

Alas! we know what the educated Hindu does think! In a letter, circulated in tens of thousands all over the world, he asks, where is the superiority of Christianity in its treatment of women? All the pioneers—the leaders of every step in woman's advancement—Josephine Butler, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell—have met with opposition, misrepresentation, and often foul abuse.

Therefore, as a matter admitting of no delay, I entreat all who are interested in the extension of the Church of Christ abroad, and the advancement of His Kingdom, to give their warmest moral support to the advocates of the enfranchisement of women.

July, 1910.

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## THE "CONCILIATION" BILL

### An Explanation and Defence

By H. N. BRAILSFORD

FORTY years of quiet argument more than sufficed to establish the theoretic basis of Woman Suffrage. Behind the arguments was the rush and pressure of economic facts. Women had left the home, five millions and more of them, to become wage-earners in shop and factory, while the State in its turn, perpetually intervening in the most intimate concerns of a woman's life, be she mother or industrial worker, has itself created the best of all cases for her citizenship. Five years of gallant and devoted agitation have given the question an immediate urgency. The debate of last July was a faithful register of the position which it now holds. The Government granted what no other Government has ever given before—two entire days for a comprehensive debate. The Conciliation Committee had to face obstacles which none of its predecessors encountered. Its Bill is a working solution, a practical compromise, framed to become law, and with no other object. It asked for no academic support. It lost on the one hand Liberal supporters who demand adult suffrage in one cataclysmal measure, and on the other Unionist supporters who fear that its Bill may eventually pave the way for that vast change. It was assailed as none of its predecessors had ever been by two of the most powerful Suffragist Ministers in the House, who directed all their ascendancy and eloquence to the end of defeating its Bill on the Second Reading division. The anti-Suffrage movement is at last alert and well organised, more especially on the Unionist side. In spite of all, the Conciliation Bill rallied a larger number of supporters than any previous Woman Suffrage measure, and was carried by a majority (110) greater than the Government has itself obtained for its own principal measures.



### A Note on History.

To understand the fortunes of the "Conciliation" Bill it is necessary to retrace the history of Woman Suffrage in the last Parliament. The record is in the main that of a conscious attempt by a group of Liberal Members to force the question on to party lines. The old Bill, which first passed its Second Reading in 1870, was once more introduced in 1908 by Mr. Stanger. The division showed the immense majority of 179 for Woman Suffrage, though the total of the "ayes" (271) was smaller than that which the "Conciliation" Bill has since obtained (299). Meanwhile the various parties in the House had ceased to act together, and the Liberals had formed a separate party committee. Their proposal was that when the expected Reform Bill should be introduced towards the end of the life of the late Parliament, an attempt should be made upon party lines to graft Woman Suffrage upon it by means of an amendment. This strategy could succeed only if the Suffragists in the Ministerial ranks were united on the amendment in question, and only if these Ministerial Suffragists were able from their own numbers alone to command a majority of the whole House. In the following session an experiment was attempted which served to show how hazardous, even in a House dominated by the Liberal Party, this strategy must be. An Adult Suffrage Bill was introduced by Mr. Geoffrey Howard, once more on the understanding that it should not be carried beyond the Second Reading. The majority fell to 33; more significant still, the number of "ayes" dropped to a bare 157. Mr. Lloyd George was the only Member of the Cabinet who voted for this Bill. On the other hand, the Unionist Whips officially told against it. The opposition, none the less, included many Liberals, and even some Liberal Suffragists like Mr. Birrell. The lesson of that experiment was clear. A solution on party lines is the ideal method of dividing the Suffragist forces. Liberals cannot be united as a party in favour of Adult Suffrage, but Unionists can be united against it. It had no adequate backing even in the last Parliament, despite the fact that the Ministerial forces outnumbered the Unionists by 502 to 168. There is no possibility that it could obtain a majority in the present Parliament with its more even balance of 397 to 273. In a list published by the People's Suffrage Federation the number of pledged adherents of Adult Suffrage is given as 120. Nor is it only in the House of Commons that the adherents of Adult Suffrage are in a minority. It is a proposal which raises the maximum of opposition while it rallies the minimum of support. It affronts the opinions of professed Conservatives. Nor is the man in the street converted to it. The experience of the women who have worked during these years of propaganda at canvassing and street-corner speaking is that the plain man is ready to enfranchise "women who pay rates and taxes." He is prepared to give some women the vote, but he dreads a measure which would place political power in the hands of a majority of women. It is no part of democratic theory to override or ignore public

opinion, and for a measure which would add at one blow from eleven to thirteen millions of women to the electorate, public opinion is not prepared. English politics do not move on these revolutionary lines. It took half a century for our fathers to advance from the middle-class Reform Act of 1832 to the relatively democratic Reform Act of 1884. If men are enfranchised so slowly, what precedent is there for the sudden liberation of the whole body of women? Without the bold support of a strong and united Government the miracle is unthinkable, and for that we may wait a generation. Parties may be driven to extreme solutions in advance of public opinion by the authority of a great leader, the zeal of a united staff, and the pressure and coercion of party discipline. But the Liberal leader is hostile, the staff divided, and of the party machinery no use can be made. To wait for Adult Suffrage is to refuse the enfranchisement of women.

The Conciliation Committee was founded in the belief that the time had come to insist upon a prompt solution of this woman's question. For forty years there has been a majority in the House of Commons for the enfranchisement of women. Common honesty requires that Parliament shall give effect to its expressed convictions. No man who respects courage and perseverance can, without self-reproach, allow women to make the sacrifices which this long agitation has demanded, only to be insulted by repeated admissions of the justice of this reform and repeated refusals to give it effect. It was obvious that success could be achieved only by the united efforts of Suffragists in all political parties. The Committee is composed of a large and representative group of private Members of Parliament,\* and there was little difficulty in finding a basis of agreement which united them all. Their several points of view were not irreconcilable. The Unionists demanded of any solution that it should be moderate and definite. The admission of women to the franchise is an immense innovation, both social and political. They asked for a cautious advance, and in this stipulation there can be no doubt that they reflect the typical English attitude. The Liberals (and with them most of the Irish and Labour Members) were chiefly concerned to insist

\* The Conciliation Committee is composed as follows:—

*Chairman:* The Earl of Lytton.

*Liberal Members of Parliament:* Percy Alden, Sir T. Barclay, G. T. Bentham, Thomas Burt, Noel Buxton, H. G. Chancellor, Sir F. Channing, A. Cameron Corbett, Sir Wm. Crossley, Sir W. Howell Davies, J. A. Dawes, Ellis G. Griffith, Sir D. Brynmor Jones, J. McCallum, C. A. McCurdy, Sir Chas. McLaren, Walter S. McLaren, M. Muspratt, Walter F. Roch, A. H. Scott, Sir A. Spicer, G. Toulmin, Sir George White, J. H. Whitehouse, Aneurin Williams.

*Unionist Members of Parliament:* G. A. Arbuthnot, H. T. Barrie, Sir Wm. Bull, Captain Craig, H. S. Foster, C. S. Goldman, E. A. Goulding, J. S. Harmood-Banner, F. Leverton Harris, J. Henniker Heaton, Lord Lewisham, H. Mallaby Deeley, W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore, Basil Peto, Sir J. S. Randles, J. F. Remnant, Sir John Rolleston.

*Nationalist Members of Parliament:* Sir T. G. Esmonde, T. M. Kettle, J. C. Lardner, Dr. Lynch, Hugh A. Law, J. P. Nannetti.

*Labour Members of Parliament:* J. Keir Hardie, John Hodge, J. B. O'Grady, F. W. Jowett, D. J. Shackleton, Philip Snowden.

*Hon. Sec.:* H. N. Brailsford, 32, Well Walk, N.W.



that if a limited number of women were admitted to the franchise, they must not be so selected as to give an undue advantage to the propertied class. They had dreaded that this result would have followed from the old Bill (last introduced by Mr. Stanger), which opened to women all the qualifications at present enjoyed by men. They pointed out that it might have been abused to increase plural and "faggot" voting. Plural voting would have been introduced through the ownership vote, and the University graduate's vote. The lodger vote is also said to be subject to abuse. Lastly, Mr. Stanger's Bill would have allowed a husband and wife to be qualified as joint occupiers only if the house which they occupied was of the value of at least £20 (*i.e.*, £10 for each occupier). In other words (it was argued), almost every wife of the middle and upper classes might have been enfranchised, but virtually no wives of the working class.

