

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

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JANUARY 1, 1889.

PRICE ONE PENNY.  
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**WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.**—Communications for the Editor and Orders for the Journal to be addressed to the Office, Queen's Chambers, 5, John Dalton-street, Manchester.



MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS, DECEMBER, 1888.

Table listing names and amounts for Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage, December 1888.

ROBERT ADAMSON, TREASURER, Queen's Chambers, 5, John Dalton-street, Manchester.

CENTRAL NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS, DECEMBER, 1888.

Table listing names and amounts for Central National Society for Women's Suffrage, December 1888.

Mrs. FRANK MORRISON, TREASURER. Office: 29, Parliament-street, S.W.

BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND SOCIETY.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, NOV. 24TH TO DEC. 22ND, 1888.

Table listing names and amounts for Bristol and West of England Society, Nov 24th to Dec 22nd, 1888.

Mrs. ASHWORTH HALLETT, TREASURER. Office, 69, Park-street, Bristol.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

RECONSTRUCTED UNDER THE OLD RULES. SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS FROM DEC. 13TH TO DEC. 24TH, 1888.

Table listing names and amounts for Central Committee, reconstructed under old rules, Dec 13th to Dec 24th, 1888.

Mrs. HENRY FAWCETT, TREASURER. Office: 10, Great College-street, Westminster.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

The following is a list of the principal societies constituting the National Society for Women's Suffrage, arranged in chronological order as to the date of origin:—

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—Established 1867.

Honorary Secretary: Miss BECKER. Treasurer: Professor ADAMSON. Office: Queen's Chambers, 5, John Dalton-street, Manchester.

EDINBURGH NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—Established 1867.

President: Mrs. PRISCILLA M'LAREN. Secretary: Miss KIRKLAND, 13, Raeburn Place, Edinburgh.

BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Established 1868. President: The COUNTESS OF PORTSMOUTH. Hon. Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. LILLIAS ASHWORTH HALLETT. Secretary: Miss BLACKBURN. Office: 69, Park-street, Bristol.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—Established 1868.

President: Mrs. ASHFORD. Hon. Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. ALFRED OSLER. Office: Broad-street Corner, Birmingham.

NORTH OF IRELAND BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Established 1871. Hon. Secretary: Miss ISABELLA TOD, 40, University Road, Belfast.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—Established 1872.

Secretary: Miss BALGARNIE. Treasurer: Mrs. FRANK MORRISON. Office: 29, Parliament-street, Westminster. (Dissolved by the adoption of New Rules, December 12th, 1888.)

DUBLIN SOCIETY.—Established 1874.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. HASLAM, 91, Rathmines Road, Dublin.

NOTTS BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—Established 1880.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. COWEN, 9, Ropewalk, Nottingham.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOCIETY.—Established 1884.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. BATESON, Harvey Road, Cambridge.

\* CENTRAL NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Established by the adoption of New Rules, December 12th, 1888. Secretary: Miss BALGARNIE. Treasurer: Mrs. FRANK MORRISON. Office: 29, Parliament-street, S.W.

† CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Reconstructed under the Old Rules, December 13th, 1888. Hon. Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. FAWCETT. Assistant Secretary (pro tem.): Miss BLACKBURN. Office: 10, Great College-street, Westminster, S.W.

Each of these societies has a separate Executive Committee and list of subscribers. Each of them holds an annual general meeting, and publishes a report.

\* This Society admits as affiliated bodies entitled to send delegates to its Council Associations organised for other purposes than the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women.

† This Society admits as associated or affiliated bodies, such Associations only as are organised for the sole object of obtaining the Parliamentary franchise for women.

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By far the most important event in the women's suffrage movement that has occurred since our last issue, or, indeed, for a long time previously, is the public declaration in its favour that was made by the Prime Minister at Edinburgh during his recent visit to that city. Speaking at a meeting of the Primrose League in the Lyceum Theatre, on November 29th, Lord SALISBURY said: "I am now speaking for myself only, do not imagine that I am speaking for anyone else, but I do earnestly hope that the day is not far distant when women also will bear their share in voting for members of Parliament and in determining the policy of the country."

Without assuming that Lord SALISBURY spoke for any one but himself, we may safely assume that the public expression of his opinion will have a strong influence over the opinions and actions of others, and that it has created an impression in the public mind that the day when women will be admitted to vote for members of Parliament is less distant than many people have supposed.

In a subsequent speech, at the opening of a Constitutional club at Scarborough on December 20th, Lord SALISBURY took occasion to re-affirm his opinion. In commenting on some observations of Lord LONDESBOROUGH, which, as he said, "justly noted the great influence which women exercise upon the politics of the present day," the Prime Minister went on to say: "They exercise it largely through the Primrose League, and I need not tell you, for you know it already, that as far as I am personally concerned I should be glad to see them exercise it in another manner."

The friends of women's suffrage have long believed that the Marquis of SALISBURY was personally friendly to their cause, but up to the present time they had observed no public or specific declaration on the subject to justify them in openly quoting his authority on their side. Although women's suffrage has been a sort of traditional policy with the Conservative leaders personally from the early days of Lord BEACONSFIELD'S political life, through Lord IDDESLEIGH'S leadership, until the accession of the present Government, yet it is a fact that no one, while

occupying the responsible office of Prime Minister, had given expression to his desire that women shall be admitted to vote for members of Parliament until the ever-memorable declaration of the Marquis of SALISBURY at Edinburgh in November.

A DEPUTATION, consisting of members representing the principal seaside and inland watering places of the United Kingdom, recently waited on the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER to represent to him the grievances of persons who earned their living by letting lodgings, in having to pay the inhabited house duty as levied on private houses at ninepence in the pound instead of at the rate levied on business premises of sixpence in the pound. The contention of the lodging-house keepers was that their houses were really as much business premises as houses used as shops, and they felt it an injustice that they should be required to pay taxation of threepence in the pound more than their neighbours the shopkeepers.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER saw great difficulties in meeting the views of the deputation, and was not quite clear as to the injustice. He thought, however, that the question of the inhabited house duty as a whole might be considered at some future time.

It is worth noting in connection with this deputation that by far the largest number of persons who make their living by letting lodgings are unmarried women and widows, and that in many of the places represented on the deputation, such as Southport, Brighton, Bath, Scarborough, etc., the women who are subjected to this oppressive taxation would, if the Parliamentary franchise were extended to all householders, form a very large proportion of the total electorate of the several localities. It seems not at all improbable that such an amount of voting power in the hands of the persons interested might exert a decidedly stimulating influence on the ingenuity of a CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, in assisting him to solve the difficulty of the problem of equitably adjusting the taxation to be levied on seaside and other lodging-houses.

A REMARKABLE testimony to the oratorical powers of



ladies was given at the opening ceremony of an exhibition of women's industries at St. Leonards last month by the late Speaker of the House of Commons. The exhibition was opened by Mrs. WILSON NOBLE, and Mrs. TUBBS and other ladies took part in the proceedings. Viscount HAMPDEN, in moving a vote of thanks, said, in the course of his address, "I have had some considerable experience in listening to public speeches, and I will say this, that although I have listened to most of the most eloquent men of the present day, I am quite surprised at the way in which womankind are able to address public assemblies. I am bound to say it has struck me with astonishment; and I have heard many ladies, that although perhaps they cannot speak with quite the force and eloquence of men, still they can speak with a clearness, a precision, and voice that are eminently pleasing to listen to."

THE elections for County Councils that will take place this month are of the first consideration as regards the electoral rights of women. The vote for these Councils is by far the most public and important franchise that women have hitherto possessed in this country, and the manner in which they exercise it will be observed with keen attention by all who are interested in the question of the Parliamentary franchise for women.

The matters dependent on the election of the right men to act as County Councillors are such as will be felt in every homestead in the districts over which their powers extend. It therefore behoves women, in their care for these interests, to do what lies in their power to secure the election of competent men for these responsible duties. For these and other reasons, we urge all women who are entitled to vote in the coming elections, to make it a point of honour and duty to record their votes on the polling day for the election of the Councillors to whom the management of the county business will be henceforward entrusted.

MR. T. LENNOX IRWIN writes as follows to the *Morning Post*:—"I think it may save a good deal of trouble if you will allow me to point out how it is that women, though they may vote, are not eligible to stand for election to the County Council. The County Electors Act, 1888, by section 2, incorporates sections 9, 31, 33, and 63 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. Section 9 of the latter act gives the qualification of a burgess voter, section 11 the qualification of a councillor. Section 63 enacts

that 'for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to vote at municipal elections, words in this act imputing the masculine gender include women.' That applies by the words 'right to vote' to the word 'person' in section 9, and from the express reference to this section by inference excludes the persons mentioned in section 11. Thus it seems to me clear that women are not eligible to stand for the County Council."

It is probable that this letter correctly represents the view that returning officers will be advised to take of the law relating to the subject, and that the attempt to nominate women as candidates in the County Council elections will, if persevered in, have a result similar to that which took place a few years ago when it was sought to nominate a lady as a Parliamentary candidate in one of the divisions of the metropolis. The returning officer refused to receive the nomination, and the matter proceeded no further.

THE meeting referred to in our last issue for the purpose of revising the rules of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage took place at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on December 12th. Mr. WALTER M'LAREN, M.P., was voted to the chair. Mr. WOODALL, M.P., moved a resolution, that in the opinion of the meeting the time had come for revising the rules of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage. The resolution was seconded by the Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL. Mrs. FAWCETT moved an amendment to the effect that under the present conditions of the movement it was undesirable to make any change in the rules. Miss BECKER supported the amendment. Although the resolution opening the debate was of this general character, the discussion practically turned on the consideration of the rules themselves, which were held by the proposer of the amendment to destroy the constitution of the Central Committee as a representative union of the various independent societies, and to be perilous in that they provided for the admission of bodies organised for other purposes as bodies affiliated to the National Society for Women's Suffrage and entitled to send delegates to its council. The original resolution was supported by Mrs. CHANT, Mr. A. W. BENNETT, Mrs. BATESON, and Miss JANE COBDEN, while the amendment was supported by Mrs. BEDDOE, Miss BLACKBURN, Mrs. ASHWORTH HALLETT, and Sir OWEN ROBERTS. Many other speakers on both sides were prepared to take part in the discussion, but as there appeared to be a general impression that the meeting was prepared to vote Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, M.P.,

moved the closure of the debate. No opposition was raised to this proposal. Tellers were appointed by the chairman, with the result that on counting the votes there were declared for the amendment 63, against 94, whereupon the chairman declared the amendment to be lost.

