a few shillings, and on the return of her husband's ship sent down to have it stopped out of his wages. That this had been done became known upon the ship. Her husband was furious, not because his wages had been anticipated, but because he had been made a pauper and thus, in his opinion, disgraced in the eyes of his mates. He threw up his job, quarrelled with and ill-treated his wife, and there had since been "bad blood" between them.

#### LIFE STORIES.

Mrs. C. is the wife of a fireman. He was at home when visited, and complacently informed us that he never gave his wife any of his wages. He professed that he would gladly give her an allotment note if he could get one, but that his firm did not grant them, as the voyage lasts only a month. When handed his month's pay he says frankly that he cannot resist spending it, and it practically all goes on drink. When his booze is over and his money spent, he returns home to beat his wife and live upon her earnings. These are very scanty, being got at bag making, cleaning, or step-washing. She is deeply in debt to the moneylender, who has seized all available furniture.

Mrs. D is also a fireman's wife, but her husband, as she proudly told us, is "one of the best." She considers herself a lucky woman, yet this is how she has to manage:—His voyages last six months, and his outfit swallows up a great part of the month's advance note of £4 10s. She has paid as much as 11s. 3d. to the moneylender for cashing it. While waiting till the first half-pay allotment of £2 5s. becomes due, eight weeks after he has sailed, she works at a jam factory, leaving her four children (the eldest seven and the youngest a sickly baby of



six months) in the care of her mother. Of course, she has had to put the baby on artificial food. She lets the rent run on, pawns, and goes on credit, secure that when her husband returns these debts will be paid and the furniture redeemed.

No doubt many, very many, seamen's wives, even of the poorest grade, solve the problem of house management better than any of the above, and succeed in keeping comfortable homes for themselves and their little ones in spite of the obstacles placed in their way by the defects of law and of custom which we have described. But the conditions of life are hard enough at best for the poorer of our fellow citizens without being complicated by difficulties which a simple and almost mechanical readjustment of machinery might effectually remove.



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## AUSTRALIA'S ADVICE.

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*The following Debate on Woman Suffrage took place in the Australian Senate on November 17th, 1910, at a time when the Conciliation Bill, which had passed its Second Reading on July 12th, was still before the House of Commons, and when there was still a possibility of Mr. Asquith granting time for the Bill to be dealt with. The account given here is abridged from the official report of the Australian Senate.*

**1. That this Senate is of opinion that the extension of the suffrage to the women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliaments, on the same terms as to men, has had the most beneficial results. It has led to the more orderly conduct of elections, and, at the last Federal elections, the women's vote in a majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of Defence and Imperial concern they have proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women.**

**2. That a copy of the foregoing resolution be cabled to the British Prime Minister.**

Senator Rae, of New South Wales, in moving the resolution, said:—I think that the greater number of the statements contained in the motion, which I admit is rather lengthy, are beyond serious contention. The latter part of it has been questioned, on the ground that it is a large order to urge that "all nations enjoying representative government would be well



advised in granting votes to women." Some honourable senators felt rather touchy on the question of doing anything which might be thought to be in the nature of giving advice on an internal matter to the British Government. Therefore, the wider measure of expressing the sentiment of referring to "all nations enjoying representative government" was deliberately chosen. I think that no honourable senator can now say that that objection can be fairly urged. A mere expression of opinion is not by any means dictation. It would ill become any honourable senator to seriously urge that position, seeing that on many occasions the Federal Parliament has expressed its opinion on very much more controversial matters. It would, indeed, be straining at a gnat after having swallowed a camel if such an objection were raised in this instance.

No one can fairly urge that womanhood suffrage is a party question. It will be remembered that a few months ago, in the House of Commons, a Conciliation Committee, representative of all parties—Conservative, Liberal, Labour, and, I think, Home Rule—was formed, and that it agreed upon the substance of a measure granting womanhood suffrage. Of course, in the Old Country the question is tangled up in a way which does not obtain in the Commonwealth or the States. Here the principle of one man one vote was conceded many years ago, and obviously it was only possible to grant the suffrage to women on the same terms as it was held by men. But in Great Britain, owing to the property qualification and the relics of the Feudal System, there has been some measure of disagreement, not so much on the abstract justice of granting the franchise to women as on the question

of whether it should be conceded to all women, or to only those who are ratepayers, or how political power should be apportioned to them. No such question can arise with us. We are simply asking the Senate to affirm in the broadest fashion that every nation enjoying representative government should give the franchise to women. I think that the time has gone by when an enlightened nation can contend that women are not the equals of men.

I am not unaware of the fact that there has been some criticism of this proposal upon the ground that it seeks to dictate to the Imperial Parliament upon a matter of domestic legislation. One honourable senator opposite put the question to me in this way: "What would this Parliament say if the Imperial Parliament were to pass a resolution objecting to our Federal land tax? Do you think we would not resent any such resolution?" In reply, I said: "Probably we would if one can imagine the Imperial Parliament being so foolish as to interfere in such a matter. But there is a wide difference between a question of internal taxation and a matter affecting human rights in their largest and most important aspect." The argument cannot fairly be advanced that this Parliament should not express its opinion upon matters of vital concern to it—especially when they are non-party matters—seeing that it has already expressed a most emphatic opinion upon questions which most acutely divide political parties in the Old Country. I need only refer to the resolution which it adopted in regard to the employment of Chinese on the Rand, to that which it affirmed in reference to the Dogger Bank incident during the progress of the Russo-Japanese War, to the motion which it passed in regard to Home Rule for Ireland, and to the



opinion it expressed upon a question which is apt to rouse the strongest passions in political circles at Home—I mean the form of the Coronation Oath. When we reflect that all these are controversial matters upon which the British public is divided, honourable senators will be straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel if they object to my proposal upon that ground.

It is true that the purpose of the motion is to intimate, in the most courteous terms, to our friends and blood relations in the Mother Country, that we are of opinion that the British Government, amongst others, will be well advised if it extends the franchise to women. I am not concerned with the detailed objections which may be urged to the adoption of that course. We know that one of those objections is that the women of Great Britain outnumber the men by some millions, and that, consequently, they would reign, if they fully availed themselves of the franchise. That is an undemocratic objection, and an absurd one, upon its face, because we do not find that upon matters of practical legislation, divisions of opinion are based on sex grounds. We do not find all the women voting upon one side in respect of any question submitted to the electors. Both women and men hold certain opinions, and are able to express them. It would not be wise for me to labour this motion, which I have brought forward in all sincerity.

It is idle to say that any feeling will be aroused as I trust that it will be carried, and that it will assist, in some measure, to settle this vexed question. to the result of its adoption, because, in the first place, we know that the female suffrage movement in Great Britain has progressed to such an extent that it is now admitted by all parties that the reform is within the region of practical politics. Only yesterday, the cable

announced that it is a question of such importance that the present Government declare that it must be settled at a very early date to avoid serious embarrassment. When we find it coupled with the question of Home Rule, and with the Osborne Judgment, which affects trade unionists, we must admit that its settlement cannot be much longer delayed. One reason why it should be settled speedily is that, when once the vote is granted on equal terms to women and men, a great political subject will have reached finality; and the road will be open to reform on other matters affecting the social and economical condition of the people. Therefore, the least that we can do is to send word to our kith and kin in Great Britain that we have found this great measure of freedom which has been granted to our women to work well in every particular; and that it has falsified every prediction which was urged against its acceptance. I trust, therefore, that honourable senators will unanimously support the proposal.

#### **Senator Lieut.-Col. Sir Albert Gould:—**

This motion asks the Senate to pose as a body which is to advise the nations of the world. In other words, the youngest nation is to undertake the teaching of the most venerable nations. There is a very homely proverb about youths teaching their grandmothers to suck eggs. The proposal affirms that we should particularly give the benefit of our opinion to Great Britain. It provides that a copy of the resolution shall be forwarded to the Prime Minister of Great Britain, not in the ordinary way, but by a cable message. Through him the whole of the British nation is to be apprised of the importance of the question of women's suffrage. But, as a matter of fact, we know that for some time an



agitation has been in progress in Great Britain in regard to this very question, and that peculiarly advanced Suffragettes have made all sorts of demonstrations to impress on the Government the advisableness of extending the franchise to women. We know that a little time ago Mr. Asquith dare not play a game of golf without having two or three policemen to protect him against the energetic assaults of these ladies. We are now asked to help him out of the difficulty by telling him our opinion and giving him our advice. Is it desirable that we should take upon ourselves the duties of a mentor to the British Parliament in the regulation of its own affairs? It is true that we have enfranchised our women, and that we have no reason to regret that step. But there is no necessity for us to adopt a motion of this character.

Quite recently we passed a Bill relating to land taxation. Let us suppose that the House of Commons or the House of Lords forwarded us a resolution setting out what in their opinion are the disadvantages associated with such legislation. We are only making ourselves ridiculous by attempting to dictate to that country as to what it shall do. I do not know what may be the opinion of honourable senators generally. There may be some who think that it is "about up to" the Commonwealth of Australia, through the Senate, to teach other nations. But I have not advanced to that position yet. I think that it would be very much better for us if we were to mind our own business. We should certainly resent it if the House of Commons or the House of Lords passed a resolution with regard to legislation which Australia thought was in her interest. (Senator GUTHRIE: Does not Great Britain veto some of our legislation?) She may do so; but

that is no reason why we should attempt to teach her what she should do. We are not authorised to veto British legislation. A motion of this kind is beneath the dignity of the Senate. If we are to pass it, however, it might be desirable to go further, and to cable the motion to other nations that at present enjoy representative government. (Senator W. RUSSELL: Will the honourable senator move an amendment to that effect?) I should be very happy to do anything within reason that would please the honourable senator; but I do not contemplate submitting such an amendment myself, though I certainly think that there is just as much reason for it as there is for the motion. The nations of the world would then realise that we in Australia have attained to such a position that we are able to teach them what they ought to do, and to lay down an invariable rule, by means of which they may advance their interests.

#### **Senator Henderson:—**

We are entitled to say to Great Britain that we have tried the effects of this reform, as we have tried several other reforms that Great Britain has not yet ventured upon. It is quite fair that we should give the benefit of our experience to the country from which we come. We are surely quite capable of saying to Great Britain, "As we are part and parcel of your race, especially as we have relatives living in your land, we think it right to tell you that this constitutional reform has had excellent effects in Australia, and that you would not do wrong if you tried it in Great Britain."

#### **Senator de Largie (Western Australia):—**

When I saw this motion on the business paper, I



thought it would be sure to go through without opposition, and I have been surprised to find that in this Senate, and in this enlightened year, we have a remnant of the old Conservative forces prepared to oppose this well-established principle. If we were living in some of the older countries of the world, that is what we might expect, but in a young country like this, that has already experienced the benefits of women's franchise, it is surprising to find that there is even one individual left who is hostile to the principle. Senator Gould, in discussing the motion, carefully avoided arguing whether the principle was right or wrong. He sheltered himself behind the question whether we have the right to advise the older countries of the world. (Senator WALKER: Have we?) Yes, we have the best possible right. We have, in this matter, the right of our experience of womanhood suffrage. We know how this principle has operated in Australia, and in this respect, being politically older than the Old Country, we have the right to give this advice.

**Senator Lieut.-Col. Sir Albert Gould:—**

Does the honourable senator suggest that we should also advise South Africa, Canada, and New Zealand?

**Senator De Largie:—**

Why not? Senator Gould will admit that the greatest difficulty which the parliamentarian is confronted with is that, when he is aware that a law has been enacted in a foreign country which he thinks might be usefully applied here, he has no means of knowing how it has operated. I am not so sure that we have not been asked for this advice. I have yet to

learn that we have not been asked for it very plainly by the people of the Old Country. (Senator WALKER: Have they sent a cable message asking us for the advice?) That is not the only way in which a request may be made. We know the disgraceful scenes which have occurred in the Old Country during recent years in connection with the women's suffrage movement. I see no reason why we should not take notice of that movement. Let me remind honourable senators that this is not a party question in the Old Country. I am sorry, for the sake of the Liberals of the Old Country, that it is not. If they had been really Liberal in their views, they would have taken up this question years ago. As it is not a party question in the Old Country, we can claim, in giving this advice, that we are not taking sides in the matter. Having benefited by our experience of the operation of this great principle, we should, I think, be lacking in our duty if we fail to make the facts known.

I hope that those who intend to oppose the motion will give some more substantial grounds for their opposition than that we are a younger people than the people we propose to advise. I hold that, politically speaking, and in political experience, we are not junior to any country in the world. As a matter of fact, we are, in politics, the pacemakers for the world. There is more experimenting going on in the political arena in Australia than in any other country, and how, therefore, can any one contend that we are politically the juniors of the other countries of the world? If it is length of years only that gives the right to advise, we should not be allowed to enter the Senate until we have reached the age of three score and ten. In former years that was a qualification for a legislator, and men had



to reach the age of dotage before they were considered able to pass laws. But that method of estimating knowledge and capacity is out of date. Knowledge and experience should be the qualifications for the right to advise, and not merely the number of years a man has lived. We are in every way fitted to advise in this matter, because we know how the principle has operated.

**Senator Lynch:—**

As I understand the motion, we are asked to tell other Governments and peoples of the successful results which have followed the adoption of women's franchise here. We are asked to speak of the healthy influence it has had upon public life, and to let the people of other lands know something of what has occurred here from the adoption of this principle, in the hope that they may copy our example and profit by it.

When the South African War had drawn to a close, we found Mr. Chamberlain, as the chief mouthpiece of the British Parliament, at that time openly inviting the Commonwealth Government and the State Governments of Australia to tender their advice as to the form of government which it would be best to confer on South Africa. That was an Imperial issue, as well as one closely concerning the public life of South Africa, and yet the British Government considered it politic and wise to ask the advice of such junior partners of the Empire as the Governments of Australia.

I consider that it is politic and necessary that we should tender our advice to the Old Country in this matter, and speak of the beneficent results which have followed the adoption of this principle here, in the hope that the people of Great Britain may be induced to

benefit by our example by extending the franchise to the half of the population from whom they are at present withholding that right. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, and hope that it will lead to some good. If it does no more than show the people of the Old Country, the Press, and even its Parliament, that we are alive to the necessity of some change taking place, and the folly and the cruelty of withholding a right of citizenship from the women of Great Britain, the motion will at least accomplish something.