Fortunately a precedent exists which is open to none of these objections. Since 1869 women have enjoyed the vote for municipal purposes. The terms on which they possess it have never been a subject of party controversy. Neither party has ever brought in a Bill to reform it. Throughout these forty-two years, though Liberals have once altered and repeatedly sought to alter the Parliamentary Franchise, the Municipal Franchise has remained untouched and uncriticised. Here, clearly, was the basis of agreement and the line of least resistance. The Municipal Franchise includes no ownership, or lodger, or graduate qualifications. It gives no advantage to wealth. Its basis is not property but occupation. With the omission of these categories of voters most of the possibilities of plural voting disappear. A woman may own land in a dozen constituencies at once, and would, if ownership were a qualification, acquire a vote for each of the twelve. But she cannot "occupy" more than one dwelling-house. It may, in some rare cases, happen that she occupies both a house and an office, shop, or other "tenement." But the law allows her a vote only for one of these where they are both situated in the same borough or county division. The only possibility of plural voting which remains is where a woman occupies a house in one electoral area and a shop or office in another. A woman may live in Southport and conduct a business in Liverpool. But such cases are so exceedingly rare that it is quite unnecessary to burden the Bill by providing against them.

The first clause of our Bill runs as follows:—

Every woman possessed of a household qualification, or of a ten pound occupation qualification, within the meaning of The Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the county or borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.

Its effect may be briefly summarised. It will enfranchise two categories of voters:—

(1) The householder, who will account for about 95 per cent. of the whole of the new electorate. She will get a vote if she inhabits any house or part of a house,

be it even a single room, and however low its value, provided she has full control over it.

(2) The occupier of premises valued at £10 per annum. This will bring in the small shopkeeper, or the typist who has an office of her own. It also enables women living together in a house to rank as joint occupiers, provided the house is worth £10 for each occupier.

These two categories of voters are the women occupiers who at present figure on the register for Town and County Council elections on the English and Welsh basis.\* Their numbers are known. In England and Wales, according to the official returns, there are 870,000 women municipal voters. Adding an estimate for the Scottish and Irish women, the total of the women occupiers in the three kingdoms will be not less than one million, while it cannot exceed a million-and-a-quarter. Our Bill, in short, will add one woman to each group of seven men who at present possess the vote. It satisfies both the axioms from which we started. It is moderate, and it confers no special advantage upon the propertied classes.

### The Status of Married Women.

The main difficulty in devising any Bill to enfranchise women is to provide for the case of married women. The Municipal Franchise is in this particular a grotesque chaos. Married women may vote in Scotland, Ireland, and London. Elsewhere in England and Wales they are disqualified for voting, despite the fact that a recent Act made them eligible to serve on Town or County Councils. It was necessary, therefore, in our Bill to stipulate formally that marriage shall not disqualify a woman, if she is in her own right a householder or occupier. In the vast majority of cases the husband, in whose name the house is rented, will be the householder. But there are cases where the wife owns the house, and others in which she is the real breadwinner. Then, too, there are men who are frequently absent from home and are rarely able to exercise the vote—officers on foreign service, Anglo-Indians, commercial travellers, sailors, and fishermen. It has sometimes been proposed that sailors and fishermen should be enabled to record their vote by some specially devised machinery. They could if they chose arrange that their houses should be rented in their wife's name, a plan which would make her the "householder," and under our Bill confer the vote upon her. The clause dealing with married women runs as follows:—

For the purposes of this Act, a woman shall not be disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided

\* The Scotch and Irish municipal register is wider, and includes owners who are not occupiers and also lodgers. In two minute particulars our Bill departs from the English municipal basis. (1) It includes under householders service voters, a very small class. (2) In England an office or shop qualifies for a vote, however low its value. In Scotland and Ireland there is a £10 qualification. In practice the point may be ignored, for under modern conditions there are hardly any shops or offices that can be obtained for a lower rental than £10 per annum. It was necessary to introduce this slight anomaly in order to reach a uniform basis for the three kingdoms.



that a husband and wife shall not both be qualified in respect of the same property.

The purpose of the proviso in this clause will be readily understood. We had to meet the criticisms directed against the old Franchise Bill. The chief difficulty was that raised by the Joint Occupation Franchise. In Leaflet No. 1 issued by the People's Suffrage Federation this is described as "the franchise which is most dangerous to labour." In Leaflet No. 3 the point is thus put:—

A very large majority under this franchise would be well-to-do women. All men living in houses of a clear yearly rental of £20 could give their wives votes. Only in London and other highly-rented districts are working-class rents above £20. No agricultural labourer's wife could get a vote.

The Conciliation Committee was unanimously determined to draft no Bill which could be accused of creating an artificial party preponderance among women voters. Here clearly was a fear generally entertained by Liberals which had to be dissipated, if our Bill was to obtain their support. The Unionist members of the Committee at once assented to the proviso in Clause II. which disposes of it. Since a husband and wife may not both be registered in respect of the same premises, the Joint Occupation Franchise cannot be used to make this preponderance of propertied votes.

### Faggot Voting.

The debate on the Second Reading showed that although we had omitted all the qualifications to which the democratic critics of the old Suffrage Bill objected, we had still left a loophole for attack. The Joint Occupation Franchise ("the most dangerous to labour") was gone. The ownership vote was gone ("everybody knows the ownership vote is a property vote."—Leaflet No. 3). The lodgers had been omitted ("A very large majority under this franchise would be well-to-do women."—Leaflet No. 3). Even the University graduates had been left out. We had left only the occupiers and the householders. Of the occupiers generally Leaflet No. 3 remarks: "The large majority in this class would be working women"; and of householders the same authority (Leaflet No. 1) has said: "The majority of the householder voters are poor." We had, in short, met all the criticisms against the old limited Bill, and met them in a way that involved considerable party sacrifices from Unionists. The People's Suffrage Federation, the only body of men and women who are actively working for Adult Suffrage, was satisfied that its objections had been met, and very candidly issued a whip in favour of our Bill. It was left to Mr. Winston Churchill, a recent adherent of Adult Suffrage, who had never before voted or spoken in its favour, to discover new objections to our Bill. He had authorised me to state that he "welcomed the formation of our Committee, and would favour a solution on non-party lines," but he held, as the event showed,

that this attitude was consistent with an uncompromising opposition to the Bill which our Committee was formed to promote. It is more usual for a critic who bases his objection to a Bill on some point of detail to stipulate on the Second Reading that his support is conditional on the removal of the blemish. Now the blemish which Mr. Churchill has detected may be removed by the alteration of a few words. His case was this:—

It is not merely an undemocratic Bill; it is worse. It is an anti-democratic Bill. It gives an entirely unfair representation to property as against persons. . . . I want the House to consider the effect of this on plural voting. At present a man may exercise the franchise several times, but he has to do it in different constituencies. But under this Bill, as I read it, he would be able to exercise his vote once or twice or three times in the same constituency if he were a wealthy man. If he had an office and residence in the same constituency he has only one vote now, but if this Bill passed he could vote for his office himself and he could give his wife a vote for his residence. . . . If he owned a house and a stable, another separate building, then under this democratic Bill he could give one vote to his wife in respect of the house and take the other himself in respect of the stable. I am told it is quite open to question whether it would not be possible for a wealthy man with a large family or retinue of dependents to multiply faggot votes by letting to them any property of the value of £10 within his own residence.

These possibilities were not new to us. All of them had been considered by the Conciliation Committee. It decided, after seeking the advice of an experienced revising barrister, that these are theoretic bogeys. Men do not at present on any considerable scale manufacture "faggot" votes for their male "retinues"; why should they do it for their female dependents? Nor was there any evidence to show that in Scotland, Ireland, and London, where it might be done at present, men confer "faggot" municipal votes upon their wives. If Mr. Churchill really feared these dangers a very simple remedy was open to him. He might have suggested the omission of the £10 occupation voters from the Bill. They are probably not more than 5 per cent. of the total number who would be enfranchised by it, and their omission would not seriously weaken the Bill. Such an amendment would have been in order. But it is not necessary to have recourse to a remedy so drastic. The Conciliation Committee has already drafted an amendment which deals with Mr. Churchill's cases. The original text of the Bill laid it down that a husband and wife shall not both be registered in respect of the same property. By forbidding their registration *in the same constituency*, we make it impossible for a man to endow his wife with any qualification which he cannot use himself—his office, or stable, or what not. With this amendment the safeguards against plural and faggot voting are complete.

To sum up, the Bill, with this amendment, now reads as follows:—

- 1.—Every woman possessed of a household qualification, or of a ten pound occupation qualification, within the meaning of The Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the county or borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.
- 2.—For the purposes of this Act, a woman shall not be



disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided that a husband and wife shall not both be registered as voters in the same Parliamentary Borough or County Division.

This Bill is not an arbitrary or a "fancy" franchise. It is the municipal franchise in which both parties have for forty years acquiesced. Our critics invite us to follow Colonial precedents by adopting Adult Suffrage. We have found a precedent at home. Women have won a footing in municipal politics. The natural course is to build on that foundation.