The meeting then proceeded to the discussion of the rules. Before entering on this, Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said that in his opinion those who had voted against the adoption of the rules could not logically take part in the discussion; if they were to do so, they would by that action be bound by the rules. The supporters of the amendment then left the meeting.

THE proposed rules were then adopted, with some amendments of detail, and one of a fundamental character. The original draft provided that the title of the Society should be "The National Society for Women's Suffrage." Had this been maintained, the rules would have purported to be rules for the whole Society, and as the meeting was strictly limited to subscribers to the funds of the Central Committee only, excluding subscribers to the Manchester, Bristol, and other societies forming integral portions of the existing National Society for Women's Suffrage, it is obvious that a meeting so constituted could not make rules for the society at large. The difficulty that would have been caused by the title originally proposed was obviated by changing the title of the Society to be organised under the new rules to that of "Central National Society for Women's Suffrage," thus keeping up the analogy with the other branches, each of which adopts the generic title "National Society for Women's Suffrage," with a prefix "Manchester," "Edinburgh," "Bristol," etc., to distinguish them from the others. The Society as organised under the new rules is therefore a section of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, independent, like the rest, and of course perfectly free to organise on whatever basis it deems best, and affiliate to itself whatever Associations it pleases, under whatever conditions it may see fit, now that it has, by adopting a specialised title, localised itself as an independent branch and abandoned the title of Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage.

A LARGE number of the original members of the Central Committee, together with representatives of most of the leading women's suffrage societies in the country, felt that it was very undesirable to permit the cessation of the original Central Committee as a representative body

on which the various societies throughout the country could co-operate in council and action. A meeting was accordingly held in the Westminster Palace Hotel, on December 13th, and although only one day's notice could be given there was a large and influential attendance. Mrs. FAWCETT presided. Colonel COTTON, M.P., moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, M.P., and unanimously adopted: "That this meeting resolves to reconstruct the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, with the old rules and the old organisation." A second resolution, moved by Viscountess HARBERTON, and seconded by Miss JESSIE BOUCHERETT, was adopted for the appointment of a provisional committee to make all necessary arrangements, and to draw up a circular for distribution among friends of the women's suffrage movement, asking their adhesion to the reconstructed organisation.

The offices of the reconstructed Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage are at 10, Great College-street, Westminster.

THE net result of the proceedings in regard to the revision of the rules of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage has been the dissolution of the society heretofore existing under that name, and the creation out of its constituent elements of two distinct societies. The one established by the new rules, on December 12th, under the title "Central National Society for Women's Suffrage," admits as affiliated bodies, entitled to send delegates to its Council, Associations organised for other purposes than the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women. The other, established December 13th by the re-construction under the old rules of the "Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage," admits as associated or affiliated bodies such Associations only as are organised for the sole object of obtaining the extension of the Parliamentary franchise for women.

THE division of the "Central Committee" into two organisations may be regarded as an evidence of redundant energy in that section of the Women's Suffrage Society which has hitherto existed under that name. There are some living organisms in the animal world which increase by fission. The observer perceives an animalcule, perhaps moving a little slowly, as if conscious of some difficulty in progression. The two extremities of the creature show



signs of wanting to go in different directions. In a few minutes he looks again, and lo! instead of one, he beholds two organisms, each instinct with new life. Thus, the Central Committee, having divided into two parts, represents two organisms, each seeking new adherents, each gathering in its harvest in its own separate field, and each, we trust, destined to add its quota to the forces which will bring nearer the accomplishment of the object of the society.

#### THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY AT EDINBURGH ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a meeting convened by the Primrose League in the Lyceum Theatre, at Edinburgh, on November 29th, the Marquis of SALISBURY said: My lords, ladies and gentlemen, in thanking you for this hearty expression of welcome, allow me, in the first place, to congratulate you on the position this independent branch of the Primrose League has assumed in Scotland. It is a very recent growth. For some time there was very great doubt whether the Scotch people would accept the Primrose League. That doubt is now at an end. The League is prospering and growing, and is destined, I have no doubt, to exercise a vast influence on the political future—(cheers)—and I do not imagine, as some people do, that there is nothing of essential importance in the League, or that it is a mere preface of a play. It embodies a very important principle, it represents the modification of our political machinery to suit the change of the political arrangements of our time. The old Conservative associations have done, and do still, an infinite amount of service, but in some respects and for some purposes they were better fitted for the old suffrage, the old arrangements of party, than they were for those which now exist. The Primrose League is freer. It is more elastic. It brings classes more together, and I think its greatest achievement of all is that it has brought the influence of women to bear on politics in a way that has never before been the case. Now, the Primrose League in that respect represents to my mind the modifications of our Constitution that have taken place in the past, and modifications that will probably take place in the future. In the past, as we know, there has been a large extension of the suffrage, and a very much larger proportion of the inhabitants of this country now take their share in the election of members, and in the framing of the policy by which the country is guided. By its more elastic rules and freer organisation, the Primrose League has adapted itself to this state of circumstances. I am now speaking for myself only, do not imagine that I am speaking for anyone else, but I do earnestly hope that the day is not far distant when women also will bear their share in voting for members of Parliament—(cheers)—and in determining the policy of the country. I can conceive no argument by which they are excluded. It is obvious that they are abundantly as well fitted as many who now possess the suffrage, by knowledge, by training, and by character, and that influence is likely to weigh in a direction which, in an age so material as ours, is exceedingly valuable—namely, in the direction of morality and religion. I look, therefore, upon the League as representing an important matter in the past, but as a great agent in the future. (Cheers.)

#### LORD SALISBURY AT SCARBOROUGH.

The Marquis of Salisbury opened a new Conservative club at Scarborough on Dec. 20th, and in the course of his address said: Lord Londesborough, in the course of his speech urging each member of this audience to bring to the common cause all he could of exertion and influence, justly noted the great influence which women exercise upon the politics of the present day. (Cheers.) They exercise it largely through the Primrose League, and I need not tell you, for you know it already, that as far as I am personally concerned I should be glad to see them exercise it in another manner. (Cheers.) But, setting that aside as a question not in the immediate future, I earnestly press upon you to accept and aid the Primrose League in every way you can, for many reasons, and, above all, for this—because it brings into work this great political

force so eminently tending to sustain the institutions and uphold the morality of the Empire. (Cheers.)

At a public meeting in the evening, Lord Salisbury, referring to Mr. Gladstone's recent speech at Limehouse advocating a reform that would give "one man one vote," said: Mr. Gladstone proposes to take our representative machinery to pieces again. (Laughter.) I will put forward my own opinion, and it is only my own opinion. Whenever you take your representative machinery to pieces again the first thing you will have to consider is the claim of women to the suffrage. (Cheers.) But for the present, with this tremendous bill of fare before us, I do not want to take the machine to pieces again.

#### POLITICAL LEADERS ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

After the speech of Lord Salisbury at Edinburgh, the editor of our contemporary, *The Women's Gazette*, addressed letters asking the opinion on women's suffrage to many leading politicians. The following replies have been received:—

The Rt. Hon. Lord Randolph Churchill writes:—

"2, Connaught Place, Dec. 5th, 1888.

"Sir,—In reply to your letter of yesterday's date, I am desired by Lord Randolph Churchill to inform you that he has always been opposed to the extension of the Parliamentary suffrage to women.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

"FRANK D. THOMAS.

"To the Editor, *Women's Gazette*."

The Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour writes:—

"4, Carlton Gardens, S.W., Dec. 5th, 1888.

"Dear Sir,—I entirely endorse everything the Prime Minister has uttered upon this subject, and I have nothing to add to it.—I am, yours faithfully,

"ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

"To the Editor, *Women's Gazette*."

The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Rosebery writes:—

"Dalmeny Park, Edinburgh, Dec. 7th, 1888.

"Sir,—In reply to your question, I am bound to say frankly, and with regret, that I do not see my way to promoting the extension of the suffrage to women.—I am, yours respectfully,

"ROSEBERY.

"To the Editor of *The Women's Gazette*."

The Lord Chancellor writes:—

"House of Lords, S.W., Dec. 10th, 1888.

"Sir,—In answer to your letter of the 7th instant, I am desired by Lord Halsbury to say that he has for long been in favour of the extension of the Parliamentary suffrage to women.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"HERBERT J. HOPE.

"To the Editor of *The Women's Gazette*."

The Rt. Hon. C. T. Ritchie, M.P., writes:—

"Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W.,

"Dec. 7th, 1888.

"Sir,—I am desired by Mr. Ritchie to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th inst., and to say that he is not disposed to express any opinion on the subject referred to.—Yours faithfully,

"G. W. C. LOBER.

"To the Editor of *The Women's Gazette*."

#### SCOTLAND.

##### EDINBURGH NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

On the evening of December 6th, the twenty-first annual meeting of this society was held in Queen-street Hall. There was a good attendance, the body of the hall being well filled. Among those on the platform were Bailie Walcot, Professor and Mrs. Haycraft, the Rev. John Baird, Mr. James Bruce, W.S.; Mr. Peter West, ex-Bailie Lewis, Mrs. Ormiston Chant, Mrs. Scatcherd, Miss Louisa Stevenson, Miss Heriot Maitland, Miss Burton, Miss Mary Hope, Mrs. Pringle, Miss Bell, Mrs. Andrew, Mrs. Miller Morrison, Miss Simpson, Mrs. John Miller, and Miss E. Kirkland.

On the motion of Miss BURTON, Bailie WALCOT was called to the chair.

Apologies were intimated by the CHAIRMAN from Lord Provost

Boyd, Professor Masson, Mr. Walter Bright M'Laren, M.P.; Mr. R. B. Haldane, M.P.; Mrs. Ashton Dilke, who was detained in London with School Board work; Mr. and Mrs. Duncan M'Laren, Mrs. Wellstood, Miss Flora Stevenson, Miss Wigham, and others.