**Senator W. Russell:—**

Senator Gould's speech on this motion recalls the speeches of the Conservatives in the Legislative Council, South Australia. They urged that if the franchise were granted to women the poor children would be neglected, the father's dinner would not be ready when he came home, women would mix with drunken men at the poll, and awful disaster would take place because the husband would be found voting for one candidate and the wife for another. That has never happened in my case. I have never asked my wife whom she intended to vote for. The Conservatives in both Houses of the State Parliament voted against the Bill, but we had just the desired number and won. I take this credit to myself, that had I not been returned at that election the women of the State would not have got the franchise then. What has happened since? The very party which cried down womanhood suffrage as a danger and as destructive to morals and everything else—I refer to the ladies—instead of spurning the vote, go to the poll. Instead of proving disastrous, womanhood suffrage in South Australia seems to have had a different effect altogether. It has had a moral effect.



Some of the men who were not as good as they ought to be have been kept out of Parliament.

It has been found right in our case, and even in Victoria the Conservative element has knuckled down. I am very proud of our victory. It ought to have considerable influence on Home politics if we express our sympathy with the women who are fighting a battle for their just rights, and state that our experience is that the grant of female suffrage has had only a beneficial effect. It is nonsense for any member of the Senate to say that that is interfering with a matter which does not concern us. In the light of our experience, we can cordially recommend that the franchise should be granted to women in the Old Country.

**Senator Ready (Tasmania):—**

We are part of the Empire, and I take it that any recommendation we may make will receive, not only full consideration in the Old Country, but also carry a good deal of weight. In his attempts to throw ridicule on the motion, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not dare to ridicule the principle. (Senator WALKER: Why should he? We do not object to the principle.) I think in the past the objections to principle came to a very large extent from those who sit on the other side. (Senator WALKER: Certainly not. I have never opposed it from start to finish.) The honourable member is a golden exception. We know that a number of honourable senators will oppose anything of a progressive nature. But I trust that every representative of Labour in this Chamber will vote for the motion, in order that the people of Great Britain may see how this great democratic country of Australia is desirous of helping those who are struggling for

political freedom. (Senator WALKER: It seems to me that our friends opposite are barking up the wrong tree.) Members of the Opposition do not object to female suffrage; but they do object to the downright piece of impertinence which is contained in this motion, which affirms that a copy of it shall be cabled to the Prime Minister of Great Britain. How would we like the Imperial Parliament to send us a message, asking us why we refuse to receive people into Australia unless they can pass a certain examination?

Senator MCGREGOR: We merely propose to tell the Imperial authorities the result of our experience.

**Senator Walker:—**

It will be time enough to do that when we are asked to do it. I recognise that the influence of women is a good and God-fearing influence. It is nonsense for Senator Ready to suggest that honourable senators upon this side of the Chamber are opposed to female suffrage. The honourable senator was almost insulting in his remarks. If he wishes to talk to the electors, he is at liberty to do so; but I object to him declaring that those who sit with me in Opposition are opposed to what is at present the law of the land. How would we like the United States or Canada to tell us that if we desire immigration we ought to adhere to a freehold system of land tenure? We are invited to say that: "Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women?" Ought the women in the harems of Turkey to be given votes? (Senator RAE: Why not?) Because they have no knowledge of anything outside the four



walls of the place in which they live. What is sauce for the goose is equally sauce for the gander.

**Senator O'Keefe (Tasmania):—**

This motion is not without a precedent. The only objection which has been urged to it by honourable senators opposite is that the Commonwealth Parliament has no right to interfere in the affairs of other countries. Senator Gould characterised the motion as a piece of impertinence. But I would ask him, and also Senator Walker, to recollect what occurred a few years ago when a similar proposal was before this Parliament. The cry was then raised that its opinion would be flouted. We were told that it would be an impertinence for the Commonwealth Parliament to gratuitously offer its advice to the House of Commons. But we all recollect what followed. The advice which was given on that occasion was only a little ahead of its time. It related to a question which was of importance to the whole British race. It will be recollected that a certain course of action which had been taken in the interests of the South African mine owners had been condoned by the British authorities. I refer to the permission which had been granted to hordes of Chinese to work in the Rand mines. This Federal Parliament, in its wisdom, sent a protest to the House of Commons against that action. We were then told that it was impertinence to do so. Senator Gould was a member of this august assemblage at that time. I also had the honour to be a member. Then, as to-night, those honourable senators who objected to the motion did not say that they were opposed to the principle; they said that they did not think that the Chinese ought to be imported to take the place of white

men in the South African mines; but they disagreed with the principle of the Parliament of this young nation tendering advice to the mother of Parliaments. Was that action on our part considered impertinent by the British people? I do not think so.

Only a little time after the advice was tendered, the resolution having been sent to England by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Deakin, those statesmen who were responsible for the importation of Chinese to South Africa were sent to the right about, and the policy with regard to the Chinese was entirely reversed. On that occasion, as I have shown, we took the step of tendering advice to the people of Great Britain. We may have been a little in advance of our time then. In this matter, also, we may be in advance of our time; but, nevertheless, we are justified in passing the motion; and I have much pleasure in supporting it.

**Senator Stewart (Queensland):—**

It gives me much pleasure to have this opportunity of supporting the motion submitted by Senator Rae. I was very much surprised at the attitude assumed by Senator Gould and Senator Walker. Both of them are fervent Imperialists. They believe in the Empire above everything. I am not an Imperialist; but, while we remain a portion of the British Empire, it is quite permissible and justifiable that every portion of that Empire should take an interest in the whole of it, and especially in its good government. Having discovered a good thing in Australia—having found, from practical experience, how excellent women's suffrage is—seeing that, as some honourable senators have claimed, women's suffrage has been the means of placing the Labour Party in power—surely we should be failing in



our duty if we did not carry the good tidings to the uttermost ends of the Empire.

The only objection which the Opposition have to the motion is that they say we are interfering with a matter that does not concern us. I say, however, that it does concern us. The good government of the Empire concerns every citizen of the Empire. We in Australia, having found women's suffrage to be of such advantage to the community from every point of view, are in duty bound to tell the people of Great Britain our experience.

I understand that Miss Pankhurst, who is one of the most active advocates of women's suffrage in Great Britain, cabled out to the Prime Minister, asking what had been the experience of Australia in this matter. That being the case, it is but right and proper that we should testify as to what has happened. That is all that we are doing. By means of this motion, we are simply telling the people of Great Britain what the result of female suffrage in Australia has been.

I was very much amused—though there was a great deal of anger mixed with my amusement—when I read of the indignities which the women suffragists were subjected to in Great Britain. The facts brought home to my mind with tremendous force what barbarians our men are, and what selfish views they take of their position. To my mind, there ought to be no sex in citizenship. There should be no political difference between man and woman. Each has his or her own work to do, and each is essential to the well-being of the nation.

I hope that the Parliament of Great Britain will take the advice tendered to it by the Senate of the Commonwealth, and remove the injustice under which a large

number of women are undoubtedly suffering in Great Britain. With regard to our pious hope that "all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting the franchise to women," I ask, "What is there to object to in that?" If the women of Germany, in France, and in Russia had votes, does anyone imagine that war would be as common as it is? Do honourable senators think for a moment that if the women of Europe were enfranchised equally with the men, the nations would rush at each other's throats as they do to-day? If they believe in the era of peace, honourable senators should advocate the extension of the franchise to women. That would be one of the surest means of sweeping war utterly off the face of the earth. The temperament of women is entirely against bloodshed. It is quite different from that of men, and I am sure that their influence when they have the power will be directed towards the promotion of peace.

#### **Senator Stewart:—**

I think it would be a most excellent thing if the women of Turkey had votes. I am sure that if they had, the system to which the honourable senator has alluded would be very soon swept away. They would not tolerate a system under which one man may have 500 wives, and 500 men may have no wife at all. I am as sure as that I am standing here, that if the women of Turkey or of any other country in which similar institutions exist had a voice in the government, such a system would be swept out of existence immediately. (Senator BARKER: It is a degradation.) It is a degradation of women. It is contrary to the laws of nature, against the laws of God, and the best



laws of man, and it ought to be, and would be, stamped out if the women of Turkey or of any other country that suffers from evils of the kind had any political power at all.

**Senator Rae (New South Wales):—**

Senator Walker indorsed Senator Gould's contention that it is an impertinence on our part to urge that Great Britain and other countries enjoying representative institutions would be well advised to act as we have done. I fail to see where the impertinence comes in. I know that in respect of many matters we have already set the pace for Great Britain. The Old Age Pensions system recently adopted in Great Britain is cast on the lines of the system adopted in the Commonwealth. The fact that many years ago almost all the Colonies, as our States then were, passed legislation permitting the marriage of a man with his deceased wife's sister ultimately forced the hand of Great Britain in the adoption of similar legislation. That is another instance in which political views held in Australia were far in advance of those held in the Old Country. I might mention the Real Property Act as another important case in point. We know that expressions of Australian opinion were promptly cabled to the Old Country when Russian war vessels made an attack on British fishing vessels on the Dogger Bank.

I do not wish to traverse the ground followed by other speakers on the motion, but I should like to say that, just as we had occasion only this afternoon to debate at some length the inadequate way in which the views of Parliament are expressed through the Press, and as many have had to complain of the way in which their utterances have been distorted and mis-

represented, I am perfectly certain that the cable messages we have received as to the doings of the women suffragists in Great Britain have very rarely placed the facts before the people of this country. Later advices received by mail, giving fuller accounts, have placed the position of the women in that movement in a far better light than we might have been led to believe from the cable messages, and have shown what Senator Stewart has rightly described as the sheer barbarism exhibited by the men of Great Britain opposed to that movement.

I believe that a majority of honourable senators will support the motion, but let me say, in conclusion, that my object in moving it is not in any way to bring myself under the limelight. Years ago, when this movement was not popular in my own State, I was one of those who took a foremost part in advocating it. I am proud to have been in a position at that time, as president of the largest union in Australia, to secure an enormous number of promises of support by moving that womanhood suffrage should be a plank of the Labour platform. By carrying it as a plank of the Labour platform, we were able to bring sufficient pressure to bear upon the State Government of the day to make them promise to make it the law of the State. Years before that, when a resident of New Zealand, I advocated the principle there before it became the law of that country. So it will be admitted that I am only consistent in the action I have taken in submitting this motion. I do so because, while agreeing with Senator Henderson that probably Mr. Asquith will not be directly influenced by my opinion, or the opinion of the Senate, I hope and believe that the people of Great Britain will be influenced to some extent.



It may be a factor in increasing the force of public opinion making for the success of this righteous movement. I believe that a clear expression of the National Parliament of this young Democracy in favour of this reform, which places men in a higher and more dignified position, and gives women a nobler mission than they have had in the past, will have its influence, and that other countries enjoying representative institutions will not be slow to follow if Great Britain should take the advice which we, in all good faith, are offering her in the terms of this motion.

At the request of Senator Gould the motion was then put in two parts. The first clause was carried *nem con.* The second clause—"that a copy of the foregoing resolution be cabled to the British Prime Minister"—was carried by 15 votes to 4; majority 11.

### **In the House of Representatives.**

The Resolution was also put in practically similar terms in the House of Representatives on November 25th, 1910, by Dr. Maloney, of Melbourne, who in moving it drew attention to the fact that the words, "In matters of Defence and Imperial concern they [the enfranchised women] are proving themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as the men," were inserted at the suggestion of the Conservative Leader of the Opposition. The Resolution was seconded by a member of the Opposition, as the Leader of the Opposition, who had promised to second the motion, was unavoidably absent, and the question on being put was resolved in the affirmative.

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# For Freedom's Cause.

An Appeal to Working Men.

By RONALD H. KIDD.

**C**OMRADES! It seems that at last some measure of scant justice may be conceded to women. After close upon half a century of agitation, women have been successful in forcing their cause upon the attention of Parliament. That is a great thing; but not, perhaps, the greatest. I feel that their real triumph is the conversion of public opinion to their cause.

Shamefully as this question has been played with by politicians, we know that qualities of self-sacrifice and determination have been called out which have made the cause invincible. The women have been through much tribulation, but they have proved themselves equal—more than equal—to the task laid before them. Every new idea or doctrine has been bitterly opposed by the enemies of progress, and the equality of the sexes has been strenuously denied by those who benefited by the old false, degraded estimate of the capacity of women. The amount of opposition with which the advocates of women's rights have had to contend would have killed any movement, had that movement not been founded upon an unshakable moral idealism.

In this respect, the struggle for the citizenship of women resembles very closely, not only your own



struggle for citizenship, but also the present struggle for the emancipation of Humanity from the shackles of the dead past. And as it is upon you that the future of Humanity so largely depends, I would venture to put forward a few considerations in the hope of enlisting your active sympathy on behalf of the struggling women. If some of you have not realised the deep significance of the movement, if some of you thought that you had no concern with the women's fight for justice, then it is because you have failed to look at it in the light which reveals its full meaning.

You *are* concerned with this question! Will you deny that it is your duty to work for the destruction of tyranny and the establishment of Freedom?

I would ask you to judge this cause by the light of the gospel of Liberty. I do so with the greater confidence because you are already franchised, because you know the value of the vote as the *symbol* of Liberty.

That it was the power of the vote which did so much to raise you to your present position, you are fully aware. Most of you know the story of the dark days of the early part of last century—days when wages were so low and food so expensive that the workers could barely subsist; when men, women, and children worked twelve hours and more at a stretch, exclusive of meal-times. Those were the days when children were obtained for the factories on a system amounting to sale and purchase, and children of seven years old not infrequently worked in the cotton mills from six o'clock in the morning to nine o'clock at night. You may have read of the

days of the repeal of the Corn Laws, of the Chartist movement, and of the early growth of Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies. Much was done to improve the lot of the workers, but not until they themselves had power was their full development possible. In the words of Miss Esther Roper:—  
“Men found out that industrial emancipation can only come through political enfranchisement. As early as 1838 the Chartists were saying, ‘Without it (*i.e.*, a vote) you are veritable slaves.’”