### Household Suffrage.

The Parliamentary Franchise is an intricate chaos, and in order to show how the Conciliation Committee arrived at the present Bill, it has been necessary to wade through a mass of repugnant detail. But it is not enough to prove that a Bill is negatively free from the objections which either party may bring against it. It must have some positive merit. The aim of our Bill is, of course, to remove the insulting disqualification of sex. When it becomes law no woman will be disqualified from the exercise of a citizen's rights simply because she is a woman. But beyond that justification which might be urged even in support of a Suffrage Bill which was capricious and undemocratic, we must be able to show that our plan accords with some reasoned and generally accepted view of the franchise. The Prime Minister said that he was able to discern "no intelligible principle" in the Bill. Its principle lies on the surface. It is an attempt to make household suffrage a reality. Our existing franchise system is a mass of anomalies which history has accumulated. But the core and substance of it is simplicity itself. The one vital and important element in it is household suffrage which the country owes to the great Reform Act of 1867, which Disraeli carried with the help of a composite majority of Conservatives and Radicals. It conferred the vote in towns upon every head of a house who is a male "person," however poor his dwelling may be. Extended as it has been first by the Reform Act of 1884 and then by the "latchkey" decision, it now recognises as a voter any man who is the settled occupier of any part of a dwelling-house in town or country over which he has full control. But as John Stuart Mill pointed out, when the Reform Bill of 1867 was before the House of Commons, any system of household suffrage is partial which is confined to men. Its principle is clear and democratic. Every household is in a real sense a unit, which has, be it rich or poor, a concern in government and an interest in furthering good and checking bad legislation. The vote is naturally conferred upon the head of the house, who is responsible for the rates and taxes directly imposed upon it. But there are households whose head is a woman. She may be a widow with children, a wife with an invalid or absent husband, or a single woman who bears her own burdens as a bread-winner and a taxpayer without the help of

husband or father. Of these women householders there are in the three kingdoms about one million who satisfy all the tests which the law imposes on men. Our Bill confers upon householders who already bear the burdens and fulfil the obligations of their status the rights and privileges which it ought to carry with it. There could be no more equitable or intelligible principle.

It has been oddly said of these women householders that they are a "dependent" class who do not possess "the same strength and backing to resist undue influence as the wife of a working man would have" (Mr. Lloyd George, at Bodnant, August 11th).

Our Bill is first assailed on the ground that it would give a vote to "every lady of property throughout the country." When we reply that it gives no vote to owners of property as such, and go on to prove that it will enfranchise a majority of working women, we are told that these working women are too "dependent" to be trusted with votes. The theory is apparently that no woman has backbone enough to vote honestly unless she has a husband behind her. But to add to the confusion, Mr. Lloyd George went on to describe the condition of the working-class wife whom he is more particularly anxious to enfranchise—the woman living in a "squalid, miserable, impoverished home with its hungry and ragged children," receiving from "a husband given to excessive drinking . . . the miserable remnant of his salary." "No Woman Suffrage Bill," he declared, "which did not give the potent weapon of the vote to such a woman would ever obtain his support."

There is here some confusion of thought. It is legitimate to hold up the miserable wife of the slums as an object for pity, for care, and for remedial legislation. But if our object is to find a peculiarly independent class, we should do well to look elsewhere. To whom is she to look for "the strength and backing to resist undue influence"? To her drunken husband? The plain common sense of this matter is quite otherwise. So far from being a peculiarly "dependent" class, these women householders are the self-dependent women. They are the women who have learned to face the world alone, to meet their burdens unaided, and to bear the full responsibility for the households of which they are the heads. Poor they may be—most women are relatively poor in a world where women's labour is systematically underpaid. But they are at least their own mistresses, and the votes they gave would be determined by their own experience of life. These women who have had to struggle alone and to think for themselves are the class to whom one would naturally look to represent the distinctive woman's point of view on all social and industrial questions. On the merits of Adult Suffrage the Conciliation Committee as such has no opinion. It contains both adherents and opponents of this reform. I personally will use no argument which might seem to deny to any woman "the potent weapon of the vote." But this is common ground between opponents and supporters of Adult Suffrage, that women who are householders and



ratepayers can prefer a claim to the vote which is more direct, more obvious, and more certain to meet with the assent of public opinion than that which any other class of women can put forward.

### Is the Bill Democratic?

The working women whom this Bill would enfranchise are not, it is said, "representative of their class" (Mr. Lloyd George, at Bodnant). There is no excuse for conjecture on this point. Exact knowledge is available. We contend, on the contrary, that the women occupiers are a miniature of the whole community, and fairly represent every class. The data in regard to London are known to every social student. In Booth's classical book, "Life and Labour in London" (vol. iv., page 391, second series) may be found the figures which show in detail the classes to which the women occupiers of London belong. There were, when this patient house-to-house canvass was taken, some 186,982 women occupiers in London. Of these nearly half were housewives, mostly of the working class. Rather more than half (94,940) were women who did other than domestic work. It is worth while to set out the more numerous categories of these:—

Charwomen, office-keepers, laundresses	...	...	30,334
Dressmakers and milliners	...	...	14,361
Shirt and blouse-makers, seamstresses	...	...	6,525
Waitresses, matrons, etc.	...	...	5,595
Tailoresses	...	...	4,443
Lodging and coffee-house keepers	...	...	4,226
Medical women, nurses, midwives	...	...	3,971
Teachers	...	...	2,198

These are the most numerous classes. Below 2,000 come lesser groups of artificial flower-makers, milk-sellers, bookbinders, etc., down to the 144 literary workers and the 140 Civil Servants. All of these possess the municipal vote already, and all of them would be qualified under this Bill. A fairer representation of the mass of working women could hardly be found. The educated women, doctors, nurses, and teachers are included in their due proportion. The poorer manual workers are the immense majority. The former will be enabled to give to the State the service of their trained intelligence. The latter will win the protection of the vote.

It is not possible to obtain exact figures as to the social standing of the women occupiers who are housewives only. But Miss Clara Collet, an expert statistician and the Senior Inspector for Women's Industries, writing in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* (September, 1908) estimated, on the basis of Booth's figures, that about 70,000 of the 90,000 keep no servant. Taking together the women engaged in work outside the home and the housewives who employ no servant, Booth's figures show that 89 per cent. of the women occupiers of London are working women.

There is other evidence available. The Independent Labour

Party conducted an inquiry some five years ago and found that in fifty towns or parts of towns where it had active branches, 82 per cent. of the registered women occupiers belong to the working class, a term which was defined to mean "those who work for wages, who are domestically employed, or who are supported by the earnings of wage-earning children."

Even more impressive were the results of an inquiry conducted in 1904 in northern towns by three women's organisations, which can be suspected of no bias in favour of property—the Lancashire and Cheshire Women Textile and Other Workers' Representation Committee, the Manchester and Salford Women's Trade and Labour Council, and the Women's Co-operative Guild. In Nelson two deputed inquirers, both of them Socialists, found that the proportion of working women voters on the register is 93 per cent. In Bolton, where there are over 5,000 women municipal voters, a very elaborate inquiry conducted in all the wards by Mr. Gerrey, the Liberal agent, gave a percentage of over 90. Wards in Leeds, Darwen, Kirkby Lonsdale, Barnsley, Horsforth, and Cambridge were also canvassed, with this conclusion, that "the average proportion of working women out of the total of women voters examined in all these places is 91 per cent."

Even in Kirkby Lonsdale, "a residential and shop-keeping town in which there is no special industry and where, if anywhere, one would expect the rich women to predominate," Miss Llewelyn Davies, a leading advocate of Adult Suffrage, could discover only "eight rich women and forty-nine trades and working women." A Cambridge ward showed "eighty-six working women occupiers and twenty-one upper and middle class." The joint report issued by these three organisations concluded as follows:—

Even in places where the professional and middle-class interest is strong, the working women's vote . . . will easily outweigh the propertied classes. On the other hand, in those great areas devoted to the Textile industries, the women's franchise will be almost entirely in the hands of the workers. This should cause no surprise, as it is only an illustration of the undeniable fact that in England there are more poor women than rich ones.

These careful statistical inquiries made by the leaders of working women's organisations are a sufficient answer to Mr. Churchill's casual verdict that a Bill which will enfranchise between 82 per cent. and 91 per cent. of working women is undemocratic, and even anti-democratic.