Miss LOUISA STEVENSON, before reading the annual report, said this was the first occasion since the commencement of their society, twenty years ago, that their secretary, Miss Eliza Wigham, had been absent from her post, and had not read her own yearly report of the society's proceedings. She was sure they all deeply sympathised with her in the trial which they knew it would be to her not to be with them that evening. (Applause.) Her mother, in years the oldest member of their society, and a member from its commencement, was on Wednesday laid in her last resting-place, amid many affectionate and grateful memories of the past. From the time in which she faithfully worked in the anti-slavery cause till within a short time of her death, when increasing weakness withdrew her from work, Mrs. Wigham was a sympathetic and active labourer in every good cause. Miss Stevenson then read the report. In this reference was made to the great Women's Suffrage Convention held at Washington, United States, at the beginning of the year, to which Mrs. Ormiston Chant was sent as a delegate from Scotland. Reference was also made to the statement made by Lord Salisbury last week in Edinburgh, that "he earnestly hoped the day was not far distant when women would bear their share in the voting for members of Parliament, and in determining the policy of the country." The Premier added—"I can conceive no argument by which they are excluded. It is obvious that they are as abundantly fitted as many to possess the suffrage by knowledge, by training, and by character; and their influence is likely to weigh in a direction which, in an age so material as ours, is exceedingly valuable—namely, in the direction of morality and religion." Surely, if this belief was seriously held—and many expressed themselves as seriously holding it—there was great responsibility in withholding the Parliamentary franchise from women. (Applause.)

Miss SIMPSON submitted the treasurer's report, from which it appeared that the income for the year amounted to £133, and the expenditure to £139.

The CHAIRMAN, in moving the adoption of the report and financial statement, said they had reached the stage when they had got the momentum of progress, and when that had arrived they might be sure that the end was near. The last part would come very speedily, however slow the previous parts might have come. In the expectation that this right—this act of justice—would very shortly be obtained, he thought that night they might encourage themselves to go forward. (Applause.) Referring to Lord Salisbury's words, to which reference had been made in the report, he said he was much interested in one phrase which was not given in the report. Lord Salisbury was specially careful to tell his audience that he spoke for himself, and he repeated that statement more than once. Well, they accepted the statement; for they knew it was impossible for such a man to speak without his words having great power. He believed there were many persons in Edinburgh who had been stimulated to assist in the work of obtaining the franchise for women in matters pertaining to the management of national and Imperial affairs by those memorable and much to be prized words which Lord Salisbury spoke last week. (Applause.)

Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD, one of the delegates to the Women's Suffrage Congress in America, moved: "That in the opinion of this meeting women who pay rates and taxes ought to have the right to vote in the election of members of Parliament, and that a petition based on the foregoing be adopted by this meeting, to be signed by the chairman and forwarded to one of the city members for presentation, praying the House of Commons to pass a measure to extend the Parliamentary franchise to duly qualified women."

Mrs. ORMISTON CHANT, the other delegate to the American Congress, seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously adopted.

On the motion of Mrs. HAYCRAFT, a vote of thanks was given to the ladies who had addressed the meeting.

A vote of thanks to Bailie Walcot for presiding brought the proceedings to a close.

#### DRAWING-ROOM MEETING.

In the afternoon a drawing-room meeting in connection with the question of women's suffrage was held at Sir Thomas Clark's residence, 11, Melville Crescent. Rev. C. M. BLACK, Christ Church, Morningside, presided; and among those present were Bailie and

Miss Walcot, Rev. Mr. Henderson, Mrs. Forbes, Mrs. Henry Thomson, Mrs. Geddes, and Mrs. Hotson. Letters of apology were received from the Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr. Cameron Lees, and Principal Cairns. Bishop Dowden wrote stating that he had been for several years in entire sympathy with the movement for the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women, under restrictions similar to those now applicable to women voting for members of the School Board. Dr. Cameron Lees entirely sympathised with the movement, and Principal Cairns wrote that personally he was favourable to women's suffrage, but he kept aloof from all Parliamentary questions except those connected with disestablishment and temperance. The following resolution was moved by Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD, seconded by Mrs. ORMISTON CHANT, and adopted: "That in the judgment of this meeting women who pay rates and taxes ought to have their right to vote in the election of members of Parliament; and further, that a petition based on the foregoing be adopted by this meeting, to be signed by the chairman and forwarded to one of the city members for presentation, praying the House of Commons to pass a measure to extend the Parliamentary franchise to duly qualified women." A resolution was also unanimously adopted, thanking Lord Salisbury for his remarks on the question of women's suffrage at the meeting held recently in the Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh. On the motion of the Rev. Armstrong Black, seconded by the Rev. Mr. Henderson, a vote of thanks was given to the delegates for their addresses.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### RATES ON HOUSES LET FOR LODGINGS.

To the Editor of the *Women's Suffrage Journal*.

Madam,—I wish to call your attention to a hardship to women in the matter of taxation. I find that *tradespeople*, who are usually *men*, are let off a third of the poor rates on their rents, because such rents do not show their private means, but are necessary to their gaining a living by their shop. The same exemption ought surely to exist for people who take houses for letting apartments, for the rent of these houses does not represent their private means, but their means of earning their living. But lodging-house keepers being usually only women, without Parliamentary votes, no M.P. has any interest in seeing justice done for them. Moreover, a rich landlord's house, when empty, pays no rates, while a poor widow's furnished lodgings to let are rated whether tenanted or not. I have known several of these sold up through this injustice.—Yours, &c.,  
M. G. S.

NOTE.—We are compelled to postpone notices of many meetings of various political societies at which resolutions in favour of women's suffrage have been adopted.

#### Obituary.

MAJOR ROSS, M.P.—The friends of women's suffrage have sustained a loss by the death of Major Ross, M.P. for Maidstone, which occurred last month. Major Ross voted in favour of the Bill on several occasions when in the House of Commons.

SIR WILLIAM PEARCE, M.P.—We regret to record the loss of a Parliamentary friend by the death of Sir William Pearce, M.P. for Govan, Lanark, since 1885. Sir William Pearce assisted in the division of 1886, which caused the second reading of the Bill.

#### SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

##### ALTERATION OF RULES.

A special general meeting of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage was held at Westminster Palace Hotel, on Wednesday afternoon, the 12th ult., for the purpose of revising the rules of the committee named. Admission was by ticket only, and "restricted to members of the Central, General, and Executive Committees, and subscribers to the funds



of the Central Committee." Mr. WALTER M'LAREN, M.P., was voted to the chair.

Professor Adamson (Manchester Delegate), Miss Mary Albert, Mrs. Sheldon Amos, Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., Miss Anderson, Mrs. Arthur Arnold, Miss Atkins, Miss Babb, Mr. J. Staines Babb, Miss Baines, Miss Adelaide Banbo, Mrs. Bateson, Miss Margaret Bateson, Mrs. Henry Fleming-Baxter, Miss Annette Bear, Miss Becker, Mrs. Beddoe, Miss E. Bell, Miss Bennett, Mr. A. W. Bennett, Mrs. Bedmead, Miss Ashurst Biggs, Miss Caroline A. Biggs, Miss Bird, Miss Helen Blackburn, Mrs. Stanton Blatch, Miss Jessie Boucherett, Mrs. Bright, Mrs. Jacob Bright, Mrs. Brooksbank, Miss A. Brown, Miss Browne, the Dowager Countess of Buchan, Mrs. Percy Bunting, Mrs. V. I. Chamberlain, Mrs. Ormiston Chant, Mrs. Charles, Mrs. Charlesworth, Mrs. Chesson, Mrs. Benjamin Clarke, Miss Helen Clegg, Miss Jane Cobden, Mr. M. Cooke, Mr. Mead Corner, Mrs. Costelloe, Mrs. G. Cotton, Miss Courtney, Mrs. Cowen, Miss Sharman Crawford, Mrs. Edward Davies, Miss Florence Davenport Hill, Miss Rosamond Davenport Hill, Mrs. Ashton Dilke, Baron Dimsdale, M.P., Miss Catherine Drew, Mrs. F. A. Drew, Mrs. Edmonds, Mrs. Eland, Mrs. Eve, Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Fennell, Miss Bessie Ford, Miss Isabella O. Ford, Mrs. Foster, Miss Agnes Garrett, Miss Gott, Louisa, Lady Goldsmid, Mrs. Grimes, Miss Grove, Miss Gwynne, Mr. S. Halifax, Mrs. Ashworth Hallett, the Viscount Harberton, the Viscountess Harberton, Miss Ida Hardcastle, Miss Harris, Mrs. W. Bayley Heath, Miss Emily Hill, Miss S. Hill, Miss Hitchin, Mrs. Charles Holland, Miss Mabel Holland, Mr. C. H. Hopwood, Q.C., Professor W. H. Hudson, Mrs. John Hullah, Mrs. A. W. Hunt, Mrs. Herbert Jacobs, Mrs. Larkcomb Jacobs, Miss E. Johnson, Miss Lucy Johnson, Miss Kilgour, Miss Kirkland (delegate from Edinburgh), Mrs. Knowles, Mrs. Lindsay (delegate from the North of Ireland Society), Mrs. Lough, Miss Edith Lupton, Miss E. C. M'Kee, Mr. Chas. E. M'Laren, Mrs. C. B. M'Laren, Mrs. Eva M'Laren, Mr. W. S. E. M'Laren, M.P., Mrs. May, Mrs. Fenwick Miller, Mrs. Mills, Miss Mills, Mr. Llewelyn Mills, Dr. Julia Mitchell, Dr. Kate Mitchell, Miss Helen Ogle Moore, Mrs. R. R. Moore, Miss Mordan, Mrs. Müller, Miss Clara Myers, Miss Cooke (Notts delegate), Mrs. Cooper Oakley, Mr. Tito Pagliardini, Dr. Pankhurst, Mrs. Pankhurst, Miss Pease (delegate from the Bristol Society), Mrs. Penso, Mrs. F. Pennington, Mrs. Peppercorn, Mrs. Edwin Ransom, Mrs. Reed, Miss Reeves, Mrs. Broadley Reid, Miss Reid, Mrs. Richardson, Sir Owen Roberts, Dr. Roberts, Miss Edith Roberts, Mrs. Robertson, Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., Mrs. Savile, Miss M. Sharp, Miss Arabella Shore, Mr. J. Shortt, Mrs. W. Sichert, Mrs. Eustace Smith, Mrs. Peannell Smith, Miss A. Peannell Smith, Mrs. Southey, Rev. S. A. Steintal, Miss Frances Sterling, Mrs. Stopes, Mrs. R. R. Storer, Mrs. Streatfield, Mr. G. S. Symon, Mrs. Tanner, Mrs. Troughton, Mrs. Turle, Dr. Alice Vickery, Miss Abney Walker, Mrs. Ingram Walker, Mr. E. M. Ward, Mrs. Waters, Mrs. Mabel Weld, Miss Whitehead, Mrs. Weiss, Miss Williams, Miss Lucy Wilson, Mr. W. Woodall, M.P., Mrs. Zier, were present at the meeting.