In this the Chartists were right. It is political power only which can secure real freedom. For one class to depend on another for Parliamentary representation is worse than useless. The class which owned the cotton mills neither knew nor cared about the welfare of their workers. Think what an absurdity it was for these rich owners to legislate for the cotton operatives, whose interests were totally different from those of their masters. You know well enough that only since working men have had direct political power have your interests been considered by the State. The necessity for every class being represented is obvious to all. And what is true of classes is equally true of sexes. Women are still in the position which you as men, occupied more than sixty and seventy years ago. To them, all political power, all real liberty, is denied.

I have no fear that you will think lightly of the word Liberty. It is not in the nature of an Englishman to despise that word. But I do not think that yours is a blind adoration of the word itself. You love it for what it means. You love it because to



you it means all that makes life worth living, because it sums up all that you and your fathers have striven for—all you suffered for and sought to gain. Blood has flowed freely in the sacred cause of Liberty; men have gladly sacrificed their lives in order to give the heritage of liberty to their children. Yes, and you would do so still. As your fathers threw off their industrial fetters and demanded to be treated as men, so now you would rise up and resist to the very last, even to bloodshed, any encroachment on your rights and responsibilities as free men.

And you do well thus jealously to guard your freedom and independence. Many of you perhaps are Trade Unionists or workers in Co-partnership Societies. You know the value of freedom even as you know the value of the right of combination. You know what a mockery of life is that existence which is dependent on the favour or caprice of individuals.

Joseph Mazzini, the apostle of freedom to the Italian people, said: "Without liberty you cannot fulfil any of your duties. Therefore have you a right to liberty and a duty to wrest it at all risks from whatsoever power shall seek to withhold or deny it. Without liberty there is no true society, because association between free men and slaves is impossible; there can only exist the rule of the one over the others."

You, artisans and workmen of a democratic State, need not to be told that these words are true. They must awaken in you a responsive note. You, who value liberty as a means to enable you not only to improve your material condition, but to attain to the

fuller life, *must* sympathise with the struggles of others to secure for themselves liberty. And as you admit that liberty is the foundation of all true life, can you remain passive while one-half of the population is not only refused the Parliamentary franchise, but is actually placed under cruel disadvantages? Can you, in the name of Liberty, refuse to allow women to raise themselves by the very means which enabled you to rise from slavery to freedom? Can you shut your ears to the cry of the army of wretched women who slave long hours for a mere pittance which will not suffice to buy food? No. You, who by political power have gained the right to combine, and to demand fair wages and decent hours, cannot, if you have any regard for liberty, be deaf to this appeal. You cannot wish that one-half of the people shall be excluded from citizenship. If such a wish entered into your minds, you would be false to liberty, false to democracy, false to all you profess to hold most dear.

I have spoken of the evils of class-rule—of the rule of one class over another. I have reminded you of the unfairness of the factory-owners having political power while the operatives were helpless. But if class rule is evil, sex rule is no less so. The rule of one class over another is absolutely contrary to freedom and democracy. So also is the rule of one sex over the other. For men to hold in their hands the fortunes and lives of women is a mockery and denial of liberty. Democracy knows no sex.

Do you not hate privilege and monopoly? Do you not loath them as the Devil? I know you do,



and you do so with good reason. But have you realised that the rule of women by men is one of the most monstrous tyrannies in existence? Man has a monopoly of political power. Man rules by the privilege of birth—merely because he is a man.

To this you may answer that man rules because he was meant by nature to do so. But that has been the answer of every monopolist. Whenever the tyrant has been threatened with a destruction of his tyranny, he has said that he was fashioned by God for the purpose of ruling.

The same was said when it was proposed to do away with the negro slave trade. The slave-owning classes declared and believed that the negroes were intended to be slaves.

The same was said when the working men demanded the franchise. They were told that it was "against the Bible." They were told that the upper classes had a divine right to rule. Surely *you* will not use such an obviously false argument. Surely *you* will not have recourse to the one argument which has been used to defend every abuse and every social injustice. Every argument which is now used against the enfranchisement of women was used against your own enfranchisement when you demanded the vote. You were right to struggle for your own emancipation. But you are doing a grievous wrong if you do not aid women in their fight for political freedom.

With great truth Talleyrand once said: "To see one-half of the human race excluded by the other from all participation in government is a political phenomenon which it is impossible to explain."

For such sex-tyranny there is no justification whatever. It cannot truthfully be said that women are now intellectually inferior to men. At the Universities women take exactly the same degrees as men. In such capacities as school teacher, writer, journalist, doctor, and even borough councillor, women have proved themselves the equals of men. Every political party depends largely upon women for its success at elections. Women vote in municipal and county council elections. How, then, can we say that women are unfit to vote? To do so would be sheer hypocrisy.

Listen to Mazzini's words concerning the equality of the sexes, again addressed to the Italian workmen:—"Love and respect Woman. Seek in her not merely a comfort, but a force, an inspiration, the redoubling of your intellectual and moral faculties.

"Cancel from your minds every idea of superiority over Woman. You have none whatsoever.

"Like two distinct branches springing from the same trunk, man and woman are varieties springing from the common basis—Humanity. There is no inequality between them, but—even as is often the case among men—diversity of tendency and of special vocation.

"Man and Woman fulfil different functions in Humanity, but these functions are equally sacred.

"Consider Woman, therefore, as the partner and companion, not merely of your joys and sorrows, but of your thoughts, your aspirations, your studies, and your endeavours after social amelioration. Consider her your Equal in your civil and political life.



"Your complete emancipation can only be founded and secured upon the triumph of a principle—the principle of the Unity of the Human Family.

"At the present day one-half of the Human Family—that half from which we seek both inspiration and consolation, that half to which the first education of childhood is entrusted—is, by a singular contradiction, declared civilly, politically, and socially unequal, and excluded from the great Unity.

"To you who are seeking your own enfranchisement and emancipation in the name of a Religious Truth, to you it belongs to protest on every occasion and by every means against this negation of Unity.

"The *Emancipation of Woman*, then, must be regarded by you as necessarily linked with the emancipation of the working man. This will give to your endeavours the consecration of an Universal Truth."

My brothers, the subjection of women is dragging you down, preventing your development. The denial of freedom to women is hindering your upward rise. Not until women are fully emancipated can you call yourselves free in the truest sense of the word. Can a nation be called free if only the rich classes have the vote? Can a nation be called free when only the men have the vote, and the women remain unfranchised? To both questions the answer is an emphatic No. The nation of which one sex alone is franchised is only half free. It is incomplete and ill-balanced.

Mazzini calls Man and Woman "the two human wings which lift the soul towards the Ideal we are

destined to attain." We know what happens in the case of a bird if one of its wings is cut short. Flight is impossible. It can only beat the air and move in a circle in a vain attempt to raise itself. It cannot fly properly unless both wings are equal.

Just as long as women are fettered and forbidden full and free exercise of their capabilities, so long will men find themselves handicapped in the battle of life.

The nation has need of women's help, and it is an urgent need. But for men, too, is required the full political liberty of women. At present, owing to many causes—among others, women's position of economic inferiority, the lowness of women's wages, and the chaotic state of our social system—the interests of the sexes clash, and the problem of competition between men and women has become acute. "It is generally admitted," says Miss Roper, "that the low rate of women's wages tends to bring down the standard for both sexes, and is a constant source of danger to the interests of all workers." And this, of course, is an obvious fact. The labour market, already crowded, is menaced by a host of badly-paid women eager to work for an inadequate wage rather than starve. So long as women are ill-paid they must necessarily enter into the keenest competition with men. So long, too, as employers can obtain cheap labour—*i.e.*, women's labour—they will continue to do so, much to the disadvantage of men. It is evident that this system of undercutting by women must be a serious hindrance to Trade Unions and other industrial organisations in their efforts to keep wages up to a proper level.



The miserable remuneration for women's work, therefore, places men in an unfair position; while the cruelty to the women themselves must be revolting to all who regard a fair day's wage for a fair day's work as the basis of industrial morality. Only by raising the position of women in the labour market can this evil be remedied. Only by this means can men be safeguarded from the perpetual danger of undercutting. And we know that no class—and no sex—can be raised industrially without first obtaining the Parliamentary franchise.

Do not be misled by the false statement that women are fighting against men, fighting only for their own advantage. Such is not the case. Women want political power to enable them to work for the common good. To remove the cruelties which now afflict women, to promote thereby happier and more harmonious relations between men and women—this is the earnest desire of those who are fighting for female suffrage. While the conflict lasts, while women are driven almost to desperation by obstinate and slow-moving governments, it is inevitable that there should be some appearance of friction or hostility between the sexes. But that is only the outcome of the present fight. As the hostility between Boer and Briton is a thing of the past in South Africa, so surely shall this seeming friction between men and women, this appearance of sex antagonism, pass away when justice has been done.

You know that every act of justice towards yourselves as a class has had to be wrung from those above you. But shall we men cause it to be said

that justice to women had to be wrung from us? Heaven forbid that we should bring this discredit on our sex!

Well may the land monopolist, the creator of slums, fear the advent of women's political power. For it is upon women that the land-starvation ultimately falls with such brutality. We cannot wonder, either, if the Brewer and the owner of sweating-dens should have some fear for the future—the future in which women shall have a voice in politics.

But these fears are not for you, my brothers. You have no cause to dread the triumph of justice and truth.

In this country, as in others, the democracy is taking a courageous stand for the principles of right and truth, for the brotherhood of the human race. The democracy is demanding for every individual a fair start and a fair chance in life. The democracy is demanding, also, that the power of the great anti-social forces—such, for instance, as the liquor trade—shall be ruthlessly broken up. It is a long, hard fight. At times it seems that the influences of reaction must triumph; it seems that the powers of evil are gathering force for one last firm resistance. It even seems that the labour and sacrifices of those who seek for nobler things must be in vain.

But we know that Right is going to triumph. We know that in the end humanity will emerge victorious. Yes; but we also know that before us lies a desperate struggle—a conflict which, by one act of justice or by withholding our hand from that act, we can make either shorter or longer. If men



continue to exclude women from full participation in the political life of the nation, it may be that for a time the forces of injustice and tyranny will gain the upper hand.

"The emancipation of womanhood," says Mr. Lloyd Thomas, "is the first and most necessary step to the emancipation of human society from evils which men are powerless to fight alone. . . . We need woman's moral spirit and insight in all our most urgent social questions. On all the great human issues, the voice of women would be the deliverance of the higher morality of the nation; it would be . . . a voice in the interests of peace against war. In matters of social purity their power is almost our only hope; for that horrible cancer of vice is almost exclusively man-made. Their help for temperance reform would be, I believe, decisive; whereas now the brewer and his friends are victorious to the point of defiance and contempt. On subjects like infant mortality, the care of the feeble, the imbecile and the unfit, medical inspection, and feeding of school children, education, labour legislation generally, apart from all questions of rights, we need women's suggestion and help and experience."

I appeal to you, therefore, my brothers, to fight for the rights of women as in the past you fought for your own rights, and as you still are fighting. Indeed, in fighting for the rights of women you are fighting also for your own welfare and for that of all mankind. In the freedom of women should rest your hopes, your aspirations.

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## Militant Methods in History

By JOSEPH CLAYTON

With an Introduction by H. W. NEVINSON



## Introduction.

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My friend, Mr. Joseph Clayton, has here described in brief the great crises in our history which mark, as it were, the battles along our road to freedom. We have had no written Constitution; we have gained nothing as a free gift—nothing all at once; bit by bit, class by class we have fought our way onward; and each advance has cost a struggle. It is all very well for a poet to talk of our freedom slowly broadening down from precedent to precedent. That picture is far too calm and gentle for the truth. There was many a savage onset in the progress that Tennyson thought so smooth, and freedom would not have broadened down at all but for the indignant devotion of men and women who counted dear life cheap for her cause.

It is only by defiance that our liberties have been won hitherto. For each in its turn the battle had to be fought against the brute army of privilege, established power, custom, ridicule, and indifference. Nor was the victory ever complete and the contest done. Either to beat back encroachments, or to extend the ground, we must remain continually alert, and always under arms. Encroachment, too, is now threatened by the Cabinet or Executive, which usurps the time and frustrates the will of the electors' representatives. And as to extending the ground, nearly every one now admits what is the



next position to be captured. No longer will we suffer half of the population to remain entirely excluded from the main right of our citizenship, and to be compelled to submit to government without their consent. We are in the thick of that conflict now, and Mr. Clayton here assists us to learn courage and persistence from the example of those who have triumphed in similar battles before us.

HENRY W. NEVINSON.

## MILITANT METHODS IN HISTORY.

### CHAPTER I

#### How Magna Carta was Won. 1214-1215 A.D.

One copy of the Great Charter still remains in the British Museum, injured by age and fire, but with the royal seal still hanging from the brown shrivelled parchment. It is impossible to gaze without reverence on the earliest monument of English freedom, which we can see with our own eyes and touch with our own hands, the Great Charter to which from age to age patriots have looked back as the basis of English liberty.—  
J. R. GREEN.

WHAT was this Great Charter—this Magna Carta—this to which patriots have turned from age to age? and how came it that a king like John, as astute as he was unscrupulous, and as vigorous as he was cruel, was compelled to sign so remarkable a document?

The Great Charter itself neither conferred new rights or privileges nor sanctioned any new political liberties. In the main it was but a re-affirmation of the earlier Charter of Henry I. Its real importance and value came in here—it was a *written* document, it was “the first



great act which laid down in black and white the main points of the Constitution and the several rights and duties of king and people." "The Great Charter marks the transition from the age of traditional rights, preserved in the nation's memory and officially declared by the Primate, to the age of written legislation of parliaments and statutes, which was soon to come." It was felt in England in the thirteenth century that there was no security of life or liberty and no possibility of justice between man and man, without something positive and definite written down in black and white, to command submission from both the king and his subjects.

There was no question about the need for the Great Charter.

When Stephen Langton, the Great Archbishop of Canterbury, whose name is for all time linked with the Great Charter, returned to England in 1214, he found the administration of justice utterly corrupt, and that, often enough, free men were arrested, evicted, exiled, and outlawed without legal warrant or any pretence to a fair trial.