### Mothers and Wives.

There remains only one possible meaning which might with any plausibility be attached to the charge that this electorate of women is not "representative." It will include comparatively few married women. "The basic principle of this Bill," declared Mr. Churchill, "is to deny votes to mothers and wives—that is to say, to deny votes to those who are upon the whole the best of their sex." There is here a double misconstruction. The Bill does not deny votes to married women. It bestows them upon all married



women who are householders and in the technical sense occupiers. If a wife satisfies the conditions imposed on a man, and if she has on her shoulders the responsibility before the law for the burdens of a household, she will be enabled to exercise the vote. Nor can it be said of a wife that under normal conditions she is wronged in quite the same crude way as a widow or single woman is wronged by the refusal of a vote. The vote is not a reward for excellence or virtue. It is a means of protection. Now the single woman, earning her own living, goes at present quite unrepresented. There is no one who can, however imperfectly, speak for her, and sometimes the men of her class or trade or occupation, so far from voicing her interests, are her rivals and competitors. Men doctors, for example, or men printers (as the recent strike suggests), would not use their votes to remedy any grievance of women doctors or women printers which legislation might touch. Their attitude towards the women of their own occupation is, speaking generally, one of antagonism and jealousy. These women then have certain interests which are totally unrepresented. It is otherwise with married women living under normally happy conditions. Their interests are in the main identical with those of their husbands on all the chief issues of legislation and taxation. This argument may easily be pressed too far. Every wife has her own personality, her own angle of vision, and in some measure her own distinct interests. But in so far as her chief interests are those of the household and the family, they are not unrepresented at present. But it would be a serious objection to our Bill if it left the special standpoint of the married woman unrepresented. She has her own problems—questions connected with her status before the law, with divorce, with the custody of children, and above all with the education and rearing of children. But the widow will come to the poll with all the wife's experience behind her, and of the women qualified under our Bill a large proportion will be widows and mothers. The widow will not have forgotten (to take Mr. Lloyd George's illustration) what she suffered from the drunken husband who gave her only the "miserable remnants" of his wages. Freed from his brutal presence, indeed, it is probable that her vote will be more truly her own than it could ever have been while she was actually a wife. But it is needless to labour the point. Will anyone assert that an electorate which includes a million women, whatever be their status, would fail to insist that more attention shall be paid to the needs of married women than is paid to them by governments responsible only to men? No woman elector, for example, married or single, widow or wife, would tolerate the harshness of the Midwives' Bill for which the present Government is responsible. The prospects and interests of every woman, married or single, will be forwarded and not injured by our Bill. This insistence on the special case of married women has come solely from men, and chiefly from men like Mr. Churchill, who have never by vote or by speech sacrificed an hour of their leisure to forward the cause of women's enfranchisement.

From the Women's Suffrage Societies, which include a large proportion of married women, not a word of protest has reached us. They have all, both militant and non-militant, party and non-party, supported our Bill. It is significant that we can cite the support of the only organisation which has a right to speak for married women of the working class—the Women's Co-operative Guild. It accepts our compromise while maintaining its ultimate demand for Adult Suffrage.

But why, it will be asked, did the Conciliation Committee so draft its Bill as to exclude the mass of married women? The answer lies in the conditions of our problem. We had to satisfy Suffragists of all schools and parties; on no other terms could we have obtained a majority. I was allowed, while we were preparing our Bill, to examine the pledges and answers to questions collected by the Suffrage societies during the General Election. They revealed the greatest divergence of opinion on this very point. The 120 Liberal and Labour Members who are pledged to Adult Suffrage would, of course, have preferred to enfranchise all married women. On the other hand I counted about forty Unionist and twenty Liberal Members who stated that they were prepared to enfranchise "widows and spinsters only." Our solution is a compromise. It recognises the principle that marriage ought not to disqualify, but in practice it admits only a limited number of married women to the vote. Adult Suffrage is confessedly unable to command a majority in this Parliament. Is there any middle course? A proposal has been put forward by Mr. Denman, based on an earlier Bill introduced by Mr. Dickinson. It is that the wives of all male householders should be qualified by virtue of their husband's qualification. There are about seven millions of qualified male householders. Of these presumably between five and six millions are married. We proposed to enfranchise a million women, and this even Mr. Churchill, with all his ardour for large solutions, described as "an enormous addition to the franchise." Is it probable that Conservatives, who frankly prefer a cautious and moderate measure, will accept an addition of six or seven millions? The probability is not increased when one learns that the group of Radicals which is promoting this suggestion expressly declares that it does not propose to consult Conservatives, or to seek their co-operation. A scrutiny of the division on our Bill offers a fair test of the probable fate of such a measure. Most, if not all, the Unionist Suffragists (I write after careful inquiry) would vote against it. Not all the Liberal Suffragists would vote for it. Defeat is inevitable.\*

\* The division on the second reading of our Bill gave this result, excluding the tellers:—

	FOR.	AGAINST.	
Liberals ... ..	161	60	
Unionists ... ..	87	113	
Labour ... ..	31	2	
Nationalists ... ..	20	14	
Total ... ..	299	189	Majority 110



As the title of our Bill stands, an amendment to extend its scope by admitting the wives of all householders would be out of order. But Mr. Snowden, in the course of the debate on behalf of the Committee, offered to re-commit the Bill in respect of its title, an offer which will be renewed when Parliament reassembles in November. If the Prime Minister will grant the further facilities which the Conciliation Committee seeks, the title can be altered and this amendment may be moved. Our object in giving the Bill a restricted title was to limit the time which might be spent in debate. We were suitors for time. The Government had refused even the week which we thought adequate, and our opponents had threatened obstruction. But if the Government will grant the time necessary for the consideration of the "whole question," the sense of the House can be taken on this proposal. It is not a proposal which a non-party committee can itself put forward. It would divide the Conciliation Committee, as it would divide Suffragists generally. For my part I do not believe that it could be carried, but the experiment is one which may fairly be tried. The event would show, I believe, that the Bill which we drafted after a careful study of all the available data, is the largest measure of Woman Suffrage for which a majority could be obtained in this House. It is a frank compromise, and it has succeeded in rallying sincere Suffragists of all schools to its support. There is another school of Suffragists—the school in whose eyes the chief defect of any Suffrage Bill is that it has a majority behind it.

The position of those who are determined to block our Bill from a "democratic" standpoint, I take to be this. Women have asked for a small boon. Like Alexander the Great, Mr. Lloyd George declares that what may be good enough for women to receive is not good enough for him to give. The lowest number of women which he will consent to enfranchise is apparently seven millions. Unluckily he is not at present in a position to give. There are other questions which interest him more. His proposal is that women should ignore the efforts of those who are prepared to help them now, in the hope of receiving from him at some date unspecified a Bill for which there is in the Commons no majority, and for which in the Lords there would be still fewer supporters. On other questions Mr. George will compromise. He will spend half a year in seeking some arrangement of the constitutional controversy with the Unionist leaders. It is only where women's interests are at stake that he insists on an unbending party attitude. It would be a sorry task to make light of the daring

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Of the Liberals who voted against our Bill, only seven have ever voted for a suffrage Bill before, while another seven have in some way at some time pledged themselves to woman suffrage or adult suffrage. The remaining 46 are anti-suffragist. These 14, with the two Labour opponents, would probably vote for such a Bill as Mr. Denman proposes. If we transfer these to the "Ayes" and the Unionists to the "Noes," the result would be: For, 228; Against, 260; Majority against, 32. But even this estimate is too favourable. There are probably about 20 of the Liberal supporters of the Conciliation Bill who would not support a wider measure.

of a man who proposes to embark on so high and chivalrous an adventure. But what does he risk? He compared this question to that of Home Rule, and asked the women to put their faith in the Liberal Party with as great a patience as Irishmen have shown. Mr. Gladstone staked on Home Rule the fortunes of Liberalism, made it a government question, faced a rift in his Cabinet and a schism in his party, and went gallantly into the wilderness for his convictions. Mr. Lloyd George will not do that. Liberalism is to monopolise the credit, while it refuses the risks. It is to veto a non-party settlement, while it declines to use its resources as a governing party to impose a settlement on party lines.

### The Future of the Bill.

Enough has been said to explain the origin and to defend the scope of our Bill. Nothing stands in its way save the Veto of the Cabinet. It can show every mark of popular favour which a democratic Government might require. The great organised bodies of women unanimously support it regardless of party or class. In impressive processions and in vast mass meetings women have demonstrated in its favour. While every party question slumbers, they have proved their zeal and their determination by a ceaseless propaganda. Public bodies like the Town Council of Glasgow and the Dublin Corporation have petitioned that it may pass into law. Above all, the representatives of the people, by a majority greater than is held to be necessary to carry the largest constitutional changes, have given it the stamp of their approval. It cannot be said that the question is not yet ripe. The Prime Minister himself, on the eve of the General Election, undertook that the Parliament then to be elected "should be given an opportunity of expressing its views." It has expressed its views. Are they to have effect? No one can pretend that the vote in our favour was academic.\* Our two most formidable opponents, Mr. George, and notably Mr. Churchill, challenged the House from the Government benches to vote for the Second Reading only if it wished that the Bill should "be passed into law this session," "wanted it as it is," and "wanted it now," were "prepared to send it to the House of Lords," and "to fight the House of Lords if they reject it." We are entitled to conclude that the House of Commons wants all these things, and to demand that "the will of the people shall prevail."