The CHAIRMAN, after thanking the meeting for having elected him to preside, said he should do his very utmost to preserve strict impartiality—an impartiality which he sincerely felt—between the two sides which were represented there that day. He had taken no part whatever in the discussion of these new rules. He had not been at any committee meeting at which they were discussed, and he had entirely kept out of the discussion from beginning to end. Hence he was wholly uncommitted, and would endeavour to do that which was fair to the best of his ability. Perhaps it would meet with their acceptance if that meeting was guided by the well-known procedure rules of the House of Commons in reference to the right of speaking and so forth. With regard to the method of putting questions to the vote, it had been suggested to him that they might vote by cards, a card being given to every person upon which he or she might put his or her name and the way in which they voted. On this he had taken the opinion of both sides since he entered that room, and the unanimous opinion given to him accorded with his own, namely, that that method would be impracticable. He should in the event of a division name tellers, the persons voting sitting and standing alternately while the numbers were being ascertained. He asked the meeting to support him in his ruling on any points of order which might arise. Having read the notice convening the meeting, he remarked that that meeting was a meeting of the members of, and subscribers to, the Central

Committee, and not a meeting of the entire National Society for the whole of the United Kingdom. For that reason admission had been limited to members of the Central, General, and Executive Committees, and subscribers to the funds of the Central Committee, and they had been obliged on that and the preceding day to refuse admission to members of Parliament and others who were not subscribers. There was a strong expression of opinion at the last executive committee meeting that it was undesirable that new subscribers—persons who had just subscribed, in order to qualify themselves for voting at that meeting—should attend on that occasion, but clearly, according to the rules, they could not be excluded. It was left, consequently, to every such person to determine for himself or herself whether it was proper to vote in such circumstances. (Hear, hear.) He was sorry to say that they had received a letter from Mrs. Frank Morrison expressive of her inability to attend. She had been ill three weeks, and was unable to come. Several other letters had been received, one of which was from the Dublin committee, dated the 10th December. The letter contained the terms of a resolution which had been passed disapproving of the changes proposed, and endorsing the amendment to be moved by Mrs. Fawcett, and adding that Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., would attend as the committee's delegate. Mrs. Ashford wrote regretting her inability to be present, and intimating that otherwise she should have supported, with "voice and vote," Mrs. Fawcett's amendment. Lady Sawyer, vice-president of the Ladies' Auxiliary Union of Conservative Associations, regretted she could not attend, as did Lady Borthwick, who was leaving England for Egypt. Mrs. Bryant, D.Sc., was likewise unable to be present, as was Mr. Frederick Hill, who was strongly opposed to any alteration in the rules.

Mr. W. WOODALL, M.P., in the absence of Mrs. Frank Morrison, moved: "That in the opinion of this meeting the time has come for revising the rules of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage." He regretted that Mrs. Morrison was not present to move this resolution. That lady had unfortunately, some few weeks ago, sustained an accident, which had kept her a prisoner at home. He was sorry to say that there had been imported into that controversy an amount of heat and acrimony which certainly seemed to be very unnecessary, and which, he hoped, they would have no evidence of in their gathering that day. Personally, at any rate, he would endeavour to emulate the admirable tone and spirit which had been shown by their chairman, and confine himself to a very simple statement of the facts, as they appeared to him, to justify that movement. Perhaps a simpler thing for him to do would be to show what it did not contemplate. There appeared to be a general impression that new rules, which were to be submitted to them, would have the effect, if adopted, of impairing the powers of the various important women's suffrage societies throughout the country. He assured them that nothing of that kind was contemplated or was possible. The various societies which, in different parts of the country, had guided and directed public opinion, and to which they had all been so much indebted in the past, would remain, as they always had been, complete masters of their own business, wholly uncontrolled by the central authority, and having, of course, the absolute management of their own finance and all other matters. But they would ask, what was the necessity for effecting any change at all? That was indeed the point to which they might fairly address themselves. The Central Committee was formed for the purpose of focussing the common action of the different provincial societies. There did exist a separate London committee for the whole of the metropolis and its vicinity, and it was not until some years after the formation of the Central Committee that this London society was amalgamated, as it was now, with the Central Committee; but while the Central Committee was intended to be the focus and centre, the core of the general movement of the country, it had had, in the necessary force of circumstances, to act as practically a separate and independent society—independent, he meant, in regard to the very important matter of the raising of its own funds and the responsibility for them. When they were told that there was an apprehension that that meeting was likely to affect the interests of the provincial societies prejudicially, and that those societies had been excluded from any part in the reconsideration of the constitution of the society, it would be important for the meeting to know that not only were all those societies represented upon the Central Committee *ex officio* by delegation, but that the Central Committee was itself composed, to a very remarkable extent, of actual members of

the provincial societies. For instance, Manchester had nineteen subscribers who were members of the Central Committee, and Bristol had eighteen, Edinburgh had ten, the North of Ireland six, and of all these representatives, individually members of and subscribers to the provincial societies, a very large proportion made no contribution to the funds of the Central Committee. As he had said, the Central Committee had been left to bear the whole financial responsibility of its work, and that, although in many important particulars it was the executive of all the associations of the country, it had had no financial help or contribution whatever from the provincial societies; but, on the other hand, out of its sparse funds it had made various kinds of contributions which might be said to have gone in aid of the finances of other societies. He, of course, would not for a moment pretend to say that it had not had a proper *quid pro quo*. The Manchester society, for instance, had received from time to time a considerable subvention towards the expenses of the lady (Miss Becker) whom they all held in such high and grateful esteem for services rendered to the Central Committee and to the other organisations in her capacity of parliamentary agent. A further subvention out of the funds of the Central Committee had gone towards the support of the *Women's Suffrage Journal*, which was, although the organ of the movement, under the control of the Manchester committee, and which could be—and he thought some of them might possibly be of opinion had been within the last week or so—used in a sense not altogether free from partisanship. Practically the matter before the Central Committee was, however, one of a direct and important kind. He had endeavoured to show what were the financial and other responsibilities which attached to the Central Committee. The most difficult was one with which, he supposed, other societies were from time to time also familiar—that of finance. Year after year their treasurers had had to complain of the difficulty of meeting their expenditure; and this difficulty grew with the very remarkable growth of public opinion in favour of their movement, and the need which existed for keeping pace with it. Mrs. Frank Morrison had been the treasurer of the society, and he could hardly imagine a society more fortunate than they had been in having a lady of such great capacity for administrative finance, and, he was bound to say, one more generous in supplying the deficiencies of which they had had to complain. (Applause.) Well, they were, therefore, practically face to face with a difficulty which must be met and remedied if the Central Committee was to continue to do its work; but he thought there was a still further point in the minds of those who had been moving in this matter, and that was, that with their central offices and their staff, with their most devoted and constant committee, and with abounding evidences on every hand of the growth of public opinion in favour of the movement, there had been a feeling that the Central Committee had not been as potent for its purpose as it might possibly be made. Some of the members of the committee, looking about, thought they had found active, earnest, co-workers in different other directions. There were also societies throughout the country which, although not formed for the purpose of obtaining the right to vote for women, regarded the attainment of that right as one of the most likely means to carry out their social and legislative reforms. Those present would be aware of the very remarkable demonstrations of opinion in favour of women's suffrage which had come from Primrose Leagues, and he thought they might claim that the Women's Liberal Associations, although in a sense restrained from moving directly for that object, would not be unlikely to render them support if they were permitted, in some regulated manner, to affiliate themselves to them. (Applause.) He thought, too, that they might take it that, wherever they found women workers in the temperance and other social movements, they would find them most ardent disciples to whom they might look for support. He contended that it was impossible for them to take their stand upon the line of the amendment by merely maintaining a *non possumus* attitude. Some movement must be made to give greater effect and force to the society, and, above all, to enable them to maintain an effective control over their own finance. He wished to say how reluctant he was—how sorry he was—to find himself under anything like suspicion of partisan action. Those who had taken the trouble to read the little pink papers, which recited the history of that movement, would find that he merely acted as chairman of the General Executive Committee where this matter was discussed. He declined to take any part in the committee, elected by ballot, to which the matter was referred, and no

one could have addressed himself with a more calm and impartial mind to it than he had done. He trusted, therefore, that all would concede that it was under the force of a strong conviction of the absolute necessity for that movement that he was present to support it. The subject, as he said, was referred to a select committee, elected by ballot, without any kind of idea beforehand of the line which individual members would take. He believed they agreed to the recommendations before the meeting with practical unanimity, and that the rules which were to be submitted for their consideration were favoured by the general opinion of those who, at any rate, had been among those who had evinced the greatest interest in the welfare of the society. Avoiding any reference for the nonce to the rules themselves, which he did not regard as perfect, but as admitting of some amendment, he trusted that when they came to be considered, amendments would be made which would meet the views of those who were for the moment opposed to them. The rules would be submitted in a spirit of fairness and open-mindedness, and he believed that, with some amendment, their adoption by the meeting would be satisfactory.

The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL, M.A. (Manchester), in seconding the resolution, said the sole reason he had in doing so was the very strong conviction which he had that the advanced position of the movement required a different method of action than that adopted by the Central Committee when it was first formed. (Hear, hear.) He believed that of late there had been a sense amongst a considerable number of the supporters of the woman suffrage movement that their work was not being carried on quite with that efficiency which most of them desired to see, and they were supported very strongly in that opinion by the view expressed to them by those who, under the circumstances of the case, were able to judge more correctly of the actual work than those who, from other circumstances, had been compelled to be rather outside of the movement of late. Knowing, as he had done, that what seemed to have been the majority of the Central Committee had felt that their rules as they now existed fettered their action, and, at times, had really been used to make them take action of which the majority did not approve, he could very well understand that some change was necessary to be adopted. He felt that the changes proposed would tend to create a more efficient body in London than now existed. He was not at all afraid that the provincial societies would lose any power by the proposed change. He believed that a limited number of efficient delegates would prove a far more effective way of expressing opinion than the rather vague and loose manner in which membership of the Central Committee had hitherto been created. Knowing as he did the work which the Central Committee had had to do, it seemed to him hardly just or fair that those who did not subscribe at all to those funds should occasionally have a controlling power over the expenditure. This was contrary to the very ground of the movement in which they were engaged. They believed that those who paid should have a voice in the expenditure, and that it was not fair that those who were not really the representatives of the subscribers should control the expenditure of the latter's money. He felt too—and this was a rather delicate subject to touch—that now and then local committees did not always completely represent local opinion. (Applause.) This might be owing to the circumstance that local societies went on in a certain well-established groove, under the management of certain recognised leaders, whilst the general feeling of the members of the societies was not expressed by the so-called leaders of the movement. He knew that in the district where he lived they—some of them at least—did not feel at the present time that their opinions were perfectly represented by the Manchester committee. Hence they would like to see an independent committee, formed like the one proposed, at which Manchester would be represented really and truly by elected members, and not by a large number of persons who had hardly a claim to share in the management of a movement in which they had not shown sufficient interest even to take part of the work or part of the financial responsibility. It was a strange thing that the idea should have got abroad that there was any desire of changing the constitution of the National Society for Women's Suffrage. How that idea had got abroad he could not, for the life of him, say. The wording of the proposal was clear, that they were only to discuss the constitution of the Central Committee, and therefore only members of and subscribers to that committee were fit and proper persons to express an opinion on that occasion.