In a word, the entire system of government and administration set up under the Norman kings, and developed under Henry and Richard, had been converted by the ingenuity of John into a most subtle and effective engine of royal extortion, oppression, and tyranny over all classes of the nation, from earl to villein.—KATE NORGATE—"John Lackland."

The barons were discontented enough at all this misrule, but they had no notion of sticking together, or of uniting in a big national movement until Langton took the lead. And Langton saw that the barons must contend, not only for their own liberties, but for the liberties of all England, that a Charter must be won from King

John which would promise some measure of justice for yeomen, peasants, and artisans—the hardworking people of the land, who in that thirteenth century were voiceless and powerless.

So, in August, 1214, Archbishop Langton called the barons together in St. Paul's Cathedral, and there reminded them of the old liberties promised by Henry I. at his coronation, and appealed for the recovery of these rights. "With very great joy the barons swore they would fight for these liberties, even unto death if it were needful, and the archbishop promised that he would help with all his might."

And now the movement was fairly started. Three months later the barons again assembled, this time in the abbey church at Edmundsbury, with a set purpose.

They swore on the high altar that if the king sought to evade their demand for the laws and liberties of the charter of King Henry I. they would make war upon him and withdraw from fealty to him till he should by a charter furnished with his seal confirm to them all they demanded. They also agreed that after Christmas they would go all together to the king and ask him for a confirmation of these liberties, and that meanwhile they would so provide themselves with horses and arms that if the king should seek to break his oath they might, by seizing his castles, compel him to make satisfaction. And when these things were done every man returned to his own home.—ROGER OF WENDOVER.

In vain John tried, by evasion and by organising the support that yet remained to him, to break up the confederacy of barons and get rid of their demands. All his efforts were unsuccessful, and at Easter, in the following year, the king was compelled to listen to Langton while the Archbishop read out the demands of the barons. "They might as well ask for my kingdom at



once," was John's reply, when he heard the various items of the petition, and he swore he would never grant the liberties that were asked for. Thereupon, when the news came that the King had refused their petition the barons flew to arms, formally renounced their homage and fealty, and chose a militant leader, Robert Fitz-Walter.

John would have withstood the barons if he could; but he had but a handful of mercenaries from Poitou, and London had welcomed the insurgents. There was nothing for it but surrender, and on June 15th, 1215, John met the barons of England in the meadow of Runnymede, between Staines and Windsor, and there, in the presence of Archbishop Langton and "a multitude of most illustrious knights," the Great Charter was signed.

Henceforth it was decreed, with many another matter, that no free man was to be seized, imprisoned, ousted of his land, outlawed, banished, or in any way brought to ruin, save by the legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land, and that, to no man was justice to be sold, denied, or postponed by the King.

A week later the Great Charter was published throughout all England.

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For further information readers are referred to Matthew Paris, Roger of Wendover, and Ralph of Coggeshall—all in Rolls' Series; also Stubbs' "Select Charters" and Kate Norgate's "John Lackland."

## CHAPTER II

### **Simon of Montfort and the Beginning of Parliamentary Representation.**

**1257-1265 A.D.**

FORTY years after the signing of the Great Charter at Runnymede the struggle for good government in England once more comes to a head, and Simon of Montfort, Earl of Leicester, is now at the head of the barons anxious for a reform—Simon, the great Earl, who withstood King Henry III. and his evil counsellors, "like a pillar that cannot be moved."

It was an evil time for England in the year 1257. A horde of foreigners in the King's service devoured the land, law and justice were brought into general contempt by the King's judges and sheriffs, the Great Charter was set at nought, and to make matters worse for the mass of hardworking people, after a wet summer and a bad harvest had come inevitable famine.

Henry III. was both brave and merciful; but he was extravagant, and his word was utterly unreliable, so that no man could trust him; had the King listened to Simon and the best of the barons instead of heeding the false advice of the alien parasites, the appeal to arms might have been avoided.

The barons put their case plainly in 1258, when Henry



was again asking for money from his subjects. "The King's mistakes call for special treatment," said Richard, Earl of Gloucester. "If the King can't do without us in war, he must listen to us in peace," the barons argued—anticipating the demand expressed centuries later that representation must accompany taxation.

A contemporary writer, William of Rishanger, gives in rhyme the need felt in the thirteenth century for Parliamentary representation :

The King that tries without advice to seek his people's weal  
Must often fail, he cannot know the wants and woes they feel.  
The Parliament must tell the king how he may serve them best,  
And he must see their wants fulfilled and injuries redressed.

Henry was obliged to summon a Parliament, and in June the "Mad Parliament," as it was called, because the barons attended it fully armed, assembled at Oxford. Earl Simon and his friends fully anticipated civil war at Oxford in that year 1258, but they were too strong for the King's party, and carried all before them, so that the war was postponed for five years.

The "Provisions of Oxford" were the work of that Parliament in 1258; and these Provisions promised a better Government, for they required the King to have a standing council of fifteen, and a meeting of Parliament three times a year—in February, June, and October. To this Parliament four knights were to be summoned, chosen from each county by the King's smaller freehold tenants. To save expense, the baronage was to be represented by twelve commissioners.

Henry, Prince Edward, his eldest son, Earl Simon, and the English barons, took oath that these Provisions should be obeyed, "that neither for life nor death, for

hatred or love, or for any cause whatever, would they be bent or weakened in their purpose to regain praiseworthy laws, and to cleanse the kingdom from foreigners." As for the aliens, who made all the mischief, they fled to the Continent—for a time.

Only for a time, for Henry was soon at his old work, complaining that he had been forced against his will to submit at Oxford, and the barons failed to stand together. The Provisions were not fulfilled, and appeal was made to King Louis of France to arbitrate — if haply civil war might be averted.

At Amiens, in January, 1264, Louis decided in favour of Henry and against the barons, annulling all that had been done at Oxford, and this award destroyed all hopes of peace. Certain of the barons went over to Henry's side, but Simon answered the deserters by declaring manfully, "Though all should forsake us, I and my four sons will fight to the death in the righteous cause I have sworn to uphold." Yeomen and peasants could take little part in the struggle, but London rallied to the cause of reform, and the Cinque Ports, and though Simon made a last effort for peace, offering £30,000 to Henry if only he would stand by the Provisions of Oxford, the proposal was rejected with scorn.

So there was nothing for it but battle, and on May 14th, 1264, Simon met the King's army at Lewes and routed it, carrying off the King and Prince Edward as prisoners in honourable captivity. Once more Henry swore to observe the Provisions of Oxford, and to employ no aliens in his service, and Earl Simon, with full power in his hands, proved what manner of statesman he was.



Either Simon's views of a constitution had rapidly developed, or the influence which had checked them in 1258 was removed. Anyhow, he had genius to interpret the mind of the nation and to anticipate the line which was taken by later progress.—STUBBS.

It was in that one short year of Simon's authority that we get the beginnings of representative government in England, for in December the writs were issued for the famous full Parliament of 1265. For the first time two burgesses were to be elected to Parliament from each city and borough in addition to two knights from each shire.

Parliament met in January and sat till March, confirming all that had been agreed upon by Henry and Simon at Lewes.

But Simon's good government was short lived. Jealousy of his power drove Earl Gilbert, of Gloucester, to revolt, Prince Edward made his escape, and some of the Welsh nobles rose for King Henry.

Earl Simon, cut off from his sons, fell fighting at Evesham, on August 14th, fighting to the last like a giant for the liberties of England, and the news of his death was received with general mourning by the common people. They counted the great earl a martyr; and wisely, for to die for justice' sake is to die a martyr.

But though it seemed that all was lost when Simon perished at Evesham, the good cause of liberty was not really lost. For the very barons who had deserted him for the King were determined that the King should henceforth obey the Great Charter.

And the lasting value of Simon's work was seen in 1295, when Prince Edward had become Edward I. In that year the great representative Parliament was summoned on the acknowledged principle that "that which

touches all shall be approved by all." By that very principle this Parliament served for "a pattern for all future assemblies of the nation."

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Readers anxious to read the story of Simon of Montfort for themselves are referred to Matthew Paris, William of Rishanger, and Adam of Marsh—all in the Rolls' Series; to the "Political Songs," Camden Society, 1839; to Stubb's "Select Charters," and "Constitutional History," vol. 2; and to W. H. Blaauw, "The Baron's War."



### CHAPTER III

## John Hampden and Parliamentary Government—1629-1643.

By the ancient laws and liberties of England it is the known birthright and inheritance of the subject that no tax, tallage, or other charge shall be levied or imposed but by common consent in England, and that the subsidies of tonnage and poundage are no way due or payable but by a free gift and special Act of Parliament.

In these memorable words began the declaration moved by Sir John Eliot in the House of Commons on March 2nd, 1629.

Only by physical force could the resolutions be carried, for Charles I. had ordered the adjournment of the House. So the Speaker was held down in his chair, the Sergeant-at-Arms was stopped in his effort to remove the mace, and the key of the House of Commons was turned from within until the sitting was over.

Two days later Parliament was dissolved by Royal proclamation, and for the next eleven years Charles ruled without calling Parliament together, determined that until the Commons were more submissive he would govern through his ministers alone.

The King's difficulty was to get money, and it seemed that by the device of ship-money—taxation on the pretext that ships were to be furnished with supplies for

the prevention of piracy—this difficulty had been overcome.

It is John Hampden, a country gentleman and a leader in the House of Commons, whose name has come down to us for resistance to this tax.

The King's judges, by ten to two, had decided that ship-money was legal, but the House of Commons had decreed that all forced loans and taxes were unlawful unless sanctioned by Parliament; and Hampden saw clearly that if the Crown could obtain a revenue without consulting Parliament there was an end to constitutional government, and all the work of building up a representative House of Commons was undone.

The amount was small—only a matter of 20s.—but to Hampden the principle was everything. When the case came into the courts judgment was given against Hampden; but five of the twelve judges decided that his objection was valid, and the arguments for non-payment were circulated far and wide, so that, in the words of Clarendon, "the judgment proved of more advantage and credit to the gentleman condemned than to the King's service."

Charles was compelled to summon Parliament again, so sore was his need for money, and after the "Short Parliament" of three weeks, came, in 1640, the "Long Parliament," which lasted thirteen years, and was only dissolved in the end by the arms of Oliver Cromwell.

Charles called Parliament together for the one purpose of getting supplies, but the House of Commons met in no spirit for voting taxes before the grievances of the country had been redressed, and in no mood of submission. Men like Hampden and Pym were now



determined that the King's ministers should be answerable to Parliament for their policy, that the House of Commons should, in fact, be the real governing body of the nation, that, briefly, the people who supplied the money for government should have a voice in the spending of that money. Neither Pym nor Hampden was Republican. Both men believed in government by King, Lords, and Commons; only the royal claim of "Divine right" and the royal absolutism that regarded Parliament as a machine for voting money for the Crown without questioning or criticising the royal policy, were intolerable. If the King would not listen to the Commons, then the Commons would prove, by force of arms in the last resource, that in them and not in the Crown was the real authority of government.

But Hampden and Pym were far from desiring civil war; they were for constitutional methods as long as such methods were possible. Charles simply could not bring himself to see the point of view of the House of Commons men, and treated every movement they made as grossly improper. The crisis came when the Grand Remonstrance of the House of Commons was presented to the King, in December, 1641. The Remonstrance was in no sense a revolutionary manifesto, but it stated, quite frankly, the case for the Parliament, and its main points were the need for securities for the administration of justice, and an insistence on the responsibility of the King's ministers to the Houses of Parliament. It was only carried in the Commons by a majority of eleven—159 to 148.

The reply of Charles to the Grand Remonstrance was to order the surrender of five members of the House of

Commons on an impeachment of high treason. "All constitutional law was set aside by a charge which proceeded personally from the King, which deprived the accused of their legal right to a trial by their peers, and summoned them before a tribunal which had no pretence to a jurisdiction over them."

The House of Commons declined to surrender the five members, and when Charles came in person to Westminster to demand their arrest, the five members (of whom Pym was one) were safely away in the City of London. In vain the King endeavoured to procure their arrest, the citizens—all for the Commons—ignored his writs, and called out the trained bands for the protection of the people's representatives.

And now, in the end of the winter of 1642, by war, and war alone, was the issue between the King and the Commons to be decided. Constitutional precedents were rudely broken when the King levied troops by a royal commission without advice from Parliament, and when Pym, for the Commons, got an ordinance through Parliament, appointing the Lords-Lieutenant of the counties to command the Militia without warrant from the Crown.

The final attempt at negotiations came to an end in April, Charles rejecting the proposals for limiting the power of the monarchy with the words, "If I granted your demands I should be no more than the mere phantom of a king."

By August war was begun.

Less than a year later and Hampden, who had raised a regiment of infantry from his native county of Buckinghamshire, fell mortally wounded after a skirmish



with the King's troops on the field of Chalgrove. For six days he lingered, and then at Thame, on June 24th, 1643, all further battling for human liberties was over for John Hampden.

His reputation of honesty was universal, and his affections seemed so publicly guided that no corrupt or private ends could bias them.

So Clarendon wrote of John Hampden.

The civil war went on, though Hampden was dead, and the final success of the Parliamentary Army under Cromwell not only brought the King and his minister, Archbishop Laud, to the scaffold, but ended for ever in England all absolute supremacy of the Crown. The mass of working people in the country were largely indifferent to the struggle between the King and Parliament (see G. P. Gooch, "History of Democratic Ideas in the Seventeenth Century"); how could it be otherwise when the labourer and the artisan must needs be about their daily work?

But in spite of this inevitable indifference time has proved the lasting value to the nation of John Hampden's work.

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Readers cannot do better than turn to S. R. Gardiner's "History of England" and "History of the Great Civil War" for further information.

## CHAPTER IV

### **The Passage of the Great Reform Bill —1832.**

FOR fifty years the question of the reform of the House of Commons was discussed and agitated in the country before the great Reform Act of 1832 gave some answer to the agitators, and brought a temporary peace.