No material obstacle stands in the way. This is an idle session

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\* The Prime Minister has laid stress on the fact that many of our supporters declined to back Mr. Shackleton's motion to send the Bill to a Grand Committee. But this implied no lack of sincerity or zeal. Unionists have always opposed the use of Grand Committees for important or controversial Bills. Several of them have publicly protested against this interpretation of their vote. Three of them made the best speeches delivered on our side, a fourth is a member of the Conciliation Committee, and a fifth was speaking five days later from our platform in Hyde Park.



—a period of truce. Not one of the pending party controversies can be touched. No elector, however anxious he may be to see Home Rule, or Welsh Disestablishment, or Education or Licensing dealt with, could complain, if time which cannot be used to further his own questions were given to the women. Both parties have agreed to make a vacuum. What occasion more suitable could there be for the consideration of a non-party issue? A unique opportunity has presented itself, which may not for a generation recur. Time there is to spare. A week will suffice for the further stages of our Bill. When once the truce is broken, and the normal course of party politics is resumed, every measure which has behind it the pressure of some disciplined body of male electors will claim and receive pre-eminence. Mr. Lloyd George has already announced that nothing must be done to satisfy the claims of women—claims which Parliament has recognised by vote upon vote over a period of forty years—until the Welsh Church has been disestablished. Mr. Redmond has an urgent claim to press. The Labour Party demands instant attention for the situation which the Osborne Judgment has created. If the opportunity which this year has brought with it is allowed to go by, if it ends in an academic and fruitless Second Reading, women will feel that a great chance has been used only to insult their hopes. If the moment is lost, men indeed may return to their party questions, but women will be left to meditate on the still unsolved problem of how best a voteless class may impress the handful of men who control the time of the House. A spectacle more repugnant to the whole spirit of representative Government it would be difficult to conceive. Parliament admits the wrong of which women complain. A remedy is devised by Members of all parties, meeting as the Constitutional Conference itself meets, in an atmosphere of peace and a spirit of good will. The remedy is accepted by Parliament in an overwhelming vote. It votes, but because certain Ministers dissent, it is apparently prepared to allow its vote to count for no more in the counsels of the nation than a resolution passed by a students' union. Yet the question is perhaps the gravest which any modern society can face. It touches every moral and social issue of our time. It has stirred the best women of our generation to an incessant and self-forgetful toil. They have braved for it the ridicule of the streets, defied custom, and faced in their hundreds the degradations of prison. It is difficult to believe that a body of men who have the power, the time and desire to right this grievance, can fail to be moved by the spectacle of such devotion to make the effort that will give their will effect.

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# The Emancipation of Womanhood.

*(Extracts from an Address delivered at the High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham, on November 14th, 1909.)*

No doubt many good people have wonderingly asked, "What has Christianity to do with the Women's Movement?" The truth is that the Higher Spirit of Humanity has stirred the hearts of pioneer women in our day and set them on fire with a zeal for justice and for a freer, ampler life.

I was speaking to a Socialist and a Catholic the other day on this subject. He was in favour of the thorough-going social and political emancipation of women, but he could not understand the modern movement. "It is beyond my comprehension," he said, "that they should have all this passion of reckless self-sacrifice for such a futile and impotent thing as the vote has turned out to be. There is something in the movement that is unaccountable and strange. When I try to fathom it I hear mystical talk about liberty, equality, comradeship, completer womanhood, and realisation of personality and so forth—but I can't get any clear understanding. It baffles and bewilders me." Then he added: "Yet there is—must be—something significant, however inexplicable, some spirit at work, some revival and uprising from the depths of Humanity to account for the things we witness. There must be some cause adequate to these effects. What is it? It can't be a freak or an accident, and yet I am utterly unable to see what it is and what it means."

I told him how there seemed to be a welling up of life that swept women away in its flood almost before they realised they were in



the current. Whence it came, whither it went, might be difficult to say—but at any rate here it was—a transforming and transfiguring faith that made stammering women eloquent, and the shy and the sensitive to speak with tongues, the modest and the shrinking to be violent, the cultured and refined who had been nursed in the lap of luxury to be comrades with wage-earning women and to share the same insults and wounds and imprisonments and bodily humiliations; titled ladies, university graduates, artists, authoresses, working housewives, and charwomen were made one in this movement and suffered a common crucifixion and torture even as patrician matrons and their slaves were made one in the early persecutions of Christianity. If this thing was of evil it simulated the enthusiasm of religion uncommonly well and certainly brought forth some of the fruits of the spirit: unearthly joys, endless heroisms, unyielding devotions, passionate loyalties, and all the agonies of martyrdom short of, but only a hair's-breadth short of, actual death—and probably deaths were in store for some of them in the near future.

### The Vote a Symbol.

Something of that kind I tried to say to my friend. It is what that splendid champion Mr. Nevinson has been saying in an article\* in the *English Review* of November, 1909: "The struggle has now become so intense, its phases change so fast from day to day, and such elements of abhorrence and indignation have been added, that the ultimate hope and result of it all cannot be much spoken of. In the midst of tactics and manœuvres, in defence and attack, in law courts and police courts, in prison cells, during the pain of hunger-strikes, and under the abomination of stomach-tubes forced against their will down their throats or nostrils, the women who are fighting for political rights in this country have hardly time to remember the full significance of their aim. They are obliged to take all that for granted, and to argue about it now seems a little irrelevant, a little uninteresting. The Vote to them has become a symbol, a summary of faith—something for which it would be glorious to die, something assured and indisputable that needs no demonstration. It is to them what the Cross was to the Christians."

This writer knows the movement from the inside and understands the situation. But words like these sound foolishly extravagant and almost insane to those men who would not sacrifice a cup of

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Price one penny.

coffee or a cigar for any principle whatever, or to those women whose thoughts cannot ascend higher than a Bridge-party.

I am not going to discuss the "symbol" nor the violence of the crusade. I have referred to these incidents simply as social phenomena, however indefensible, that reveal the resolute and invincible determination, the deep consuming passion, the amazing endurance that are behind the women's demands.

No one who has met the chief personalities that command and inspire the forces will ever believe that they can be suppressed. To think they can be diverted from their purpose by policemen or gaolers, or any repressive machinery of Government, is simply the folly of men who think that physical force can hold down a spiritual and a moral force that does not fear those that can kill the body but cannot break the spirit. States and Governments can no more suppress the soul of the movement than the Czar can suppress reform in Russia; than Nero or Marcus Aurelius could suppress Christianity in Rome. The spirit of these women is an ultimate and decisive committal of the soul. Their attitude is conclusive and irrevocable. If we do not mean to massacre them the sooner we recognise that they are bound to triumph the better. The spirit of the leaders is shared by the rank and file—that spirit is invulnerable to either our arguments or our assaults. It will defeat all opposition precisely because there is no opposition in the present age, no movement in the living world, with the same fire and daring of moral conviction behind it. In the estimate of these women all mere party wrangles, however important they seem to us, are but the irrelevant chatter of small men who cannot see that they are discussing things, as it were, behind locked doors, in the absence and enforced silence of the majority of the inhabitants of these isles.

### The Crisis Reached.

Let us, if we can, pass for a moment out of the dust of the actual arena of conflict and consider rather the meaning of the strife. It is an old strife that calls to mind names like those of John Stuart Mill and Mary Wollstonecraft; only in our day it has swiftly passed beyond the stage of discussion into the battlefield of defiant deeds. No *man*, however sympathetic, can quite share the intensity of the modern revolt of woman. But he can at any rate try to understand it. It seems to me that here we have the clear emergence of a newer and more heroic human energy. We often speak as though evolution and revolution were contradictory terms. But they are by no means necessarily so. There are occasions when revolution



belongs to the ordinary and normal course of evolution. Development reaches a crisis now and again from which further progress is possible only through a sudden convulsion. This catastrophe becomes then the necessary step in further development. Social growth may be, and often is, as revolutionary as the passing of a grub into a moth: it is like the chick breaking the shell that once preserved but now restrains it. To say this is not to preach violence or revolution in any bad sense. It is simply the recognition of the fact that progress may come to a momentary standstill because it cannot go on any further on the old lines; that a new departure has become imperatively necessary if health and vitality are to be maintained. I believe that the evolution of womanhood has been thus artificially checked by society for centuries, and that the limit of restraint and frustration has now been reached; that the older countries must therefore follow the younger colonies like Australia and New Zealand, and remove the stone-wall barrier that has been set up against the advancement of women.