Mrs. FAWCETT proposed as an amendment: "That under the present conditions of the movement, it is undesirable to make any change in the rules of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage." She said it was a matter of very great and sincere regret to her that circumstances had arisen which had rendered the calling of that meeting necessary. She addressed the meeting under a feeling of compulsion and of great pain. She meant the compulsion of duty, because it was impossible for those who disapproved of the course which had been taken any longer to keep silence on the subject. They were bound to place before the meeting, as briefly as possible, the reasons for their opposition. She regarded the circumstances which had led to the calling of that meeting as almost entirely pure waste, producing friction leading to heat, without motion or any real advance. About two months previously a letter had been addressed to her by a member of the Executive Committee, asking her what she thought of Mrs. Frank Morrison's plan. She replied that she had never heard of the plan, and did not know what it was; but she took an early opportunity of making enquiry, and she received a letter from Mrs. Frank Morrison, which laid her aims and objects before her (Mrs. Fawcett), and then she felt that so much unnecessary, painful, and hurtful friction must be engendered by the controversy which appeared to her unavoidable, that she withdrew from the Executive Committee of which she had been a member. She did so on grounds personal to herself. She felt that she had no time and energy to pursue the work in which she was then engaged, and also to take part in a controversy of that kind. She felt that she must choose between her work or taking part in the controversy, and she thought it best to go on with the work she was then doing. She was also desirous, in adopting this course, to keep clear from any painful episodes to which Mr. Woodall had alluded, and which were perfectly certain to mark a controversy of that kind. She hoped they would all try to minimise the inevitable evils which must arise from the present controversy. They need not emulate the two grammarians, one of whom hoped the other would go to an unpleasant place because of his theory of irregular verbs. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) The crucial difficulty, she thought, in their organisation was how to bring about active and vital co-operation between London and the provinces, and at the same time to avoid friction and jealousy between them. There were various societies, various branch committees, for the purpose of advocating women's suffrage in almost all parts of England and in Scotland and in Ireland. Their chief difficulty and that of similar societies was how to leave as much freedom of action as possible to all the branches, and yet have a vital organisation at the heart and centre. As Mr. Woodall had reminded them, no sort of attempt at this kind of thing in the infancy of the movement was made. All the committees were perfectly independent, and there were no representatives of any of them upon any one central committee. The disadvantages of this were perfectly obvious, and were felt to be so great that about 1872 that Central Committee was formed, with representatives of all the local associations, and with the power also conferred upon those associations to send delegates on special occasions to the Central Committee. She thought that, on the whole, this plan had worked exceedingly well. (Hear, hear.) She did not deny the existence, from time to time, of some friction which had come about. She did not deny it had occasionally been felt; but on the whole, she maintained that this organisation and plan of action had worked very well, and had brought their question, after many years of labour, to a point which, it seemed to her, was very near the brink of success. (Applause.) If they looked at the remedy it was proposed to adopt, to get rid of the occasional friction which had occurred, she thought the remedy proposed was worse than the disease. It would be far better, she thought, to put up with a little friction or unpleasantness from time to time, in order that they could all be agreed in working cordially for the great objects they had at heart. They could all agree to put aside a little unpleasantness for the sake of common action; but to propose to remedy this by cutting off their very vital connection with the local associations co-operating with them in Great Britain and Ireland was, she thought, a fatal and most disastrous policy. (Applause.) They would, of course, be told there was no absolute severance from the great societies—(hear, hear)—but she considered that, to a large extent, they were cut off. ("No.") They were cut off from all direct representation on the Executive Committee. They had power, together with societies formed for extracting sunbeams from

cucumbers and other objects—(laughter)—if they paid an affiliation fee, to send a delegate to the Central Council, and this council was empowered to elect the Executive Committee by ballot. That was, however, a very different thing indeed from the possession of the right of direct personal representation on the Executive Central Committee, and she thought it would palpably weaken that strong and vital connection which should exist between the heart and members of the whole organisation. It would throw some light on the way in which this matter had been brought up for their consideration when she stated that earnest and unanimous protests, which had been received from Manchester, Bristol, and Belfast, were not even read at the meeting of the Executive Committee. (Applause, and cries of "No.")

Mr. WOODALL: May I interpose, just to make a correction? The communications from Manchester and Bristol were both read.

Mrs. FAWCETT (continuing) said there had since been received the letter from the Dublin society, which their chairman had read. She believed that the Nottingham society, which was represented on that occasion by its secretary, and Mrs. Ashford, who represented the Birmingham society, were of one mind with her on this subject. She believed that the only exceptions to a unanimous vote of condemnation on the part of the provincial societies proceeded from the committees of Edinburgh and Cambridge. Those committees were represented, and would express what they felt on the subject. She considered it was exceedingly natural that a strong feeling should be entertained and expressed by the provincial committees against proposals which were tantamount to their virtual disfranchisement. (Applause.) From individual members, who had laboured for many years for women's suffrage, she had received very strong letters against the proposed change. Amongst others, she had received such letters from Mrs. Peter Taylor, whom she regarded as almost the mother of that movement; from Mrs. Frances Power Cobbe, one of the most energetic of workers; and from Lady Portsmouth. They had also heard the chairman read a letter from Mr. Frederick Hill, an aged member of the Executive Committee, one who for many years devoted himself with earnest zeal to the cause of women's suffrage. She wished particularly to call the attention of the meeting to the words in her amendment relating to the inopportune time, which she considered it to be, to raise a question affecting vitally the whole constitution of the Central Committee. "Under the present conditions of the movement," she said in her amendment, "it is undesirable to make any change in the rules of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage." Those who voted for the amendment would not vote that the rules of the Central Committee were ideally perfect and needed no reform now or at any future time. She merely asked them to declare that at the present moment it was inopportune to change their organisation or break up their machinery in order to introduce novelties. She thought the reason why the proposed changes were now inopportune must have occurred to nearly all the ladies and gentlemen present. She meant the marked progress which the movement had made even within the last week or ten days. It was a very important thing, in her opinion, that the Prime Minister had thought it well, in an important speech he lately made in the country, to declare that he was strongly in favour of the extension of the suffrage to duly qualified women—(hear, hear)—and she thought it would be a most fatal and suicidal act on their part to break up their machinery just at a moment most favourable, according to all appearance, to their success. (Applause.) She did not, however, forget that they must not attach too much importance to words uttered by persons in such very distinguished positions. They would have obtained success long ago if words spoken in their favour by eminent statesmen were to be relied upon as meaning legislation on their part. Still, she believed that the whole tide of public feeling was now running so strongly in favour of their movement, which had been brought to a point approaching victory by their existing machinery, that it would be foolish for them now entirely to abandon those means which had so far been crowned with success. (Applause.) She desired to say a few words about the dangerous departure from the principle of non-intervention, which would be allowed if the new rules were adopted by the committee. There could be no doubt, she believed, that one great secret of the success of their committee thus far had been that it was entirely of a non-party character. (Applause.) She objected also very strongly to the distinction which was made between delegates of societies and private individuals joining the Central

Council. She thought it very objectionable that delegates who were appointed by outside societies, which might exist for purposes wholly different to their own, should be allowed to join the Central Council at a *pro rata* charge of five shillings per head, while private individuals, in order to obtain the same position, would have to pay £1 each. She thought this would give a preponderating weight to the delegates of other societies, and would introduce an element entirely foreign to the well-being of the Women's Suffrage Society. She was told that Mrs. Ashton Dilke knew of fifty women's Liberal associations which would immediately avail themselves of this rule, in order to place as many delegates as their numbers would entitle them to on the General Council of that society, if it were constituted as suggested. Suppose on the average these fifty societies would be entitled to have three delegates each, that would give them 150 representatives on the Central Council, and would secure them a preponderating weight, very likely enabling them to outvote members of the Women's Suffrage Society, who were for that society first and nothing else. Personally she had very little confidence in political or party wire-pullers on either side. She did not wish to use any real names, but would distinguish the influences to which she referred by the titles of Schnadolph and Randhurst. (Laughter.) She thought if they placed confidence in the hands of those represented by these names, the friends of women's suffrage would have deep reason to regret it. They had received very strong opposition in the past from the wire-pullers and caucus managers of the Liberal party. At the Leeds conference, for instance, all their power was used to burke and prevent the discussion which took place and the vote which was passed in favour of women's suffrage. Again, at a similar conference at Bristol, like pressure was brought to bear with a view of burking the question. In the session of 1884 the strongest possible official pressure was exercised by the party wire-pullers to prevent Mr. Woodall's amendment from being considered. Again, in 1886, all the power of the Liberal party was exerted to prevent progress being made with the Women's Suffrage Bill after it had passed the second reading. She was not so well acquainted with the facts bearing on the other side of politics, and was not aware of the manner in which the Conservative wire-pullers had treated them. She had, however, very little confidence in the wire-pullers on either side. They should be very careful lest they gave to one party or the other power in their society. (Hear, hear.) It might very well be that the wire-pullers on one side might not wish their Bill to become law before the next general election. If that were so, they might influence the delegates they had on the Central Council of that society so to alter the Bill as to very much damage its chance of becoming law within any reasonable limits of time. If they admitted representatives of both political parties on the General Council, the annual meeting of that council would be made the battle-ground of rival parties, which would be undesirable. If, on the contrary, one political party obtained a preponderating influence on the Council, then it would become a mere branch of a political caucus, and that, too, she thought very undesirable. (Hear, hear.) She also strongly objected to the voting at the General Council being by ballot. She considered that the most open voting was desirable, and that the votes should be recorded with the utmost sense of personal responsibility. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, on all these grounds, she objected to the rules which would be placed before them if the motion were carried. She objected because of the inopportune-ness of the time, and because of the probable breaking up of the society. (Applause.)