The movement fluctuated in those fifty years. Its beginning may be dated from Major Cartwright's proposals in 1776, and the old Major—whose statue may be seen in Burton Crescent, Bloomsbury—was rightly called the "Father of Reform." In 1780, the Duke of Richmond moved in the Lords for manhood suffrage and annual Parliaments, and for the next ten years the Whigs looked favourably on Parliamentary reform. But the question never touched the great masses of people in the eighteenth century.

The success of the French Revolution stopped the movement for a time, for the English Government, alarmed at democracy, ruthlessly stamped on all the reform associations, and the Whigs were without faith or courage. Then, after Waterloo, the distress in the country made men and women (for in those days there were societies of female reformers) turn once more to Parliament. Again the Government adopted a policy of repression. In 1819 the entirely peaceful demonstration



at Peterloo, near Manchester, was attacked by the yeomanry and broken up with loss of life, and Radical reformers were prosecuted and imprisoned. The *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, the *Six Acts* were passed to put down all free speech. "The Tory Government was still afraid of the Ghost of the French Revolution. Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, had no remedy but repression." (Professor Tout.)

Sir Francis Burdett, M.P. for Westminster, was the Parliamentary leader of the Radicals; "Orator" Hunt (afterwards M.P. for Preston) was the popular agitator, and William Cobbett had an enormous influence on the side of reform with his *Political Register*.

The ten years of George IV.'s reign (1820-1830) saw a considerable advance in public opinion, and when William IV. came to the throne in 1830 it was said on all sides that there must be some change in the matter of electing the House of Commons, and political unions sprang up in numbers. The failure in the harvest of 1829, followed by an unusually hard winter, brought general misery and distress. In the agricultural districts rick-burning became contagious, while silk weavers and mill hands broke out into violence in the Midlands. In Huddersfield, 13,000 individuals were found with not more than 2½d. a day to live on. It was felt that there was no hope for better times while the people were so unrepresented in Parliament, and were voteless and voiceless. For what was the political condition of things before the Great Reform?

Seventy Members of Parliament were returned by thirty-five places like Old Sarum, which had hardly any voters at all.

90 members were returned by 46 constituencies having less than 50 voters.

37	„	„	„	„	19	„	100	„
52	„	„	„	„	26	„	200	„
157	„	„	„	„	84	men.		

Towns like Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham had no representatives at all.

To make matters worse, in 1830 the Duke of Wellington, then at the head of the Tory Ministry, declared that "no better system (of Parliamentary representation) could be devised by the wit of man," and that he "would never bring forward a reform measure himself, and should always feel it his duty to resist such measures when proposed by others." (Yet less than two years was to see Wellington's opposition ended and Reform carried into law.)

Public opinion, encouraged by the Revolution in Paris in 1830, was stronger than the Government realised. Wellington himself felt obliged to advise that the Royal visit of the King to the Mansion House on November 9th, 1830, should be postponed, so greatly did he fear a hostile demonstration in London. On November 15th, the Tories were defeated in the House of Commons, and by the end of the month Grey, the leader of the Whigs, was Prime Minister. At the beginning of 1831 Reform had become the most pressing of all political questions. On March 21st, the Reform Bill, introduced by Lord John Russell, grandfather of the present Earl Russell, passed its second reading in the House of Commons by a majority of 1, 302—301, and a month later Grey's ministry was defeated in Committee, and Parliament was dissolved.



In that General Election in the summer of 1831 the popular cry was for "the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill."

"The whole countless multitude of reformers had laid hold of the principle that the most secure and the shortest way of obtaining what they wanted was to obtain representation. The non-electors felt themselves called upon to put forth such power as they had as a means to obtaining the power which they claimed."

The result of this was that "the elections were to a wonderful extent carried by the non-electors by means of their irresistible power over those who had the suffrage."

For "the higher order of non-electors combined their will, their knowledge, and their manifest force in political unions, whence they sent forth will, knowledge, and influence over wide districts of the land. And the electors, seeing the importance of the crisis—the unspeakable importance that it should be well conducted—joined these unions."

Of course, there was a certain amount of disturbance at the elections. At the dissolution the Lord Mayor of London sanctioned a general illumination, and the Duke of Wellington's unlit windows were broken. But "that the amount of violence was no greater than it was, remained, and still remains, a matter of astonishment to the Anti-Reform Party."

At the elections the Reformers carried the day, and the new House of Commons passed the second reading of the Bill on July 8th, by 136, 367—231.

The Coronation of William IV. took place in September, while the Bill was still in Committee, and on

September 21st the third reading passed with general cheers by 109, 345—236. On the 8th of October the Lords promptly rejected the Bill by 39, 199—158, and at once fierce riots broke out all over the country—in especial at Derby, Nottingham, and Bristol.

Personal assaults were made on several peers conspicuous as Anti-Reformers; Lord Londonderry was knocked off his horse in London, and the Dukes of Newcastle, Cumberland, and Wellington were attacked. Window-breaking was common.

At Derby the jail was stormed, at Nottingham the castle was burned, and of nine men subsequently convicted of riot, three were hanged.

At Bristol the arrival of Sir Charles Wetherell, the Recorder, a leading "anti" in the House of Commons, was the signal for insurrection. Wetherell arrived on Saturday, October 29th, and the fierce hostility of his reception compelled him to leave the city as quickly as he could. A crowd which "never consisted of more than five or six hundred persons" then proceeded to fire the jail, and to burn the Mansion House, the Customs House, Excise Office, and Bishop's Palace. (The bishops were particularly obnoxious because their twenty votes had been cast against the Bill.) All Sunday the work of destruction went on, magistrates and military uncertain how to act, while "20,000 orderly persons attended churches and chapels, to whom no appeal was made." Twelve lives were lost in those three days at Bristol—four killed by the soldiers, and six burnt, and ninety-four were disabled. On Monday, the 31st, the military at last intervened vigorously, and the riots were ended. At the subsequent commission,



eighty-eight were convicted of riot, and four were hanged. The Mayor was acquitted, but Colonel Brereton, a humane man in command of the troops, "sank under the conflict between his civil and professional conscience," and committed suicide.

The Government, of course, repudiated the rioters, but never hesitated about Reform, and on December 6th, with the new Session, the Reform Bill was again and for the third time introduced into the Commons. No notice was taken of the ultra-reformers who throughout the agitation attacked the Bill as "undemocratic." On December 6th the second reading was passed by 162—a bigger majority than ever, 324—162. Then the Bill went into Committee, "and it is amusing to read the complaints of Anti-Reformers, of the hurry in Committee, as if the provisions of the Bill were perfectly new to them."

At the end of March the Bill was through the House of Commons, and now the Lords hesitated and allowed the second reading to pass by 184—175. But on May 9th the Lords struck out in Committee the clauses disfranchising the rotten boroughs, *i.e.*, the boroughs like Old Sarum. Grey at once resigned, and the Duke of Wellington tried his best to form a Tory anti-reform Ministry. The task was beyond him in the temper of the country.

The National Political Union came to the front in London. At Birmingham, the political union mustered 150,000 at a great mass meeting, and proposed to march to London, and encamp on Hampstead Heath. Petitions flowed in, urging Parliament to vote no supplies, and resolutions were passed, refusing to pay taxes till the Bill became law.

Wellington declared the army was in readiness to put down revolution, but there was a doubt expressed whether the army could be relied on. "There is reason to believe that what passed at Birmingham immediately determined the issue of this mighty contention."

At all events, Wellington could not make a Government, and the King had to recall Grey, and gave him assurance that reforming peers should be created to carry the Bill.

But the battle was over, the Anti-Reformers retired, and on June 4th, 1832, the Reform Bill passed the Lords by 84, 106—22. Three days later it received the Royal Assent.

The main provisions of the Reform Bill were (1) the entire disfranchisement of all boroughs with less than 2,000 inhabitants; (2) one member only for boroughs with between 2,000 and 4,000 inhabitants; (3) representatives for Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and other great manufacturing towns, and for several boroughs in London; (4) county franchise to leaseholders and £50 tenants at will, in addition to freeholders; (5) borough franchise, £10 rateable value; (6) county elections not to exceed two days, borough elections one day.

"The Reform Bill did not bring in *democracy*—it prepared the way for it. Vainly the Whigs protested that it was a *final measure*. It was only a stepping-stone to further changes." (Prof. T. F. Tout.)

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The Annual Register for 1830, 1831, and 1832, and Harriet Martineau's "History of the Great Peace, 1816-1846," give ample information of the passage of the Great Reform Bill.



## CHAPTER V

### The Impetus to the Reform Bill of 1867.

The Whigs were wrong when they called the great Reform Bill of 1832 a *final measure*. There can be no finality in political or social life. It is either progress or stagnation and death.

Radicals and Chartists soon found that further reform was necessary, and that the franchise must be extended to the working-classes; but it was not till 1866 that the House of Commons gave very serious consideration to the matter.

In that year Gladstone, the leader of the Liberal Party in the Commons, brought in a moderate measure, reducing the borough qualification to a £7 rental. The Bill provoked no enthusiasm, and it was fiercely attacked by the Whigs, who, headed by Robert Lowe, retired from the Liberal Party into "a new cave of Adullam." The Conservatives joined in the attack, and in June the Liberal Government, defeated in the Commons, resigned.

The Conservatives took office in July, with Lord Derby for Prime Minister and Disraeli as Leader in the Commons.

It was quickly seen in the country that the cry for reform, for the enfranchisement of the town artisan—the agricultural districts remained unawakened—was

the utterance of men in earnest for representation in Parliament. The defeat of the Bill—poor a measure as it was—roused the people in the towns to action. Reform Leagues and Reform Unions sprang up as they had done in 1831, in answer to the assertions of Anti-Reformers that the working-classes were indifferent to the franchise.

Then, in London, came the disturbance about the Hyde Park railings, and "the incident undoubtedly gave an impetus to the Reform movement. The question of the franchise, which had hitherto mainly interested politicians and zealots, was thrust before the country." (Low and Sanders' "Political History of England.")

What happened at Hyde Park was this:—The London Reform Union (whose president was Mr. Edmund Beales, a revising barrister) decided to hold a monster demonstration in Hyde Park on Monday, July 23rd, for this purpose, according to a letter in the *Daily News*, July 25th, 1866:—

"To disabuse the Tories of the idea that the working-classes are indifferent to the possession of the franchise; and as the *Times* persistently declines to report their meetings elsewhere, they resolved to place themselves *en evidence* in the most aristocratic quarter in London."

The Chief Commissioner of Police (Sir Richard Mayne), acting under orders from the Home Office, declared the meeting must not take place, and issued a proclamation announcing that the gates of the park would be closed that evening at five o'clock.

The London Reformers determined to test the legality



of this prohibition, and marched from all parts of London to Hyde Park.

When the first of the processions arrived at the Park, the gates were closed and a line of policemen was drawn outside. Mr. Beales and some other prominent Reformers came up in a carriage, alighted, and endeavoured to enter the Park. They were refused admittance, and on asking by what authority, were told it was the authority of the Commissioner of Police. Then Beales and his friend returned to their carriage, intending to contest the matter in the Law Courts, and drove away to Trafalgar Square. A large crowd followed them thither, and an orderly meeting was held.

But the great mass of people remained outside the Park, "pressed and pressing round the railings." Some were clinging to the railings, others deliberately weakened the supports of the railings. Park Lane was thronged, and all along the Bayswater Road the crowd was thick. The line was too long for the police to defend, and when the rails gave way the people poured in.

"There was a simultaneous impulsive rush, and some yards of railing were down, and men in scores were tumbling and floundering and rushing over them. The example was followed along Park Lane, and in a moment half-a-mile of iron railings was lying on the grass, and a tumultuous and delighted mob was swarming over the Park. The news ran wildly through the town. Some thought it a revolt; others were of opinion that it was a revolution. . . . There were a good many little encounters with the police; stones were thrown, and iron bars were used on the one side, and truncheons

were used on the other pretty freely. Heads were broken on both sides, and a few prisoners were made by the police; but there was no revolution, no revolt, no serious riot even." (Justin McCarthy, "Short History of Our Own Times.")

The Guards were called out, and a detachment arrived at the Park, but the people only cheered them good humouredly.

In the *Times* of July 24th, 1866, we get an account of the speeches made in the Park at various spots, and of a resolution passed "condemning the attempt of the Ministry to rule the country by force, and their recklessness in wantonly provoking a collision between the people and the officers appointed to keep the peace."

Among the speakers was "a Miss Harriett Laws, who delivered a very fervid address on the political and social rights of the people."

The police made no attempt to interfere with the speakers.

The Home Secretary, Mr. Walpole, a gentle and kindly man, was so distressed at the notion that he was responsible for the disturbance, that when Mr. Beales and some of the Reform Committee waited upon him at his own request two days later, he could hardly refrain from tears. It was agreed at that interview that the Reformers should be allowed to meet in the Park and that the question should be tried at law. "The leaders of the Reform League took their departure, undoubted masters of the situation."

A leading article in the *Daily News*, July 26th, comments thus on the policy of the Government—a Conservative Government it must be remembered—in first prohibiting and then allowing a meeting:—



“ We beg to congratulate the Government on the one prudent and sensible proceeding by which, in the course of yesterday evening, they publicly confessed the malignant absurdity of all they had done before in respect of Monday last, and the crop of most unnecessary troubles, which, thanks to Sir Richard Mayne’s ingenuity, an open air meeting was made to produce. . . . With one body of police on the top of the Marble Arch, another just inside the gates, several detachments executing aimless marches from one side of the Park to the other—one or two chasing mischievous boys across the grass—the wisdom of the Cabinet seems to have broken out afresh in a feverish and blistering activity of precautions.”

No popular rising followed the demonstration in the Park, but—

“ Nothing can well be more certain than the fact that the Hyde Park riot, as it was called, convinced Her Majesty’s Ministers of the necessity of an immediate adoption of the Reform principle. The Government took the Hyde Park riot with portentous gravity.” (Justin McCarthy.)

“ Disraeli saw that there was a new chance to a constructive Conservative leader, and, as a great Reform agitation at last broke out, he boldly renewed his old declaration for Parliamentary Reform. ‘ You cannot,’ he told his followers, ‘ establish a party of mere resistance to change, for change is inevitable in a progressive country.’ ” (Professor T. F. Tout.)