Such breaks in evolution are never without preparation. The wings of the angel of the Revolution are formed, though folded in the chrysalis. The industrial conditions of the last century especially have made the emancipation of women as predestined as any human movement can be said to be. If we believe at all in an economic interpretation of history, if we believe at all that modern changes are coming about because these changes were implicit and inherent in preceding social conditions, then to that extent the Emancipation of Womanhood is simply the expression of something which has been pre-determined and fore-ordained, and which now appears in the fulness of time. What determined it? Very largely the fact that women have been compelled to earn their own living under a capitalistic system. They have been driven into factories: they have thus come in quite a new sense under the power of economic and industrial conditions. They have been educated to serve under this system: they are equipped for technical and intellectual ends.

### Handicaps.

But although in this way they are subjected to industrial conditions they are finding that they are hampered, handicapped, thwarted almost at every turn. In the open market the male, who is said sometimes to be the stronger body and the superior mind, is given additional and artificial advantages to any that he may naturally possess. For the same work, even for inferior work—as, for instance, in some cases of teachers in schools—he is

better paid. In other cases professions like law and the ministry of religion are made a male monopoly. The old chivalry, which at its best was perhaps rather a beautiful thing, has become a nauseating cant upon our lips. The genuine chivalry is that of men who to-day will fight to see that women are given more justice and fair play in a life already by nature fashioned for a special share of pain and suffering and vicarious sacrifice. And the highest chivalry is not that which condescendingly fights for them but that which will put national and civic weapons into their hands and give them that political experience and power which will enable them to fight for themselves—as indeed they must. They pass the same examinations in Oxford and Cambridge, often they beat the man in Tripos or in Schools, but male chivalry debars them from the degree they have earned. They come out products of what we call the Higher Education as well equipped as men, often better, only to find that many of the most lucrative posts and careers are closed to them. They are thwarted on every hand in the effort to serve society and to express their individualities. As children they were a secondary consideration to their brothers and their education less seriously thought of and less generously sacrificed for, and now, when in spite of all obstacles they are as well-educated as the best of men, it is only to find their opportunities narrow and circumscribed and hedged about with stupid man-made restrictions and prejudices. Only with great reluctance was the medical profession opened to them. The better-paid careers in the Civil Service are still shut against them. There are over 5,000,000 women workers, but the inspectorships open to women are few and out of all proportion to the number of women employed in schools and factories. Our prisons, with their thousands of unhappy women inmates, have but one woman inspector, and no women doctors, I believe.

The woman wage-worker is even more weighted in the race and struggle of life. It is of our chivalry forsooth that we permit her to be sweated and underpaid and drive her to go on the streets. The Post Office tender for uniforms and clothing stipulates for the magnificent sum of 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. an hour to be paid by the contractor. It is of our chivalry that she has to labour full time at the factory and then come home to resume the housework which is never finished. It is of our chivalry that we tax her and impose our laws upon her without consulting her or admitting her to any effective voice in the Government that taxes and legislates. This is *cant*, odious and cowardly cant, that makes a pitiless mock of shielding her only



to expose her to the fiercest brunt of the tempest and leave her shelterless in the face of the elements. Fine, brave, handsome chivalrous men we are indeed to ask why she rebels against our benign ruling of her fate! We have not one reasonable argument against the justice or urgency of the women's movement, except indeed Mrs. Humphry Ward's argument that when it comes to fisticuffs we can usually knock her down. There is no argument. As a campaign for political and economic rights it is quite unanswerable. As a case for the emancipation of a sex from industrial exploitation it is absolutely incontrovertible and needs no plea.

Yet I confess that what impresses me most is not what men can confer as a measure of tardy justice upon women, but what women can bring to men in their crusade for a better and purer humanity. It is not a matter merely of her rights but of our human needs. The Emancipation of Womanhood is the first and most necessary step to the emancipation of human society from evils which men are powerless to fight alone. It is not only that we should be giving a belated measure of justice to women by conceding rights which we cannot any longer safely withhold, but that we should be releasing a reservoir of moral and spiritual energy and a source of specialised experience and intelligence for the good of the human race. I am indeed concerned about woman's own demands, but I am also concerned about the requirements of human society.

### **The Labour of Married Women.**

Take the case of Married Women's Labour. I want to put myself in the pillory as a penitent, for until recently I believed it was a simple piece of philanthropy and a wise step in social reform to restrict the liberty of wage-earning mothers. That expectant mothers should be prevented from pursuing their work almost up to the birth of their child, and that they should not be allowed to return to the factory until after the lapse of four weeks or so, seemed merely a provision of humane common sense. The male politicians and legislators seemed to think so too. But if women could have had an effective voice in the matter we should not have been so foolish and short-sighted. The problem is not so simple as it looks. The alternative for many such wage-earning mothers is not work or nourished rest, but work or starvation. If it is bad for such women and for their babes that they should work too near the time of birth and return to work too soon afterwards, it is still worse that they should be underfed and suffer hunger. "Society," says

Lady McLaren, "realises only the discomfort that is seen, and when a woman, especially an expectant mother, is seen working in a factory grimy and unpleasing, it gives a shock to the whole male sex. Men are ever ready to forbid such outrages, and stop wage-earning. For the sake of its own tender feelings, Society wishes to hide away the miserable woman in her own home, where no money can be earned; and once there it forgets her. It is in this spirit that Parliament has said that before a child is born the employer can send a woman worker away at his discretion, and that she shall not be permitted to earn anything again till the child is four weeks old. Meanwhile the law imposes on no person whatever the duty of giving her food."

I mention this case because it has specially impressed me owing to my own blindness in the matter. Such a law seemed so wise and beneficent to me once: now it seems unspeakably foolish and cruel. For such a law to be of use, to be just, the woman ought to have some sure support either from some public authority or, where there is a wage-earning husband, by having a right to some share of his wages paid directly to herself. But our laws are man-made.

It is not merely that men are selfish and will not surrender their advantages for the sake of social well-being: it is that men do not know, do not understand, have not the experience or the insight necessary and are too self-confident to call in the women to prescribe or consult. Problems such as the one I have mentioned are often *primarily* women's problems and require women's sagacity and knowledge to solve them, but they are also social problems gravely affecting the future of the race.

### **"Come and Help Us."**

We need woman's moral spirit and insight in all our most urgent social questions. On all the great human issues, the voice of women would be the deliverance of the higher morality of the nation; it would be, spite of the fascination of pageantry, regalia and gay uniforms, a voice in the interests of peace against war. Not that they, as nurses, have been less brave, but that it is they who suffer most from privation at home without bands or banners or excitement, from loss of husbands abroad, and of the sons they have borne and suckled. In matters of social purity their power is almost our only hope; for that horrible cancer of vice is almost exclusively man-made. Their help for temperance reform would be, I believe, decisive; whereas now the brewer and his friends are victorious to the point of defiance and contempt. On subjects like infant mortality, the care of the feeble, the imbecile and the unfit,



medical inspection and feeding of school-children, education, Labour legislation generally, apart from all question of rights, we need women's suggestion and help and experience.

We live, let us thank God and rejoice we live, at the opening of a new era of social reform. That being so, I want the women to be in at it from the beginning. I do not want to see the politicians stir one step without the women's comradeship in the enterprise. It is not merely that all social reform legislation affects women as much as men, and often more, but that no such legislation can be wise and sound unless we have the advantage of the women's distinctive point of view right through from start to finish. From one point of view I do not care a pin whether women say they want or do not want to immerse themselves in politics. I would tell those women who wish to hold aloof that it is not a question of their personal liking or preference. It is a question of our common social necessity. We cannot get on without your assistance, and you must be brought in. The Country requires you, the Cause demands you, Humanity needs you, Duty calls you. Whether you like it or not we mean to put a moral constraint on you and to insist that you shall apply yourselves to those problems which are common human social problems that must be tackled and solved by men and women in joint comradeship and co-operation.

### The Poor Law Commission.

Consider the Report of the Poor Law Commission. Has it occurred to all the men here that that most remarkable work is almost exclusively the product of woman's practical genius for social reform? I suppose those of us who have made even the most superficial acquaintance with that document will agree that it is the most wonderful result of social investigation and clear thinking and statesmanlike sagacity that has appeared in all English history. I am not speaking only of the Minority Report, but of the Majority Report too. But it is well known that the chief directive genius behind the Majority Report was a woman—Mrs. Bernard Bosanquet; and the chief directive genius behind the Minority Report was also a woman, one of the most distinguished and noble figures in the whole field of social politics—Mrs. Sidney Webb. Think of the blind stupidity, the criminal waste of keeping women of that character practically outlawed from the national political life. Those reports will some day result in legislation. It will be a wicked thing if women are to have no say in it, and no place in working its machinery.