Miss BECKER, who seconded the amendment, said it appeared to her that in proposing to alter the rules they should have had from those who proposed to do it a very clear case shown for a proceeding of so revolutionary a character. She thought it would be convenient to regard the discussion on the preliminary resolution as equivalent to the second reading of a Bill.

The CHAIRMAN asked Miss Becker to confine herself strictly to the question whether the rules should be revised or not.

Miss BECKER (continuing) thought the object of Mrs. Fawcett in moving the amendment was that the stage of revising the rules in detail should not be reached. Her contention was that it was undesirable to alter the rules at all. If the proposal to alter the rules contained simply some questions of minor detail, leaving the organisation of the Central Committee practically untouched, then there might be some reason for attempting to shut their mouths as to the nature of the proposal, but on the agenda there were the whole

detailed set of rules. She must confess when that meeting was resolved upon she thought the first resolution submitted would be the adoption of the rules, and she failed to see why a resolution should be submitted at all to the effect that the rules should be revised seeing that the meeting was called for the express purpose of revising them. Hence the rules themselves should, in all proper order, be considered to be before the meeting for their consideration. The meeting was convened to revise the rules of the Central Committee, but if they looked through the proposed rules they would not find a word about the Central Committee from beginning to end. The rules spoke about the "society" under the title the "National Society for Women's Suffrage." The rules were practically rules for the government of a society so named, and there was not, as she had said, a word in them about the Central Committee from beginning to end. She understood the intention was not that the Central Committee should go on as hitherto under new rules. The notices which had been sent out would seem to imply that the Central Committee as then constituted was to continue, but that the rules under which it conducted its business were to be revised. The effect, however, of the proposed rules, if passed, would be absolutely to destroy the organisation then known as the "Central Committee." She had put the question, "If these rules are carried, what will become of the committee?" The answer she received was, "As soon as ever these rules are passed, the Executive Committee elected in July last will be swept out of existence." The General Committee, too, would be dissolved. The effect, indeed, of their adopting the proposed rules would be equivalent to taking a sponge and wiping away out of existence all the organisation, which had been in existence during the last seventeen years. The change proposed was no less revolutionary than that, and it was offered to the meeting under the name of merely revising the rules of the Central Committee. The question being thus really a large one, it appeared to her simply childish to take that abstract resolution, and not to consider the effect of the proposed changes. The effect of those changes—it was not denied—would be to destroy the organisation of the Central Committee as it then existed. The gentleman who moved the resolution said he did not wish to hamper the powers of the other committees. Of course, the powers of the other committees as independent societies could not be in the slightest degree touched by the central organisation—(hear, hear)—but the powers of those societies as constituent members of the Central Committee were entirely changed by the proposed rules. (Applause.) Mr. Woodall had remarked upon the composition of the Central Committee, and he said it was a remarkable circumstance that upon that committee there were so many members who were connected with other committees throughout the country. She submitted that that was not at all remarkable, that was exactly what they would expect in a Central Committee which professed to unite in itself the representation of those committees, and it showed that the committee as then constituted was a catholic committee containing a full and fair representation of the societies throughout the country. It was true in some respects they thought their powers were a little restricted. Still the society had gone on very well during seventeen years, and she did not think there was any political society in existence where there was not occasionally a little friction, and where somebody thought somebody else rather presuming. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) In the nature of things they could not have an independent number of people working together in politics without being liable to friction. If there were no friction, no conflict of ideas, they would not be a society of men and women, but a mere troop of marionettes. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) She considered it quite natural that the permanent members of the Central Committee should include the leading members of the societies in other parts of the country, but those permanent members were elected by the general body of subscribers to the funds of that particular society, which existed under the title of Central Committee. At the annual meeting every subscriber, however small his or her subscription, could come and vote upon the election of the Executive Committee, and, once elected by their constituents, all the members of that committee were upon an equality. None had a right to say they had a greater share of the confidence of their constituents, because they lived in London, than those who lived out of London. It had been urged as a justification for the change that persons who did not subscribe to the funds, and delegates of committees which did not contribute to the funds of the Central Committee, came up to town



and out-voted those who did subscribe. She understood the seconder of the resolution (Mr. Steinthal) to say that delegates from the country came up, or could come up, and pass resolutions disapproved by the majority of the committee. She thought that could only occur if the majority did not take the trouble to attend the committee meetings. Those present must vote, and the majority of those attending was taken as the majority of the committee. She did not see how any committee could exist and carry on its work under any other rules, and she did not see how any member who absented himself had a right to complain of the action of his colleagues who attended at a meeting to which he had been duly summoned. A good deal had been said about the delegates from the country. The provincial delegates appeared to have frightened the nerves of their friends in London to such an extent that the latter were going to upset the society in order to exclude them. (Laughter.) She had taken the trouble to ascertain from the minute book what amount of influence on the Central Committee the delegates from the local societies exerted. There were forty-eight permanent members of the committee elected at the annual general meeting by the subscribers. Taking the committee meetings held in the business year ending last July, she found that nineteen meetings were held during the period named, out of which delegates from local societies were present at only three and never more than two delegates at any one meeting. There was one committee meeting in July, 1887, at which six permanent members were present. On December 14th in the same year, the committee meeting consisted of nine permanent members and the delegate from a local society. At another meeting seventeen members were present, of whom two only were delegates. Subsequently there were twelve attended, of whom one only was a delegate. Coming to the current business year, she said that since the last annual meeting when they elected the Executive Committee they were invited to disestablish and disendow—(laughter)—that committee first met to appoint its officers. Present eight persons, seven of whom were permanent members and one only was a delegate from the country. How could that one delegate out-vote the permanent members? (Laughter.) Again, at another meeting there was only one delegate to twenty-one permanent members. If these figures did not tend to reassure the minds of the subscribers to the Central Committee that their funds were not, and could not be, voted away by delegates from the country, in opposition to the permanent members, she was unable to conceive of any figures which would have that effect. She hoped that those friends who came to that meeting for the purpose of supporting the efforts of Mrs. Fawcett and herself with a view to prevent the disruption of the society, would not be misled into voting for Mrs. Morrison with the idea of afterwards supporting any amendment of the proposed rules. They asked the committee to give a straight vote now. What would happen if the rules were passed would be that the Central Committee would no longer be the Central Committee, because it would have cut itself off from communication with the other societies which then—in the event which she trusted would not happen—would have to find means of uniting amongst themselves for some central representation. If the change were made, the conduct of even the Central Committee would be taken out of the hands in which it at present lay—the general body of subscribers. Now the Executive Committee was elected by the general body of subscribers, but under the new rules those who subscribed less than £1 to the funds of the society would be entirely deprived of a voice and vote in the election of that committee. It was for those who contributed less than £1 to the movement to consider whether they would voluntarily cut themselves off from all voice in the constitution of the Executive Committee. (Applause.) She earnestly besought those present, when the vote took place on the first resolution, to remember that the division was a crucial one. She asked them to reject the resolution, and thus preserve the society as it stood. With all its faults—and she did not deny it had faults—she thought they would do better to endure its little faults rather than embark upon a scheme wholly new. (Applause.) She hoped they would not be led away with this or that detail, but would vote straight for the amendment. If the meeting arrived at the decision that it was undesirable to embark in the sea of troubles which was presented to them, their resolution would be one in the interests of peace. If, in that case, the proposers of the new rules were not satisfied with the result, they would have the opportunity of forming a society of their own

on any basis they liked, but they would not have disrupted the National Society for Women's Suffrage as it then stood. She, and those who thought with her on this subject, had no desire to see the labour of so many years overthrown, nor did they wish to see the organisation which had stood intact for sixteen years destroyed. (Applause.)

Mrs. CHANT said that in the beginning of this year an invitation came to her from the Central Committee to represent them as a delegate at the Great International Council of women at Washington. It was withdrawn, and she went as delegate for Edinburgh. She was asked on her arrival in America why she, a resident in London, did not represent the London society. Further, she was asked why she, as a Londoner, represented the Scotch women. She had to reply that there was no National Society in London but only a Central Committee, and that the women of the Edinburgh National Society were enthusiastic and strong enough to do what the Central Committee were unable to do. She could not agree that the great work of increasing the interest in the women's suffrage movement in the country had been done by the Women's Suffrage Society. It ought to have been done by the society, but it had not to a great extent. The society had done the pioneering work, but the bulk of the work of keeping alive and promoting the movement had been done by societies with which the Women's Suffrage Society had nothing to do. Women's temperance work, work on behalf of the young and on behalf of education, had been a far greater advocate for women's suffrage in the country than anything done by the Women's Suffrage Society in London. That had been the misfortune of the committee rather than its fault. They were now trying to remedy this. Mrs. Fawcett spoke of the protests of several provincial societies not having been read. If that were so she thought it was a strong argument for change. She desired to see the Women's Suffrage Society a felt power in the country; also a dignified and great society which would carry weight in America and in other nations which were following where they had led. (Applause.)

Mrs. BEDDOE (Bristol) said it did not seem to her either fair or honest to those who had hitherto signed their petitions and had given them their support and money that they should alter the nature of their society. Personally she should never have belonged to it or worked for it, as she had done in this country and in Australia, if she had thought the time would come when it might be affiliated with political organisations and mixed up with questions other than the original question for which the society was formed. (Hear, hear.) Let the political societies of which they heard do all they could to obtain women's suffrage. It was the only thing which would give them stability and any real power. (Laughter.) But it was the positive duty of that society to keep itself to the principle to which it had pledged itself for twenty years to the public. She did not understand the work of the Central Committee. That committee seemed to be in a very unsatisfactory state—(hear, hear)—but the society to which she belonged in Bristol for twenty years had adhered to the one principle, and she believed they had achieved the position they now held in the country entirely owing to their having said they had but one object in view. (Applause.) If other things were introduced, she thought it would be disastrous to the cause for which many of them had worked so long. She knew if the proposed changes were effected that they would be told they had taken the position they now held under false pretences. She hoped they would pause before they introduced into their body all sorts and conditions of societies. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. A. W. BENNETT, M.A., remarked that, according to Miss Becker, their committee was a catholic committee. Well, at a meeting of that catholic committee, at which country delegates were present, the subject before that meeting was discussed, and it was decided to appoint a sub-committee to consider whether alteration of the rules was desirable, and they unanimously reported in the affirmative. It was not the fact that letters from the Manchester and Bristol societies were not read. They were read, and country delegates were present. Nothing was further from the thoughts of the sub-committee, who unanimously recommended the alteration of the rules, than the severance of the London organisation from the provincial societies. So far from weakening the connection between the London and country societies, it was earnestly hoped that the proposed rules would have the effect of strengthening that connection.