All through the autumn and winter great demonstrations took place in the large towns and cities of the country to demand votes for the workmen, and when

Parliament met on February 5th, 1867, the Queen’s Speech contained these words: “ Your attention will again be called to the state of the representation of the people in Parliament.” Disraeli’s supporters rejoiced at this “ dishing the Whigs,” and by August the Reform Bill, after much revision and amendment, was passed through both Houses of Parliament.

By this Bill all male householders were enfranchised in the boroughs, and male lodgers who paid £10 a year for unfurnished rooms could vote. Thirty-five boroughs with less than 10,000 inhabitants were reduced to one Member, and additional representation was given to Chelsea, Hackney, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Salford, Glasgow, Birmingham, Dundee, and Merthyr.

Eighteen years later the franchise was extended to the agricultural labourer, a further redistribution of seats took place, and the law of Parliamentary representation stood as it stands to-day. We await the new Reform Bill to complete the enfranchisement of the People.

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Justin McCarthy’s “ History of our Own Times ” gives a very good account of the proceedings in 1866-67, and the *Times* and *Daily News* of those years are interesting reading. The memoirs and biographies are too numerous to mention.



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**The Sword and the  
Spirit.**

BY  
**ISRAEL ZANGWILL.**



### NOTE.

*The occasion for the delivery of the speech by Mr. Israel Zangwill which is printed in the following pages was a great meeting held by the Women's Social and Political Union in the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Thursday, November 10th, 1910, a few days before the re-assembling of Parliament after the summer recess. The whole of the lower part of the hall, consisting of some 5,000 seats, was filled by those members of the Union and friends who had purchased tickets. The upper parts were opened free to women. In the course of the evening a sum amounting to £9,000 was subscribed by the audience to the campaign fund of the Union.*

## THE SWORD AND THE SPIRIT.

BY  
ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

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CABINET MINISTERS, whether for or against Female Suffrage, were last year unanimous in assuring us that the cause had been put back by the militant tactics of the body which is responsible for this mammoth meeting. Never had Female Suffrage stood so remote and uncertain. When I remember our majority of 110 in Parliament I am tempted to say to those Ministers, in the words of the Gospel, "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and the earth, how is it ye do not discern this time?" Never was Female Suffrage so near and so certain. The principle of Votes for Women is now absolutely safe—far safer than the places of those Cabinet Ministers. If Mother Shipton had been a real prophetess, she would have left us as a prophecy—

When shall women vote?

When men fly.



I believe that in the drowsy circles and old-world haunts of the Anti-Suffrage League, the question of Female Suffrage is still regarded as open to debate. Not so in live political circles. Not even in Parliament. There the question is no longer "Whether"; it is "How?" It is not now "Shall women have votes?" but "Which party shall collar women's votes?" The settling of this little question is the only thing that delays our triumph. Till the other day both parties banged the door in woman's face. Now both are fighting to hold the door open for her, and it is only because this excess of chivalry blocks the doorway that she is still outside. But the object of our movement is not votes for Conservatives nor votes for Liberals, but votes for women. And having come thus far across every obstacle—over hedges and ditches, over bogs and mountains, over policemen and Premiers—we are not going to sit down patiently while Parliamentary parties work out their mutual long-drawn intrigues. That may take years, and, as Bacon reminds us, delays are dangerous. We demand that our victory shall be translated into legislation forthwith. We denounce the mean trick of denying us the chance of a third reading. That is not playing the game.

The Suffrage movement has brought many useful side-lessons. The penetration of its martyrs into our prisons has thrown most valuable illumination upon the abuses in those prisons, and the penetration of the cause into Parliament has turned a searchlight upon the abuses in Parliament. Laymen like myself, driven from our desks to the platform by the stupidity of the professional politician, stand in amaze before the defects

of the political machine. Any blockhead in Parliament can block a bill, any parrot can talk it out, while even when a large majority has endorsed it, the Prime Minister can cut it dead. We men at least imagined we were living under representative government. But where is our representative government if a majority of 110 can be thus mocked and nullified? Mr. Asquith can see the mote in the eye of the Lords. Let him first remove the beam in his own.

### **The Prime Minister's Paradox.**

Mr. Asquith last night dubbed the international situation *re* armaments a tragic paradox. I doubt if British history has ever produced a more comic paradox than the position of Mr. Asquith, who while his hands are raised to heaven in protest against the veto of the Lords is standing with both feet on a majority in the Commons. Three hundred members of Parliament voted for our Bill and twenty-four more paired in its favour, yet because this solitary autocrat regards Female Suffrage as a social calamity that would let loose upon the country the element he describes as fickle and capricious, these 324 men, including the leaders of all the other parties, count for nothing. We demand the removal of this Asquith veto; we demand the liberties of Parliament against the tyranny of the Cabinet. "I invite you," said Mr. Asquith in this very Hall, "to consider the veto of the Lords as the dominating issue in British politics." I am sorry to tell him there is no such dominating issue. If the subject was ever burning, the Conference has quenched it. But even at the height of the flame, what majority



did Mr. Asquith obtain for his Veto Bill? One hundred and three. One hundred and three after the last ounce of pressure had been put on, after every possible political combination had been exhausted! We have a majority of 110, with 130 absentees still squeezable. I invite Mr. Asquith to consider Female Suffrage the dominating issue in British politics. I call on the Liberal leader to bow to the Liberal majority. I say Liberal majority, though I know that the majority comes from both sides of the House. But one result of the searchlight which Female Suffrage has turned upon the House has been to disclose who are the real Liberals and who are the real Conservatives. For what can be more Radical than to admit a new sex to the franchise, and what can be more Tory than to cling blindly to the *status quo*? The unhappy Members of Parliament, driven by Whips to vote with the Party into which they were born, pitchforked, or seduced by their ambitions, were for once allowed to be true to their own selves. The House of Commons was turned into a Palace of Truth. What strange sights we saw then! Asquith stood revealed as a Tory, Balfour as a Liberal, Winston Churchill as a wobbler, and Lloyd George as a lawyer. We witnessed the Gilbertian situation of the Tory leader instructing the Liberal leader that government rests upon the consent of the governed. That both parties are bitterly dissatisfied with their leaders is an open secret. I can only suggest they should swap them. Perhaps this is what the Conference has been discussing. Perhaps this is its jealously guarded secret. I am sure it is a solution which Suffragists would welcome.

### Democrats in a Dilemma.

The case of Winston Churchill and Lloyd George differs from the case of Mr. Asquith. These gentlemen are not too Tory; they are too Liberal. They are afraid—and I believe honestly afraid—that the ladies enfranchised by our Bill will turn them out of office, and with them all their cherished programme of social reform. Panic-stricken, they count the Tory chickens before they are hatched, and protest that they will eat them out of house and home. I am not concerned to dispute their figures or their calculations, however questionable. They are entitled to their point of view. But it is the point of view of purblind party politicians, not of far-sighted statesmen. These bouncing democrats show little faith in their own speeches, or in the large forces that they declare to be shaping the future. For if, as Mr. Lloyd George told us in his City Temple speech, the storm-cone has been hoisted in social politics, does he suppose that the world-wide waves of disturbance which make the weather can be seriously modified by a petty majority of Tory women of property, even if it be true that the Conciliation Bill would produce such a majority? Can a few thousand maiden ladies ride the whirlwind and direct the storm?

If any party should complain that the Conciliation Bill is not democratic enough, it is the Labour Party. If any party stands to lose by an increased Tory vote, it is the small, struggling party that puts Socialism on its banner. Yet what is the attitude of the Labour Party? Is it counting votes? Is it calculating maiden ladies? No; it is regarding justice. While Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill are giving up to



party what was meant for womankind, it is a member of the Labour Party, Mr. Shackleton, who is bringing in this Bill, and the overwhelming majority of his colleagues cry with him, "Let justice be done though the party fall." But the party will not fall. These Labour leaders show a larger and a shrewder statesmanship than the Liberal leaders. They understand that there is no item of social progress on the programme of Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill which can for a moment compare in importance or fruitfulness with this Bill of ours, none so calculated to break up crusted conceptions of life and stimulate a fresh current of thought on all social questions. It is a limited Bill—we do not need Lloyd George and Winston Churchill to tell us that—but the enfranchisement of even one woman would be more politically momentous, more historically pregnant than the passage of any of these gentlemen's projects. That single vote would for ever sweep away sex as a barrier to the suffrage. Indeed, if I had my way, I would begin by giving the vote to a single woman. And I would give it first to that woman who, by her public zeal, her oratorical talents, and, above all, her passionate and unresting political activity, has shown herself most worthy of a vote—need I say I refer to Mrs. Humphry Ward? It is because all Suffragists realise the expediency of small beginnings rather than endless postponements that they have accepted the Conciliation Bill with a unanimity baffling to their enemies and surprising even to their friends.

What do the long-winded speeches of Lloyd George and Winston Churchill against this Conciliation Bill amount to? That it is a Conciliation Bill. It does not

go far enough. As if a Conciliation Bill *could* go far enough! As if the very object of a compromise was not a compromise! As if some of us were not as eager as these gentlemen for a more democratic charter! Or as if the Bill would have stood half such a chance had it been broader! Oliver Twist asked for more—it is not recorded that he got it. On the contrary, we are told that the master aimed a blow at Oliver's head, pinioned him in his arms, and shrieked aloud for the beadle. Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, indeed, profess their willingness to give us more—despite of the master! I quite believe them. But when? In some vague to-morrow. But we are hungry to-day. And what assurance have we that they will be in power to-morrow? Or that the Lords will be out of power? No! We prefer a bird in the hand to two mocking birds in the bush.

Not that the Conciliation Bill is beyond further conciliation. Just because it is a compromise and not our full formula, we do not cling to every letter and comma of it. If Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill can find any way of broadening the Bill without narrowing its chances, why, so much the better. We are sweetly reasonable. All we insist on at this stage is the abolition of the sex-barrier. And these gentlemen must induce Mr. Asquith to be equally reasonable and not to insist on the enfranchisement of the entire sex at one fell swoop. For, strange to say, the Prime Minister will only permit his misguided henchmen to mislead us into Female Suffrage on condition the evil is wrought on the largest possible scale, and the whole of this fickle and capricious element let loose upon the country at



once. But Mr. Asquith must content himself with a smaller social catastrophe. If he is ready to compromise with the Lords, why should he not compromise with the ladies?

### Arms and the Woman.

But if Mr. Asquith hardens his heart and persists in his veto, then there is nothing left but a return to militancy. The truce will be at an end, the era of conciliation will be closed. Mr. Asquith will have to face the question which Mr. Balfour put to him on that magic day when Parliament was turned into a Palace of Truth. How are you to govern in the teeth of all this passionate discontent? No doubt we shall again hear Pharisaic deprecations of militancy, platitudinous appeals for constitutional tactics. But woman is outside the Constitution. The House of Commons has been built woman-tight. Even the friends she has now won inside it cannot fight for her with the true passion that makes history. "Who would be free," said Lord Byron, "themselves must strike the blow." Mr. Asquith is not blind to the consequences of his obstinacy, and in his last speech in the House on this subject he solemnly warned women against taking up arms. He—the busy builder of *Dreadnoughts*—dared, in a voice grave with religious emotion, to commend to you the words of Christ: "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Well, we know who can quote Scripture for his own purposes, but I doubt if Scripture has ever been quoted with such ludicrous inaptness. For what is the sword which you women are taking up? What

are these militant tactics so portentously rebuked by the Prime Minister? He cannot object to your fighting against him at by-elections—for election warfare is the very breath of his nostrils. He cannot mean the interruption of speeches by questions and comments—for this has always been a feature of British politics. The only new feature is the brutal militancy of the men, the hysterical panic into which the sight or sound of a woman throws them. Mr. Asquith cannot have in mind the threatened campaign of "No vote, no taxes," for since the days of John Hampden the refusal to pay taxes has been regarded as a legitimate political weapon. He cannot be denouncing the old English right of access to a Minister with a petition, for a petition is the very antithesis to a sword. Least of all can Mr. Asquith's language be justified by the acts of physical aggression of which women have been guilty—for, apart from merely technical assaults, these are so rare and petty, counted, as they can be, on the fingers of one hand, that in so vast a movement involving so many myriads of women of all classes they vanish into utter insignificance. In fact, women throughout this whole long fight have wrought fewer casualties than the motor-car containing Mr. Asquith's detectives. One dare not mention it in the same breath with a single riot of miners in Mr. Lloyd George's country. What, then, is this sword? Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Asquith has been misled by a metaphor. There is no more sword in the Suffrage movement than in the Salvation Army. Its militancy is not the militancy of murder which Christ condemned, but the militancy of suffering which Christ commended. The prison and the hospital, hunger, and



darkness, and loneliness—these are its weapons. And they are more terrible than swords. Mr. Winston Churchill understands this, if Mr. Asquith does not, for he designs to blunt your weapons, to pad your prisons with those comforts which male politicians have carefully provided for their own contingencies. You are to be almost first-class misdemeanants. Mr. Winston Churchill in thus drawing the sting of your martyrdoms would weaken you far more than by his vote against the Conciliation Bill. But even this new policy of killing you by kindness must automatically defeat itself. For the easier prison is made the more numerous the applicants will be. Prison has already become an honour, when in addition it becomes a luxury it will be a fascination. Woman's place will no longer be the home: it will be the prison. And how is the Home Secretary to provide prisons (with first-class apartments) for all the multitude of female rebels? He will be driven back on the old harshness; repression will grow severer and severer; and the old miserable round will recommence. Mr. Balfour was right, you see. No Government can govern in the teeth of all this passionate discontent.

For this discontent is no passing petulance, no fit of the vapours to be dissipated as artificially as it arose, but a righteous indignation that has its roots in basic facts and must grow deeper and wider with every rising of the sun. It is not a discontent which is limited to one country, it is an unrest which is stirring everywhere. Even in Turkey the harems are seething with the new spirit; even in India, Lord Curzon told his Oxford audience the other day, there is a movement towards

the emancipation of the native women in the zenanas, and this pillar of anti-suffrage calls for English women to help their dusky sisters who are freeing themselves from the shackles of their old traditions and customs.