### The New Conception of Marriage.

And what is the summing up of it all? Is it not this—an immense gain to the civic and the national consciousness through the elevation and development of woman's personality. For all this social activity and interest will react on the woman's character, lifting it out of its narrow and petty groove and giving it a range and a sweep that it has never had before. Woman has her own individual life to live even as a man has his. She will be the better wife and mother, as he will be the better husband and father, by having wide outlooks and an intimate and firm grip on that civic and national and human life in which their being lives. The day is passing, let us hope, when a man expects his wife to be a mere household ornament and convenience—or what Laetitia Dale was to Sir Willoughby Patterne, a presence that illumined him as a burning taper lights up consecrated plate. How odious to a true man would be the sense that his wife clings to him and does this rather than that, simply because she is economically dependent upon him and feels her very soul bought and sold. The essence of true marriage is an irrevocable self-committal on both sides not to crush but to develop the individuality of each and bring it to its perfect bloom and fruit. How horrible would be the thought that a woman consents to marry because it is, under present conditions, the most obvious way of securing a livelihood!

Would not every self-respecting man desire that women should have equal opportunities to acquire their own economic independence, so that they shall feel no inducements to marry except the natural and the honourable ones that ought always to prevail. How unutterably loathsome it is to know that there are thousands of women to-day driven by sheer economic necessity to sell themselves in the marriage-market—that they will marry anyone who will keep them; so that, in Miss Cicely Hamilton's phrase, Marriage has for many women become a *trade*. And how unspeakably horrible it must be for a man to feel, even to suspect, that he is being made use of in that way. Would he not really prefer that he had genuinely to please, to woo, if peradventure he might exult in winning the glory of a free and independent woman's genuine love unaided by any bribe of economic advantage?

Think what this deeper comradeship might mean to the future of the race, when women are no more the playthings and the toys of men, no more absorbed in the punctilios of etiquette, the petty ambitions for social prestige, the little thin pleasures and affectations of a mentally starved life, the idle round of visitings and small



talk and tea-drinkings, and the dilettante dabbling in literature and art as a mere drawing-room accomplishment. Think what it would mean not for her only but for men and for human society if she really counted, and had her full self-expression in life, what her influence would mean for her men friends, and for the children she is training and equipping in civic knowledge and virtue. Think of the changed atmosphere of the home-life when the woman's slavish subservience is no longer a fact, when the mother and the daughters, no less than the father and the sons, can approach all great public questions with equal knowledge and an equal responsibility, when the woman confronts her own career with courage, knowing that she is the mistress of her own destiny precisely because she is the servant of Humanity and not merely of men, the child of God and not the sport of Nature.

### **How Freedom will be Won.**

If this day of emancipation is to come, as come it will and that right soon, it will come by the women's own daring efforts and self-reliant wills. Women may give up looking to political parties, or with much expectation to the aid of men. In the main men will give you only what you can wring out of them, and this when they see they cannot hold you down any longer. Your hope of salvation is in yourselves and the justice of your Cause, and the God of all Justice. You must make yourselves independent of parties and combine to make your subjection no longer possible. Only when men have realised that you are strong, determined, irresistible, yes, and desperate, will they accede to your claims. Until then they will play with you and put you off as they have done all through past years. So unite aggressively in your own interests and "trust no party, sect, or faction," remembering those words of John Stuart Mill: "The concessions of the privileged to the unprivileged are seldom brought about by any better method than the power of the unprivileged to extort them." You have a glorious Cause, you have perilous hazards in front, but also you have a certain victory. You are now in the dark hour, but eastward the sky is already trembling into dawn. Be of good courage, for the day is yours.

**Entrance Fee 1/-**

### **MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE.**

I endorse the objects and methods of the Women's Social and Political Union, and I hereby undertake not to support the candidate of any political party at Parliamentary Elections until Women have obtained the Parliamentary vote.

I desire to be enrolled as a member.

Mrs. or Miss

Signature

Address

*This page to be detached and posted, with the Entrance Fee of 1s., to the Hon. Secretary, W.S.P.U., 4, Clement's Inn, Strand, W.C.*



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# A DECLARATION

OF

# REPRESENTATIVE MEN

IN FAVOUR OF

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.



MEN'S LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE,

40, MUSEUM STREET, LONDON, W.C.

PRICE ONE PENNY.



A LIST  
OF  
PROMINENT MEN  
IN FAVOUR OF  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

---

Those who oppose the parliamentary enfranchisement of women are in the habit of asserting that men who are qualified to judge are unanimously opposed to it.

This assertion can be made only in ignorance of the facts. The list here published of prominent men who support the movement was collected originally during the first few weeks of 1909, and no name was included without the express consent of its owner. Since that time a number of additions have been made, and in response to many enquiries all over the country, the Men's League for Women's Suffrage decided to issue the present revised edition.

A few special points should be noted which still further refute the contention of the Anti-suffragists.



I. The men whose names appear are drawn from all Parties, Classes, and Professions. It is no list of mere theorists or cranks.

II. The "Antis" say that women are physiologically unfit. Let them read the list of scientists.

III. There are names here of some of our chief religious leaders. How then can the "Antis" say that women's suffrage is opposed to the teaching of the Bible?

IV. Leading lawyers and historians have signed this declaration. How then can our cause be opposed to all the conclusions of legal and historical science?

V. It is said that women are intellectually unfit to exercise the vote. The names included under "Education" afford striking testimony against this contention.

No honest opponent who reads these pages can deny that our cause is a serious one, backed by men of the highest eminence in every walk of life,—men who cannot be accused of trifling with great things,—men whose honesty is beyond suspicion.

The offices of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage are at 40, Museum Street, London, W.C.

*Chairman of Committee*—HERBERT JACOBS.

*Hon. Secretary*—J. MALCOLM MITCHELL.

*Hon. Treasurers*—  
GOLDFINCH BATE.  
H. G. CHANCELLOR.

All men who desire the speedy enfranchisement of women should join this League.

## Declaration by Representative Men in Support of Women's Suffrage, 1909.

"Women demand the Parliamentary Franchise on the same conditions as those on which it is now, or may be hereafter, granted to men."

This is the formula adopted by all Women's Suffrage Societies.

In support of this demand the following list has been prepared of men distinguished in various callings who have permitted their names to be quoted as definitely in favour of giving the Parliamentary Franchise to women.

### (i). Legal, Official and Parliamentary.\*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Right Hon. A. H. D. Acland, P.C.,<br>M.A.                        | Laurence Gomme, F.S.A., Clerk to<br>L.C.C.                                   |
| William F. Bailey, C.B., Irish Land<br>Commissioner              | Edward Goulding, M.P.  |
| M. Lloyd Baker, J.P.   | Trevor Grant, I.C.S. (retired)   |
| Rt. Hon. Gerald N. Balfour, P.C.                                 | J. G. P. Hallett, M.A., J.P.   |
| Sir Thomas Barclay, LL.B., Ph.D.                                 | G. S. M. Hart, Cossham, Late Com-<br>ptroller India Treasuries               |
| Edward Beaumont  | T. Hart Davies, M.P.   |
| H. Percy Boulnois  | Alfred Haworth, J.P.   |
| W. R. Bousfield, K.C.  | Arthur Hillman, J.P., Eastbourne   |
| William Boycott, County Alderman,<br>Hereford                    | Sir Chas. S. Hobhouse, Bart., Late<br>Judge of the High Court, Cal-<br>cutta |
| E. E. Bulwer, M.A., J.P., Hereford                               | C. Courtenay Hodgson, Carlisle   |
| W. Carter, J.P., Mayor of Windsor                                | H. W. Household, Sec. Education<br>Committee, Glos.                          |
| Lord Robert Cecil, M.P.  | Sir Robert Hunter, Solicitor to Post<br>Office                               |
| Sir William Chance, C.C., J.P.                                   | A. M. L. Langdon, K.C., Recorder<br>of Burnley                               |
| A. W. Chapman, J.P., D.L.  | Hugh A. Law, M.P.  |
| Cecil Chapman, J.P., Metropolitan<br>Magistrate                  | A. L. Leon, J.P.   |
| E. C. Clark, LL.D., F.S.A., Regius<br>Prof. Civil Law, Cambridge | Herbert S. Leon, J.P., High Sheriff<br>of Bucks.                             |
| Hon. Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G.,<br>Ex-Premier S. Australia     | Cyril A. L. Lewis  |
| Rt. Hon. Lord Courtney of Penwith,<br>P.C.                       | Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, Chan-<br>cellor of the Exchequer                   |
| Montague Crackanthorpe, K.C.,<br>D.C.L., J.P., D.L.              | Geo. H. Lyster, Ex-Pres. In corpor-<br>ated Law Society, Ireland             |
| R. G. Longworth Dames, J.P.                                      | Thomas W. Lyster, Librarian to<br>National Library, Ireland                  |
| Alex. Darling, J.P., Edinburgh                                   | The Earl of Lytton   |
| W. H. Dickinson, M.P., L.C.C.                                    | Charles McArthur, M.P.   |
| W. D. Earengay, LL.D., Cheltenham                                | Thomas Maloney, K.C., Dublin   |
| J. B. Falconer, K.C., Dublin                                     | Alderman Martineau, Birmingham   |
| J. T. Agg Gardner, J.P., Mayor of<br>Cheltenham                  | F. Merrifield, Clerk to the Councils<br>of East and West Sussex              |
| Hanbury C. Geoghegan, B.L.                                       | W. H. Mill, Chairman of School<br>Board, Edinburgh                           |
| James P. Gibson, Lord Provost of<br>Edinburgh                    |  |
| Rt. Hon. Herbert J. Gladstone,<br>M.P., Home Secretary           |  |

\* There are more than 400 pledged supporters of the cause in the present House of Commons. Only those are here included who desire to sign in their private capacities according to the classification here adopted.