Miss BLACKBURN (Bristol) said she handed a letter from the Bristol society to the chairman of the London committee, and it

was not read. She thought the fact that the provincial societies did not oftener send delegates to the Central Committee showed that the former were careful not to interfere in work which affected only London. Their delegates were sent up when questions affecting the whole society were to be discussed, and when they felt it necessary there should be a more special representation of the views of the country committees. No one had felt more joy than she had hitherto, in the fact that their question was one in which all parties could work together. When party spirit had grown strong, she, and others who shared her views, had felt that there was one society in which all parties met in harmony. It was said that these new proposals would still maintain that position of neutrality. Though they might intend this, the new rules were not calculated to have this effect. (Hear, hear.) They were about to try a new experiment just when it seemed that their long battle was approaching the end, and when they might work in peace and harmony, without any friction. (Applause.)

Mrs. BATESON (Cambridge) said the question they had to consider was how to bring about the success of the movement in which they were all interested. She could not help feeling that for a long time past there had been a lack of something to give effect to the very great growth which had undoubtedly taken place in public opinion in favour of women's suffrage, and one asked oneself if the something lacking was in their machinery, whether it was out of date. Certainly that something was wanting was felt very widely. People all agreed with them. There was a great deal of that harmony which had a tendency to degenerate into stagnation. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) The worst of it was that if that stagnation continued, the very growth of public opinion upon which they now congratulated themselves, would only damage them. There was a tide in the affairs of woman, and now was their tide. (Laughter.) They must not allow their machinery to rust. Some change was necessary. She thought if they looked at the Arbitration Society, the Peace Society, the Temperance Society, and other organisations, they could not but hope that they would by being represented on their committee add great force and potency to it. The very reason why in bygone times statesmen had not done more than merely declare themselves favourable to women's suffrage was because of a want of outside pressure. She did not see how the proposed change would cut the Central Committee off from the country societies, and, as to the time being inopportune, she considered it was very opportune, seeing they were now in a culminating condition. If they allowed the favouring conditions of the present to pass without making the most and the best of them, the society would tumble to pieces. The Cambridgeshire society, with which she was connected, was a very small one, and they had almost given up in despair lately, because there was such a lack of "go"—something wanted which would really tell.

Mrs. ASHWORTH HALLETT (Bath) said she was one of those who was present at the meeting at the Langham Hotel seventeen years ago. That meeting was a convention of all the suffrage societies of the kingdom met together to form a central committee as a common bond of union. Every local committee had a representative on the central executive. The proposal before the meeting to-day was to break up this union and to resolve the National Society into its original elements. The proposal destroyed the representative union. It proceeded instead to launch forth a brand new experiment, the principles of which were never heard of before in the history of any cause. The new constitution was bad in conception. Instead of being a representative union of suffrage workers, whose non-party character had enabled them to gain a majority of the members of the House of Commons in favour of the Bill, they were henceforth to begin affiliating party associations. It was said with apparent fairness that under this new constitution they would affiliate Conservative associations and Primrose Leagues, as well as Liberal associations. But did anyone suppose that the Primrose Leagues and Conservative associations would start new constitutions and rules in order to affiliate themselves with the suffrage society? Was such a thing ever heard of that a society formed for one object should go aside to affiliate itself to a society formed for an entirely different object? Then there remained the fifty women's Liberal branches which they had been informed by Mrs. Ashton Dilke were "waiting to affiliate." She objected to the suffrage being dominated by or made a consolation centre for these societies that could not convert their own caucus. What did Mr. Woodall tell the women's Liberal associations at a meeting in London not long since? He

told them to work for the party, and that it was not necessary to put women's suffrage to the front. Those were not his exact words, but they expressed, she thought, his meaning. (Mr. Woodall: Hear, hear.) But supposing fifty women's Liberal branches affiliated with the suffrage society, would Mr. Woodall tell them to put the suffrage to the forefront, or party? If he should tell them to put party first, what would become of the suffrage movement?

Miss COBDEN contended that the proposal before the meeting did not interfere with the work of the local committees, but would leave them free to act independently.

Sir OWEN ROBERTS reminded the meeting of Abraham Lincoln's advice "not to swop horses while they were crossing the stream." They were crossing the stream then, and near them on the other side of it was the attainment of their object. He advised them to be careful lest by change at the present juncture they should imperil the success of their cause.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, M.P.: I move that the question be now put. This was agreed to.

Mrs. HALLETT wished to know if the "faggot" voters were to be allowed to vote—persons who had recently paid 5s. each in order to qualify themselves to vote on that important occasion.

The CHAIRMAN said he had alluded to this matter in his opening speech and could do no more.

The amendment was then put, when there were sixty-three votes for and ninety-four against it. The amendment was consequently lost and the original motion carried.

Mr. WOODALL, M.P., then proposed that the society should be called "The Central National Society for Women's Suffrage."

Mr. JACOBS seconded.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, M.P.: I rise to say that those who have voted with me have expressed their view in the most deliberate manner by a very deliberate vote. I do not think we ought further to resist the progress of these resolutions or rules in committee. I will tell you why I believe a most serious step has been taken towards the detriment of the Women's Suffrage Society to-night. (No.) I believe so. Those who voted against the original resolution desire to point out to those who voted for it that we cannot have discussion on these rules and vote upon them. Logically we are bound by them. We announce that we shall take no further part in the proceedings of this meeting.

Miss BECKER: We, therefore, I suppose, form our own society. Mr. Russell, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Becker, and the other ladies who had supported the amendment, then withdrew.

Mrs. ASHTON DILKE took occasion to deny that she had ever said she knew of fifty Women's Liberal Associations who were prepared to become affiliated with the Women's Suffrage Society.

Mr. Woodall's motion as to the title of the society being carried, the proposed rules were adopted as under:—

#### NEW RULES.

The title of the society is the "Central National Society for Women's Suffrage."

The object of the society is to obtain the Parliamentary franchise for women on the same conditions as it is or may be granted to men.

The society consists (1) of all persons who signify approval of its object and who pay a subscription of any amount; (2) of organisations approved by the Executive Committee which signify adherence to its object and pay an annual affiliation fee.

The affairs of the society shall be managed by a Central Council consisting:—

- (1) Of delegates duly elected by each duly affiliated body in the following proportion: one representative for not less than twenty-five members; two representatives for fifty members; three representatives for 100 members; four representatives for above 100 members; four representatives to be the maximum number sent by any affiliated body. The affiliation fee shall be five shillings for each representative sent to the council.
- (2) Of all subscribers of not less than 10s. to this society.
- (3) Of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than 50 members to be chosen from the subscribers and from members of affiliated bodies, and shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting of the Central Council. The Executive Committee shall conduct the general business of the society subject to the approval of the Central Council, and appoint its own officers, and shall make



rules for the conduct of its own business. The committee shall have power to fill any vacancies occurring in its members. Five members shall form a quorum. The committee shall meet in London.

The general meeting of the society shall be held annually to receive the report and consider the future work of the society. The annual meeting of the Central Council shall be held before each annual meeting of the society. Twenty-eight days' notice shall be given of such annual meetings to each affiliated body, and to subscribers to the society.

Special meetings of the Central Council shall be called by ten members of the Executive Committee (including the honorary officers) or at the request of any six of the affiliated bodies, to discuss such matters only as are mentioned in the notice of such meeting.

Any affiliated body, or any four subscribers, shall be entitled to nominate candidates for election to the Executive Committee, provided such nominations reach the secretary in writing fourteen days before the annual meeting of the Central Council.

The accounts shall be presented duly audited at the annual meeting of the society. The auditor shall be appointed by the Central Council.

No alteration shall be made in the rules except at a general meeting of the society, of which fourteen days' notice specifying the proposed alteration shall have been given to the Executive Committee, to each affiliated body and to the subscribers.

On the motion of Mr. C. H. HOPWOOD, Q.C., seconded by Miss LUCY WILSON, it was decided that the rules just passed should come into force at once, and that the present Executive Committee should be charged with the duty of carrying them into effect as speedily as possible.

Mr. WOODALL, M.P., moved, and Baron DIMSDALE seconded, a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was carried, and the proceedings then terminated.

**ERRATUM.**—In our last issue a card that had been cancelled was inadvertently printed as the card of admission for the meeting. The card actually issued stated as object of the meeting "for the purpose of revising the rules of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage."

#### CENTRAL NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

To the Editor of the Women's Suffrage Journal.

Central National Society for Women's Suffrage,  
29, Parliament-street, London, S.W., Dec. 20, 1888.

Dear Madam,—In accordance with the desire of this committee I beg to send you the enclosed series of resolutions, moved by Sir R. Temple, M.P., and to ask you most kindly to insert the same in your next issue.—I am, Madam, yours faithfully,

FLORENCE BALGARNIE.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, December 19th, presided over by Sir Richard Temple, Bt., C.G.S.I., M.P., it was resolved, upon the motion of Sir R. Temple, Bt., C.G.S.I., M.P., seconded by Mr. Alfred W. Bennett, M.A.—

"That the Executive Committee of the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage have observed statements publicly made to the effect that the majority of the society has declared an intention of affiliating itself to a particular party in the State," and

They hereby declare—

- "(1) That the society continues, as heretofore throughout the seventeen years of its existence, to preserve an absolute neutrality in all matters political, and counts amongst its members men and women of all shades of political opinion.
- "(2) That the resolution carried at the special general meeting, held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on Wednesday, December 12th, simply affected the society's rules, and while moved by an adherent of the Liberal cause, was seconded and supported by adherents of the present Government.

- "(3) That the main object of the new rules is to broaden and strengthen the basis of the society, by admitting upon

the Central Council duly elected representatives of such organisations, subject always to the approval of the Executive Committee, Conservative, Liberal and other, as may be desirous of obtaining the parliamentary franchise for duly qualified women.

- "(4) That a copy of the above resolution be sent to the Press generally, and to each member of the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage.