### **The Unanswerable Argument.**

The demand for Women's Suffrage has behind it many reasons. It will bring to the State many advantages. And the economic causes which have created a surplus of women and pushed a large number of women of all classes outside the home, there to support themselves, have accentuated the consciousness of these reasons and these advantages. But these economic causes, these reasons and advantages, which we have had to expound to our opponents *ad nauseam*, because they offer those gross material aspects which the Philistine can lay hold of; these causes, reasons and advantages, though they are true causes, true reasons and true advantages, do not touch the true essence of the question. Were these the real, the inmost truth of the matter—were, for example, the vote needed simply as a protection for the female wage-earner—the Suffrage movement would be open to the set-back of the reform proposed by the brilliant Mr. Chesterton, that Western civilisation, having taken a wrong turning when it exposed its women to the greed and competition of the labour market, should boldly retrace its steps and rescue women from the typewriter, the factory, and the coal pit. Looking at the chain-makers of Cradley Heath, Mr. Chesterton, though anti-suffragist, has the frankness to recognise what wretched cant underlies



the anti-suffragists' contention that woman's place is the home, and he at least would not withhold the franchise without proposing another remedy for our present discontents. But alas! our civilisation cannot be turned upside down as easily as Mr. Chesterton's sentences, and the typewriter, the factory, and the coal-pit will long continue to enslave women.

It is true the reasons for Women's Suffrage would remain just as potent were every labouring or professional woman restored to the home and supported by the State. For the home is not an isolated point in the void. Just as light travels to it from every star, so every social force crosses and recrosses it. The law of divorce, for example, affects the very foundations of the home, yet not till the appointment of the Divorce Commission now sitting was woman's view ever consulted. And yet the very fact that women are assisting at this Commission, both as Commissioners and witnesses, leaves it open to the anti-suffragists to argue that ways might be found of weaving women's demands into legislation without the direct agency of the vote. What then is the unanswerable reason for Women's Suffrage? The reason that would remain in being were every practical argument of ours faced and countered by the anti-suffragists? It is that votes for women are demanded by women's spiritual dignity. It is a spiritual unrest which is stirring the world of women. It is in female politics that the storm-cone has been hoisted. That wind of the spirit which lifts the curtains of the harem and shakes the walls of the zenana gathers itself here in England to a higher force and threatens the ancient foundations of Parliament. It is urged by Mr.

Chesterton and others that this isolation of our women from politics springs not from man's contempt for woman, but from a tender consideration for her. It is an attempt to shield woman from the rough realities of life. It may be so. But the Turk or the Hindu would doubtless allege a similar chivalry for the isolation of his womenkind. Indeed, does not the very word "harem" mean a sanctuary? But whether contempt or consideration inspired these phases of woman's status, they are both outgrown. The Doll's-House is too small for the woman of to-day; she wants a house with more breathing-space, nor do we hold her less immaculate because she concerns herself with the drainage. It is not the least respected members of her sex who are assisting in the Divorce Commission. Woman no longer desires to be wrapped in pleasing illusions and to bask in that man-made social order whose foundations are laid in ruined souls and bodies. We are witnessing, in fact, a new phase in human evolution, and blindness to this phenomenon hardly goes with the type of mind recently recommended to the students of Aberdeen University by their Rector, Mr. Asquith—the mind always open to the air of reason and the light of new truth. As the demand throughout the Orient for Parliaments marks the awakening of the men of the East, so the vote is the seal and symbol of the evolution of the women of the West. And because this evolution is a spiritual phenomenon, it needs no arguments, no statistics. It is its own justification. Vainly is it urged that only a minority of women feels with you, that you must first convert all the others. Why should the higher type be dragged back by the less



evolved? No! When you have based the claim of votes for women on the spiritual dignity of women, you have based it on elemental and eternal rock. You have formulated a demand which cannot be out-argued by the stupidest politician or the cleverest epigrammatist. You have said the last word, the word that can neither be added to nor answered. The testimonies it can bring to its truth are not words. The only arguments of the spirit are works, and these arguments you have brought—and stand ready to bring—in overflowing measure. From the lady of quality enduring the torture of the feeding pump to the ill-nourished factory girl saving her ha'pence for the cause, from the amateur news vendor facing the scoffs and chills of the street to the speaker braving the rowdiness of the public meeting—you have raised up a very cloud of witnesses. Self-sacrifice, fearlessness, endurance, unrelaxing labour, sisterly co-operation and cheery comradeship of all ranks and classes, these are the testimonies of your spirit, as they are the guarantees of your speedy and ineluctable victory.

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## Women's Votes and Wages.

BY

**F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE, M.A.**

(Ex-Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.)

*Author of "Local Variations in Wages," etc., etc.*



# WOMEN'S VOTES AND WAGES.

BY  
F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

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Women are told to stay in the house and mind the home; and not to go looking for a vote. But how have we safeguarded the interests of the home and defended the interests of women when we allow the wives and mothers of the citizens of Belfast to bore 380 holes for one penny and work twelve hours a day at the most laborious of all occupations for 4s. a week? I hope the women will get the vote and emancipate not only themselves, but also some of the men.—*Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., at Belfast, September 7th, 1910.*

I WONDER sometimes how we are content to be happy ourselves. I wonder sometimes how easily we are able to pull down the curtains of our imagination, and live comfortably within, when if we dared peep out we should be covered with shame at what we saw. For here, in the very midst of our civilisation—one of the very pillars on which it rests—is a countless body of



women whose every waking thought is concerned in the well-nigh fruitless effort to sustain the life of themselves and their little ones by ceaseless toil. It is not that glad, happy labour which makes the daytime a song and gives the night for refreshing sleep, but the dull monotonous task of grinding poverty. We—our world, the whole of our civilisation—are riding as it were on the backs of these women and bearing them down, breaking their bodies, and perchance, too, their spirits. And we are content to let it be.

I suppose it is a merciful dispensation of Providence which thus limits our finite minds; for if for one moment the barriers which shut out from our eyes these sights of sorrow could be swept away, if we could see in one flash even all that we *actually know* exists, I think we should ever after be blinded by despair. But though this be so, I know that we are wrong if we draw too closely the curtains. If we are content to forget or to remain in ignorance we are guilty of criminal neglect. For there is much to do, and we have got to do it.

### **The Call to Action.**

Action must be our test. Are we prepared to act? If not, we are being false to our common humanity, the pulse of life beats but feebly in our veins, we are only half alive. But if we are ready to act we ask at once, "What, then, can we do?" The Suffragette supplies an immediate answer:—"The Parliamentary vote is the key which unlocks reform. We will first win the vote, and then we will use it to improve the condition of women. By means of it we will abolish

the sweating of women's labour, and we will gradually secure the raising of women's wages until there be not two standards of pay for the same work—one for men and the other for women."

But the Anti-Suffragist replies, "This is all a fallacy: votes cannot affect wages." In the words of Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler:—

Not only has Nature decreed that the same amount of work takes far more out of a woman than it does out of a man, but society has also decreed that she shall, as a rule, receive considerably less payment than he for that amount of work. This is undoubtedly hard upon woman; but I fail to see how the promise of a vote would in any way remedy this evil.

And the Anti-Suffragist is backed up by that peculiar type of Suffragist of whom it may be said that she is "so anxious to be upright that she leans over backwards." Generally such an one is possessed of a smattering of economic knowledge which on the principle that "a little learning is a dangerous thing" leads her woefully astray.

### **"Inferior Work by Women."**

The three stock answers which are usually given by those who deny that the possession of votes by women will raise their wages and abolish the double standard of payment of work according to the sex of the worker are as follows:—

Firstly. Women, it is said, are weaker than men. Their day's work is inferior both in quantity and quality



to that of a man, therefore they cannot expect to receive as much wages for it as men do.

This answer implies a misunderstanding of the problem. Women are not claiming equal pay for a day's work. They are claiming equal pay for an equal result. Where a woman does equal or better work in a day than a man, they claim she should receive equal or better pay (at present in many occupations she only receives one-third to two-thirds his wages for the same work). Where a woman does less or worse work than a man she will expect to receive less wages. Women also claim that the inferiority of women's work, in so far as it exists at present, is mainly due to the fact that they do not receive equal chances in the way of education and training, and that therefore they are handicapped at the outset.

### **"Men Have to Keep a Family."**

Secondly. It is said men receive better wages than women because they have to support themselves and their families on their wages, while women do not have to do so.

This is a common retort from the man in the street. It is ridiculously untrue. In the first place, it is only a conscience-soothing theory that women earn wages not to support themselves or others, but merely as pocket money. As a matter of fact, a very large number of women have to support others besides themselves by their work, and at the same time a very large number of single men have no one else dependent on their earnings. But apart from this, every employer

and practically every workman knows that this is not the principle on which wages are paid. Single men do not command lower wages than married men with wives and families to support. Widows with children do not command higher wages than spinsters. Let a workman on the eve of his marriage go to his employer and say, "To-morrow I am going to get married. I shall have a wife, and perhaps later children, to keep. You will, of course, double my wages." That employer's face would be a study.

### **The Law of Supply and Demand.**

The third answer is one given by the more educated classes of people who have studied a little political economy, and think that "all that they don't know isn't knowledge." These people look with pity and contempt on all those who are ignorant enough to suppose that wages can be affected by anything so direct as votes. "Wages are not to be altered by Act of Parliament, they are determined by the law of supply and demand," they say, with a superior shake of the head, and think that with that sapient remark they have settled the whole question.

In reality this answer proves nothing at all, because it suggests at once the question, "What do supply and demand depend upon?" and unless the Anti-Suffragist can answer that neither supply nor demand are to be influenced by votes his case goes by default.

The ancients used to wonder as to what supported the earth. At last an answer was supplied—the earth rested on Atlas; but a little thought showed that this



was not sufficient. What did Atlas rest on? Then it was said that Atlas rested on an elephant; but again came the question—what did the elephant rest on? A tortoise. And in this unsatisfactory position, of the earth ultimately resting on a self-suspended tortoise, the ancients left the problem. The Anti-Suffragist answer is of a similar character. It is quite true that the rate of wages does in the main in the first instance depend on the supply of labour and the demand for labour, but both these factors (supply and demand) are in their turn, as I shall show, to be influenced by votes.

### **How this Law Operates.**

The operation of the law of supply and demand can best be understood from an individual case. A few years back the number of girls willing to enter into domestic service was much in excess of the demand, there was always a large number of capable girls out of work, consequently they commanded comparatively low wages. Latterly domestic service has gone somewhat out of favour among girls. Mistresses find a difficulty in getting servants, and so, in order to tempt them to take up this work, they have been obliged to offer higher and higher wages and to give better and better conditions. In new countries, where the supply is still less, the wages are still higher and the conditions still more favourable to the girls, for, as the mistresses say, "we have to give them what they want or they will leave us, and we do not know where we shall find others." The first is a case of the supply being in excess of the demand, the second of supply and demand

being about equal, and the third of the demand exceeding the supply, and it should be noted that a very small difference in supply or demand may make a great difference in wages, for in the old days the girls actually out of work were only a few per cent. of the whole, and to-day in the new countries the number of mistresses actually going without servants is not very large.

When we put in place of the girls seeking domestic service the whole number of women offering themselves for all the different avocations of life, professions, business, factories, home work, etc., and in place of mistresses the whole range of employers, we have the problem of supply and demand as it applies to women's labour in general. And taking the whole range we do not find that wages have increased during the past few years in the same way as those of domestic servants. We find on the contrary that in a very large number of women's occupations wages have remained stationary, and that in many others they have actually gone down. Thus in his book "Labour in the Longest Reign," Mr. Sidney Webb says:—"Women's wages for unskilled labour still gravitate, as a rule, pretty closely to the subsistence level, below which they can never have sunk for any length of time."

### **How Votes will affect Supply.**

Now how will women's votes affect this? In the first place, legislation controlled by the vote has a direct effect upon the supply of labour, both as to its quantity and as to its quality. Hardly any industrial or educational legislation or departmental instructions can be



put into effect without altering supply. A few concrete illustrations may be given of cases in which the supply of women's labour would be particularly affected :—

Firstly, suppose that a law were passed raising the school age from 14 to 15, this would reduce the supply by cutting off from the labour market the girls from 14 to 15 years of age.

Secondly, suppose that a law were made compelling a husband in work to give to his wife a certain proportion of his wages for the maintenance of herself and her children (at present a bad husband is able to spend the whole of his wages on himself), that would reduce the supply of women's labour by withdrawing from it those married women who at present go out to work only under the absolute compulsion to provide for themselves and the family.

Thirdly, suppose that widows with young children were provided by law with a special maintenance so that they could devote themselves to those duties of motherhood which Anti-Suffragists call so sacred, but which they do nothing to secure. That would reduce the supply of the worst sweated labour, which is forced to accept starvation wages and monstrous hours as the only alternative to breaking up the home and going into the workhouse.

Fourthly. Suppose the technical training of girls in suitable occupations was carried out much more thoroughly than at the present time (this might be the direct result of a law or be brought about in consequence of a departmental minute of the Board of Education), then the quality of the supply of female labour would be improved.

I have selected these hypothetical changes which might be effected by votes, not because they will necessarily be the ones to be made by women when they get the vote, but because they illustrate the general proposition that the vote will give women the power to influence the supply of women's labour.

### **The Exclusion of Women from Employment.**

By means of the vote women will not only be able to alter the supply of women's labour, but also to alter the demand for it. It must be remembered that the vote controls not merely the making of the laws, but the administration of the laws, for Ministers of the Crown are subject to the pleasure of the House of Commons, and therefore both legislation and administration are liable to be altered when women are enfranchised.

In the first place the Government are the largest employers of labour in the whole country, the total number of their employees exceeding half a million, or more than one-thirtieth of the total number of persons working for wages. An examination of the conditions of employment under the Government exhibits two salient features. Firstly, the exclusion of women from a very large number of occupations for which they are thoroughly well fitted, and secondly, the systematic under-payment of women. This extends also to the Government contractors.

Government service consists of civil, military, and



naval positions. Civil appointments account for some two hundred and fifty thousand employees. These include the vast army of officials working in Government offices, from the permanent heads of departments down to the junior clerks, also some hundred thousand employees in the Post Office, also the posts of Customs officers, tax collectors and assessors, inspectors of schools, inspectors of factories, governors and doctors of prisons, diplomatic agents, consuls, etc., etc. These positions are not all open to the best applicant; the bulk of them, practically all the best paid, are arbitrarily closed to women. Thus, women cannot be appointed to any of the more important work in Government offices, they cannot fulfil any but the lower grades of the service. Women cannot be customs officers, as they frequently are in France; they cannot be tax collectors or assessors; there are no women governors or doctors of prisons, even for such a prison as Holloway, which is confined solely to women. There are no women consuls, and no women in the diplomatic service. There are only about twenty women factory inspectors, where there are some nine hundred men; there are only about twenty women school inspectors, where there are about two hundred and fifty men. In the Post Office all the best places are held by men. Yet women are well fitted to occupy many of these positions, and if they were thrown open to merit irrespective of sex many of them would undoubtedly be filled by women.

Turning to the Army and Navy, most people will agree that these occupations are essentially masculine; but even here the folly of excluding women entirely from the service was shown years ago by the appalling

death-rate in the Crimea before Florence Nightingale and her staff of trained women nurses came on to the scene, and it is now recognised to be necessary to send out a body of women to the field of action whenever a war takes place. It is open to question whether in the Police Force, which in London is directly responsible to the Home Secretary, women might not with advantage be included for special purposes, as they are in Norway. An illustration of what is meant will be found in the fact that women's lodging houses have to be open to the inspection of the police at any hour of the day or night.

But the possession of the vote by women would unlock the door to other employments besides those directly under the Government. There are many trades and callings from which women are excluded by operation of law or Government regulation. The Factory Acts provide that in factories women shall not work after 10 p.m. This may in some cases be a wise provision, but, contrary to the express protest of the women concerned, the Government have recently extended its application to the case of florists. Now, it is necessary for florists, under certain circumstances, to go on with their work after 10 p.m., and as women are not to be employed for this purpose, even though employers are prepared to guarantee a thirteen hours' interval before re-employment next day, women are being turned out of this essentially women's trade, and the work is being given to foreign men. There are other cases where this provision is having a similar result.

Women are excluded from practising at the Bar by the joint action of the law and of certain men's societies,



for, by the law, the only persons allowed to appear as advocates are the members of these societies, and they have decided not to admit women to their ranks. The natural way to open the Bar to women (as it has been opened in almost every other civilised country) would be for the Inns of Court voluntarily to admit women, but if they refuse to do so after women get the vote it will be possible to compel them to do so by law. Similar considerations apply to women in the Church; and that some women, at any rate, are needed in the Church will perhaps be realised when the anomaly of a man chaplain in a women's prison is considered. At present this chaplain always has to have a third person present when he is trying to speak direct to the heart of a woman prisoner. There are other occupations from which women are excluded. For instance, women are not allowed to be drivers of cabs drawn by horses, or of taxi-cabs, in this country, while they are allowed to be so in other countries.

Some of these callings, it will be said, are more likely at present, at any rate, to be filled by exceptional than by average women. Even if this be true in some of the cases which I have mentioned, it is not true of much of the work in the Civil Service. Moreover, though Anti-Suffragists are fond of asking women to remember that laws are not made for exceptional women but for average women, as a matter of fact the laws do operate to exclude not only the average women but the exceptional women from all these employments. The only satisfactory way of dealing with the matter is to leave Nature to settle it. In those occupations particularly suitable to women, women will predominate; in those

equally suitable to men and women they will very likely be found in about equal proportions; while in those least suited to women only the exceptional women will be found.

Reference must also be made to the question of the unemployed. When work was being provided for the unemployed by the local authorities under the direction of the Local Government Board, they commenced by finding work both for men and women, but after a little while they discontinued the latter. The excuse given by Mr. John Burns was that the work was unremunerative. How false this excuse was will be realised from the fact that the loss on the men's work per person was even greater than that on the women's.

In all these ways when women get the vote they will have the power to alter the demand for women's labour, and thereby affect the wages which are paid to women.

### **The Underpayment of Women by the Government.**

It is always a mystery to me how anybody can stand up and deny the power of the vote to alter wages when it must be perfectly clear to anyone that a decision of the House of Commons would compel the Government directly to raise the wages of its own women employees. Of course, if these only numbered a few hundred, such a change might be considered negligible, but as a matter of fact they number more than 50,000, and a change in the rate of wages of 50,000 women, even if it stood alone, particularly when it would affect the



badly-paid Post Office and telephone girls and the miserably paid girls in the army clothing factory, must be considered of importance. But it would not stand alone. In the first place, beyond the direct employees of the Government are two large classes of workers for whom the Government has special responsibility: (1) the teachers; (2) the employees of Government contractors.

The teachers are directly employed by the local authorities, but the Board of Education supplies from the national exchequer a large part of the funds, and has wide powers of control. Therefore, if, after women get the vote, M.P.'s decide that the wages of women teachers shall be raised so that there shall no longer be two standards of pay for identical work (the rate for women being to-day about two-thirds that for men), the Board of Education will be able to get this carried out. There are about 110,000 women teachers.

Government has been compelled to insert a "fair wages clause" into the contracts it makes with contractors. Theoretically this applies both to men and women employees, but practically it only applies to men. As this is a good illustration of how men have failed to protect women, it is worth giving at some length. The clause runs as follows:—

"The contractor shall, under the penalty of a fine or otherwise, pay rates of wages and observe hours of labour not less favourable than those commonly recognised by employers and trade societies (or, in the absence of such recognised wages and hours, those which in practice prevail amongst good employers) in the trade in the district where the work is carried out."

Now the men employees of the contractors are almost

entirely employed at work for which there is a recognised standard rate of wages, therefore in their case the clause is operative. But it is not so with the women. I will quote the words of Mr. Haldane:—

"As the Hon. Member is no doubt aware, the clothing industry is very imperfectly organised, and the consequent absence of any recognised or prevailing rates for any given work tends to weaken the effect of the Fair Wages Clause."

Mr. Haldane went on to say that in some cases they had established a minimum wage, but he hoped the most from the creation of Wages Boards.

The Wages Boards (themselves the result of Parliamentary action) may achieve something, but a still more direct method might be employed. The wages of the women (either day wages or piece wages) might be directly standardised in money. There is nothing extraordinary or new in this. It is the method carried out by the London County Council. At present Government work is reckoned among the worst sweated work in the country, and that this is the fault of the Government the following story from the Westminster Police Court will show.

### A Living Example.

On Monday, April 26th, 1909, a woman was brought before the magistrate charged with attempting suicide. In the evidence it came out that she was engaged on Army contract work, and, working ten and a half hours a day, earned two, three or four shillings a week—six



shillings at most if she worked full time. The magistrate commented on these disgraceful wages.

Next day Mr. Guildford Lewis, solicitor, asked to be allowed to make a statement in court on behalf of his clients, the contractors. In the course of this he said :

“ The whole of this trouble—and this is a matter of public importance—is due to the prices at which the contractors are compelled by the force of competition to take the Government work. If the Government were to insist on the rate of wages of the workers being standardised—as they undoubtedly should do—the whole of the system of cutting down the prices to the lowest fraction would be at an end. There is one public body (the L.C.C.) which insists on a standardised rate for the tailoring, and the workers on their uniforms, etc., do not complain, and have no reason to.”

What a comment this is on the theory that the vote has no effect on wages !

I have now shown that the wages of women who are (1) direct employees of the Government, (2) school teachers, or (3) employees of Government contractors, may all be altered by the power that the vote gives. These three classes together cannot fall far short of, and may possibly exceed, 200,000, or one-twentieth of the total women employed for wages in the country. The direct raising of the wages of this one-twentieth will have a very important effect on the wages of the remaining nineteen-twentieths. This is not merely due to the force of example—though no doubt example has a good deal to do with it—it is the necessary economic result of altering the *character of the demand* for women's labour.

### **How the alterations in the demand for Labour Operate.**

The two main changes with which I have dealt—(a) opening up of new well-paid employment to women; (b) increasing the wages of women at present employed directly or indirectly by the Government—will operate in fact upon the labour market somewhat in the following way : The most capable women in the country will find that there is demand for their labour at a good price in the new or improved occupations, and therefore they will seek employment in them. Other employers will find in consequence that they can no longer retain the services of the most capable women unless they pay a higher price than before. Some of them will do so, others who refuse to do so will only obtain the services of second rank women who were previously getting a lower wage. In the second rank similar considerations will apply; some of the women will be drawn off into the new appointments, some will receive better wages under Government than before, some will go, as I have just shown, into the ranks above. Consequently there will be more competition among employers to secure good work. Better wages will be given, and women from a still lower grade will be brought in to fill the vacant places. Similarly for every grade of labour down to the lowest. And in this lowest sweated grade the effect will be enhanced by the fact that there will be no grade below from which workers can be drawn, and therefore at last the supply of labour will not outrun the demand, as it does at present. Thus, in consequence of the increased and improved demand for



women's labour, there will be a tendency to improve the wages of women, not merely in one trade or calling, but in all.

### **Supplementary Factors.**

Every true political economist knows quite well that all the forces which go to make up an economic result are not capable of detailed economic analysis; they cannot be labelled and pigeon-holed and the exact quantitative value of their contribution ascertained. This is essentially true of the question of wages.

Thus, while it is true that wages depend in the main on supply and demand, it is true also that other factors—some tangible, others intangible—contribute their quota to the result. I have already shown how the enfranchisement of women may affect women's wages by altering both the supply and the demand for women's labour; it remains to notice that these other supplementary factors are also dependent on the power given by the vote.

### **Direct Legislation.**

That wages can, under certain circumstances, be altered directly by Act of Parliament (or by the fiat of a body responsible to Parliament) is evidently the opinion of the statesmen of Australia and New Zealand, who passed the laws relating to minimum wages and to Wages Boards, and also of the statesmen at home who have recently caused Wages Boards to be appointed in this country. The results in Australia and New Zealand and in this country at Cradley Heath, where the women

chain-makers have secured a considerable increase in wages, certainly bear out their opinion; and it may be that much of the worst sweating of women's labour can be prevented by similar means. Again, it is also hardly disputed by anyone that legislation can directly modify the conditions under which labour is performed or the hours during which it continues. These matters are intimately bound up with the remuneration in money which that labour obtains.

### **Political Goodwill.**

It is often a small consideration which finally decides an employer whether to grant or refuse a demanded increase in wages; and among those considerations the desire to keep on the right side of employees *because they have votes* sometimes plays a considerable part, especially where the employer regards himself as an important local political magnate. In this respect women employees, because they are voteless, do not receive the same attention.

### **Custom and Sentiment.**

In spite of all that is said to the contrary, custom and sentiment still count for a good deal in business. An employer will appoint a woman to do precisely the same work as has hitherto been done by a man and give her half or two-thirds his wages. Asked why, he will answer, "It is customary." And though this may not be in fact the whole reason for his action, yet there is enough in it to make it a factor in the result. In my opinion the increased status which women will get



when they are enfranchised will help them to shake off this custom.

### Collective Bargaining.

It is now almost universally recognised that the power of collective bargaining as exemplified by trade unions and by associations of employers has an important influence on wages, for though this was denied for many years by the rigid theorists who took their stand on the sole action of the law of supply and demand, facts have been too strong for them. Women by their isolated position have long been at a great disadvantage in this respect. Sometimes through ignorance of the condition of the labour market, sometimes through their sheer inability to combine, they have been induced to accept wages which in association they could have resisted. When women obtain their citizen rights and are brought into more frequent contact with one another they will escape to some extent from their present isolation, and will gain some of the advantages of collective bargaining. This point was clearly put by Mr. Haldane in the House of Commons on July 11th, 1910, when he said:—

“Everyone knows that the position of women in point of remuneration, of their wages, is not as good as is the case with men, and that is to some extent due to the fact that women cannot associate themselves together with that force and with that authority which is given by the fact that people possess a certain political footing in the State. If for that reason alone I should like to see that happen.”

These four examples illustrate the influence of the vote in affecting wages in other ways than through supply and demand.

### Three Questions.

It remains to notice three rather pertinent questions which have been put with regard to this discussion.

- (1) *Are not the wages of women in reality dependent on the prices which the articles made by women obtain, and in view of international competition is it possible to pay higher wages without placing a tariff on foreign goods?*

I have no intention of entering into a discussion on the merits of a tariff as applied to the industries in which women work; I shall confine myself to showing that wages of women can be raised without necessarily imposing a tariff.

In the first place it is not true that price alone determines wages; the price which can be obtained for goods is only one element in determining the demand for labour; and it is by the interaction of demand and supply that wages are determined. Secondly, a very large part of the women of the country are engaged in occupations (*e.g.*, postal employees, teachers, domestic servants, etc.) in which there is no question of international competition. Thirdly, low wages by no means necessarily imply cheap labour, nor high wages dear labour; employers often find it more economical to pay high wages and get the best work. Fourthly, international agreement is already tackling some of the problems relating to the condition of sweated work, and



it might easily be that the provision of Wages Boards and of similar ameliorative legislation might simultaneously be carried out in different countries.

(2) *Will not the entrance of women into the labour market on more equal terms with men injure men and reduce their wages?*

Whether men like it or not, women are being driven to-day more and more by economic necessity into the labour market and are competing with men. And the most dangerous form of competition is that in which women are undercutting men by selling their labour for a lower price. When women's wages are raised so that equal work commands equal wages whatever the sex of the worker, this unfair competition will come to an end.

(3) *Do you expect that the result of women's enfranchisement in increasing women's wages will be immediate?*

The full result will certainly not be immediate. It will be gradual, and it will not be finally complete until all the artificial hindrances have been removed and the change of status of women has acted and reacted upon all the conditions of life. But some improvement will be seen immediately, for just as when a part of the human body has been artificially compressed the slightest release of the pressure brings relief, so it is with the body politic; directly the artificial hindrances to women's development begin to be removed relief will be felt. This relief will extend throughout the whole industrial world of women.



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