- "(5) That in pursuance of the new rules, immediate steps be taken for securing the co-operation of outside organisations, and that members of the society, whether Liberal or Conservative, be invited to aid by laying the new scheme before the various political organisations with which they may be associated.

- "(6) That a meeting of the Central Council for the purpose of electing a new Executive Committee, and a meeting of the subscribers be summoned on as early a date as possible.

- "(7) That a public demonstration be held in London, at which the attendance of friends and delegates from all parts of the United Kingdom be invited."

#### RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a meeting held in Westminster Palace Hotel, on December 13th, Mrs. FAWCETT in the chair—Present: Miss Babb, Miss Becker, Mrs. Beddoe, Miss Ashurst Biggs, Miss Caroline A. Biggs, Miss Lucy Bird, Miss Helen Blackburn, Miss Jessie Boucherett, Miss A. Brown, Lady Buchan, Mrs. V. I. Chamberlain, Colonel Cotton, M.P., Mrs. G. Cotton, Miss Courtenay, Miss Davidson, Miss Dunn, Miss Ford, Miss Agnes Garrett, Mrs. Ashworth Hallett, Mr. Hallett, Lady Harberton, Miss F. Davenport Hill, Miss Hart, Miss Mabel Holland, Mrs. Hunt, Miss Lupton, Miss Mordan, Miss Mylne, Miss Osborne, Miss Pease, Miss Constance Phillott, Miss Edith Phillott, Miss Reeves, Miss Robertson, Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., Mrs. Eustace Smith, Miss Stirling, Miss Stone, Mrs. Turner, Miss Abney Walker, Miss L. Williamson.

A telegram regretting absence was read from Mr. Courtney, M.P. Mrs. FAWCETT, on being voted to the chair, said that the action taken yesterday disfranchised the local committees, and some arrangement was necessary which should continue their organisation.

Col. COTTON, M.P., moved "That this meeting resolve to reconstruct the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage with the old rules and the old organisation." As he took it, from what had occurred yesterday afternoon, the National Society for Women's Suffrage is now in precisely the same condition as before except that the Central Committee has dissolved itself. So they might consider themselves as a meeting of the National Society for Women's Suffrage on the old lines. They had lost some old friends from their body—dissentient ladies as some one had called them. They had a free hand to make what suggestions they liked to carry on the society. The resolution proposed that they continue on the old basis, and invite the societies to carry on the work which he trusted is now near completion, and which will not, he thought, have suffered much by the adverse vote of yesterday.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, M.P., seconded the resolution. He had at first been a little doubtful as to whether they had taken the right course, but the more he considered the matter, the more he felt satisfied that they had done right after having made the strongest protest that they could. He quite concurred with what Mrs. Fawcett had said, that the representation of the Provisional Committee was abolished by the new rules, but he had a stronger reason than that. All kinds of new societies might be affiliated, and he could conceive such an organisation might bring in a totally different Bill.

The resolution was carried unanimously. The Viscountess HARBERTON then moved, and Miss JESSIE BOUCHERETT seconded, "That a Provisional Committee be now appointed to make all necessary arrangements, and that the committee be requested to draw up a circular for distribution amongst friends of the women's suffrage movement, asking their adherence to the reconstructed organisation."

This was carried unanimously. Mrs. FAWCETT then moved, Miss CAROLINE A. BIGGS seconded, a list of nominations for the Provisional Committee.

#### MEETING OF THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE.

At a meeting of the Provisional Committee, held at 10, Great College-street, Westminster, December 20th, 1888.—Present: Mrs. Fawcett in the chair, Miss Becker, Miss C. A. Biggs, Miss J. Boucherett, Miss Bell, Mr. Courtney, M.P., Miss Courtenay, Miss Laura Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. V. I. Chamberlain, Miss Davenport Hill, Miss F. Davenport Hill, Viscountess Harberton, Capt. Edwards Heathcote, M.P., Mr. Hallett, Miss Mordan, Miss Reeves, Miss Stone, Miss M. C. Sturge, Mrs. Stephen Spring Rice, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, Miss Blackburn, etc.

Letters were read sending resolutions of adherence to the reconstructed Central Committee from the committees in Manchester, Bristol, Belfast; letters saying the committee could not be called in time for that committee from the hon. secs. of the Dublin, Cambridge committees.

The following resolutions were adopted:—

1. Moved by Miss F. Davenport Hill, seconded by Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, and resolved: "That this committee desires to re-affirm that its sole object is to obtain the Parliamentary franchise for women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men."

2. It was moved by Viscountess Harberton, seconded by Miss Stone, and resolved: "That this committee supports the introduction of a Bill into Parliament for the enfranchisement of women, identical to that which was introduced by Baron Dimsdale, in the session of 1888, and which obtained a second reading in 1886, and to support which an absolute majority of the present Parliament are pledged."

#### MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee held December 18th, Professor Adamson in the chair, a letter was read from Mrs. Fawcett, hon. sec., asking the adherence of the Manchester Society to the reconstructed Central Committee. The following resolution was adopted:

"That this committee has learned with regret that at the special general meeting of members of the committee and subscribers to its funds held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on December 12th, the Central Committee as it has hitherto existed was dissolved.

"That this committee has learned with great satisfaction that it has been resolved to reconstruct the Central Committee with the old rules and the old organisation, and hereby resolves to join the reconstructed Central Committee."

#### BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Bristol and West of England Society for Women's Suffrage, held at 69, Park-street, Bristol, on December 18th, a letter was read, received from Mrs. Fawcett, as hon. secretary to the reconstructed Central Committee, conveying the desire of the Provisional Committee that they would join the reconstructed Central Committee. The following resolution was moved by Mrs. Beddoe, seconded by Miss Pease, and carried unanimously, "That, whereas a special general meeting of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, held on December 12th, 1888, has, of its own mere motion, and without consultation with the various country committees that joined together to form it, destroyed the constituent relations existing for seventeen years between the Central Committee and these country committees, and has adopted new rules affiliating to itself bodies formed for party and other purposes, this Executive Committee of the Bristol and West of England Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage resolves to unite itself with the reconstructed Central Committee, 10, Great College-street, Westminster, under the old rules and the old organisation."

#### NORTH OF IRELAND BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a meeting of the North of Ireland committee held December 18th, Mr. W. Johnston, M.P., presiding, the following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

Moved by Mrs. Henry Thompson, and seconded by Rev. R. J. Lynd: "That this committee, considering that the rules just adopted by the Central Committee have destroyed the old relationship existing until now between it and the provincial societies, and that they are incompatible with the satisfactory

progress of the work, hereby withdraws from co-operation with the Central Committee."

Moved by Miss Kirkpatrick, and seconded by Miss Hardy: "That this committee, recognising the fact that the members who withdrew from the meeting of the Central Committee on the 12th inst. represent the original principles of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, hereby give in their adhesion to the Provisional Committee just formed by them for carrying on the work on the old lines."

#### NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

##### CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

##### RECONSTRUCTED ACCORDING TO THE OLD RULES.

##### GENERAL COMMITTEE.

##### FIRST LIST.

Adamson, Professor	Hallett, Mrs. Ashworth
Anderson, Mrs. Garrett, M.D.	Hallett, T. G. P., Esq.
Ashford, Mrs. (Birmingham)	Hamilton, Mrs. (Bray, Dublin)
Babb, Miss C. E.	Harberton, Viscount
Beddoe, Mrs. (Clifton)	Harberton, Viscountess
Becker, Miss	Haslam, Mrs. (Dublin)
Bell, Miss	Hill, Frederic, Esq.
Bell, Miss A. E.	Holland, Mrs. Charles
Biggs, Miss Caroline A.	Kinnear, J. Boyd, Esq.
Biggs, Miss Ashurst	Kinnear, Mrs. J. Boyd
Blackburn, Miss Helen	Laye, Mrs. Ramsay
Boucherett, Miss (Willingham)	Lecky, Mrs. W. E. H.
Boucherett, Miss Jessie	Lethbridge, Sir Roper, M.P.
Bowring, Lady (Exeter)	Lethbridge, Lady
Buchan, The Dowager Countess of	Lister, Miss Emma
Byers, Mrs. (Belfast)	Long, W. H., Esq., M.P.
Chamberlain, V. I., Esq.	Marshall, Mrs. Emma
Chamberlain, Mrs. V. I.	Meath, The Countess of
Clough, Miss A. J.	Mordan, Miss
Cobbe, Miss F. Power	Mylne, Mrs.
Collings, Jesse, Esq., M.P.	Portsmouth, The Countess of
Cooper, Miss Laura	Rayleigh, Clara, Lady
Cotton, Col. E., M.P.	Reeves, Miss
Cotton, Mrs. Edward	Ridley, Miss
Courtauld, Geo., Esq.	Roberts, Sir Owen
Courtenay, Miss	Robertson, Miss
Courtney, Leonard, Esq., M.P.	Russell, T. W., Esq., M.P.
Crook, Mrs. J. (Bolton)	Sidgwick, Mrs. Henry
Davenport-Hill, Miss	Spring Rice, Mrs. Stephen
Davenport-Hill, Miss F.	Sturge, Miss Emily (Bristol)
Davies, Miss Emily	Sturge, Miss M. C.
Dimsdale, Baron, M.P.	Sterling, Mrs.
Drew, Miss Catherine	Stone, Miss
Eccles, Miss	Taylor, Mrs. P. A.
Edwards, Miss Amelia B.	Taylor, Mrs. Thos.
Edwards-Heathcote, Capt., M.P.	Taylor, Mrs. (Chipchase)
Ellis, Miss	Tod, Miss (Belfast)
Fawcett, Mrs. Henry	Twining, Miss Louisa
Ford, Miss Isabella O.	Wilkinson, Mrs. Eason
Forsyth, W., Esq., Q.C.	Wilkinson, Miss
Fry, Lewis, Esq., M.P.	Wilkinson, Miss L. M.
Garrett, Miss Agnes	Ward, Mrs. E. M.
Goldsmid, Louisa, Lady	

##### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Professor Adamson.	Miss F. Davenport-Hill.
Miss Becker.	Capt. Edwards-Heathcote, M.P.
Miss C. A. Biggs.	Mrs. Henry Fawcett.
Miss Helen Blackburn.	Louisa Lady Goldsmid.
Miss Jessie Boucherett.	Mrs. Hallett.
Miss Frances Power Cobbe.	T. W. Russell, Esq., M.P.
Colonel Cotton, M.P.	Mrs. Sterling.
Miss Courtenay.	Miss Tod.
Leonard Courtney, Esq., M.P.	

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