Legal, Official and Parliamentary—continued.

William Moorsom, Insp. Local Gov., Bath (retired)  
 Sir Henry Norman, M.P.  
 The Marquess of Northampton  
 L. Oppenheim, LL.D., Whewell Prof. International Law, Cambridge  
 A. F. Peterson, K.C.  
 H. Pike-Pease, M.P., J.P., D.L.  
 L. Fox-Pitt, J.P.  
 Edward England Phillips, J.P., Ex-Mayor of Bath  
 Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart., LL.D., D.C.L., late Professor Jurisprudence, Oxford  
 T. S. Porter, J.P.  
 A. R. Prideaux  
 Sir Andrew Reed, K.C.B., C.V.O., Irish Constabulary  
 Hon. W. Pember Reeves, Director London School of Economics  
 Sir Owen Roberts, D.C.L., LL.D.  
 Sir Jas. Rankin, Bart., J.P.  
 W. F. Roch, M.P.  
 Sir Hallewell Rogers, J.P., ex-Lord Mayor, Birmingham  
 Sir John F. L. Rolleston, K.B., J.P.  
 The Earl Russell

M. V. Sadleir  
 Gilbert Samuel  
 H. Y. Stanger, M.P., K.C.  
 A. Francis Steuart  
 Hon. H. B. J. Strangways, Ex-Premier S. Australia  
 Ernest J. Swifte, J.P.  
 Theo. C. Taylor, M.P.  
 Sir Charles James Tarring, J.P.  
 Ralph Thicknesse  
 Sir William Hood Treacher, K.C.M.G.  
 F. E. Tuson, I.C.S. (retired), late Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands  
 Alderman W. Francis Vance  
 Sir Francis Fletcher Vane, Bart., J.P.  
 Frederick W. Verney, J.P., M.P.  
 Garnett Walker, K.C., Dublin  
 James Crabbe Watt, K.C.  
 Sidney Webb, L.C.C.  
 Sir William Wedderburn, J.P.  
 The Earl of Warwick  
 Prof. Westlake, K.C., LL.D., late Prof. International Law, Cambridge

(ii). Army and Navy.

Colonel Arbuthnot, J.P.  
 Lieut.-Colonel Linley Blathwayt, Bengal Staff Corps (retired)  
 Sir William F. Butler, G.C.B.  
 Lord Castletown  
 Capt. B. M. Chambers, R.N.  
 General Sir Edward F. Chapman, K.C.B., R.A.  
 Colonel E. T. D. Cotton-Jodrell  
 Hon. Spencer Graves, R.N.  
 Colonel R. Gwynn  
 Colonel E. B. Hartlev, V.C.  
 Colonel T. G. O'D. Hervey, Military Knight of Windsor  
 Colonel C. Macaulay  
 Colonel William C. S. Mair  
 Surgeon-Major A. R. Mantell

Lieut.-Colonel K. P. Mosley, Bengal Staff Corps (retired)  
 Colonel Chas. O'Connor  
 Colonel John Pennyquick, R.E. (retired), C.S.I. (late President R.I.E. College, Cooper's Hill)  
 Lieut.-General Arthur Phelps  
 Lieut.-Colonel A. R. Savile  
 Lieut.-Colonel H. R. Stracey  
 Major-General John Swiney  
 Major-General Sir Alfred E. Turner, K.C.B., R.A.  
 Capt. R. Dacre Vincent  
 Major-General W. E. Warrand, J.P., D.L., C.C.  
 Major G. Waterhouse (retired)

(iii). Churches.

Church of England.  
 The Right Rev. the Bishop of Chichester  
 The Right Rev. the Bishop of Gloucester  
 The Right Rev. the Bishop of Hereford  
 The Right Rev. the Bishop of Woolwich  
 The Right Rev. Bishop Hamilton Baynes  
 The Rev. the Hon. J. G. Adderley, Vicar of Saltley, Birm.  
 The Rev. W. E. Aldis, Oxford  
 The Rev. G. Arbuthnot, Archdeacon of Coventry

The Rev. Canon Arthur T. Bannister, Hereford  
 The Rev. Canon S. A. Barnett, Westminster  
 The Rev. Preb. Chas. W. Bond  
 The Rev. J. Llewelyn Davies, D.D., Hon. Chaplain to H.M. the King  
 The Rev. Canon A. M. Deane, Chichester, Proctor in Convocation  
 The Rev. Percy Dearmer  
 The Rev. W. D. V. Duncombe  
 The Very Rev. the Dean of Durham  
 The Rev. J. S. Ellison, Vicar of Windsor, Chaplain in Ordinary to H.M. the King

Churches—continued.

The Rev. B. C. S. Everett, Minor Canon of Windsor  
 The Very Rev. the Dean of Gloucester  
 The Rev. Stewart D. Headlam, L.C.C.  
 The Rev. Canon Hicks, M.A., Manchester  
 The Rev. Canon Henry Scott Holland, D.D., St. Paul's  
 The Rev. Canon J. A. Kempthorne  
 The Rev. Canon Knollys, Folkestone  
 The Rev. T. A. Lacey  
 The Venerable Archdeacon Madden, Liverpool  
 The Venerable Archdeacon Miller  
 The Rev. Arnold Pinchard  
 The Rev. E. G. Reed  
 The Rev. J. Edwards Rees  
 The Rev. Herbert L. Wild  
 The Rev. Canon E. G. Selwyn, D.D., Peterborough  
 The Rev. J. S. Verschoyle  
 The Rev. H. Russell Wakefield, M.A., St. Mary's, Bryanstone Square, London, now Dean of Norwich

The Rev. Canon Wilson, D.D., F.G.S., Worcester  
 The Rev. H. G. Woods, D.D., Master of the Temple  
 The Rev. F. H. Woods  
 The Very Rev. the Dean of Worcester

Established Church of Scotland.

The Very Rev. Dr. Cameron Lees, C.V.O.

Free Churches.

The Rev. Stopford Brooke  
 The Rev. R. J. Campbell  
 The Rev. John Clifford  
 The Rev. Silvester Horne  
 The Rev. John Hunter  
 The Rev. W. B. Lumley  
 The Rev. J. Denham Osborne  
 The Rev. J. Guinness Rogers  
 The Rev. J. H. Shakespeare  
 The Rev. Philip Wicksteed

(iv). Education.

Israel Abrahams, M.A., Reader in Talmudic and Rabbinical Literature, Cambridge; formerly President of the Jewish Historical Society  
 S. Alexander, M.A., LL.D., Professor of Philosophy, Manchester  
 J. H. Badley, M.A., Headmaster, Bedales School  
 The Rev. J. F. Bethune Baker, M.A., Fellow of Christ's College, Camb.  
 Sidney Ball, M.A., Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford  
 W. G. Bell, M.A., Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge  
 E. A. Benians, M.A., Cambridge  
 Bernard Bosanquet, M.A., LL.D., Fellow of the British Academy.  
 F. G. Brabant, M.A., C.C.C., Oxford  
 Renald M. Burrows, M.A., Professor of Greek, Manchester  
 J. B. Bury, M.A., Litt.D., LL.D., Regius Professor of Modern History, Cambridge  
 Sir Edward Busk, M.A., LL.B.  
 The Rev. F. W. Bussell, D.D., Vice-Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford  
 The Rev. H. Caldecott, D. Litt., D.D., Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, King's College, London  
 Norman R. Campbell, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge

Sidney G. Campbell, M.A., Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge  
 The Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, D.D., Principal of Manchester College, Oxford  
 S. J. Chapman, M.A., Professor of Political Economy, Manchester  
 R. F. Cholmeley, M.A., Headmaster, Owen's School, Islington  
 Albert C. Clark, M.A., Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford  
 F. H. Colson, M.A., Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge  
 R. S. Conway, M.A., Professor of Latin, Manchester  
 F. M. Cornford, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge  
 W. A. Craigie, M.A., LL.D., Oxford and St. Andrew's  
 Robert F. T. Crook, M.A., Trinity College, Dublin  
 The Rev. James Drummond, M.A., LL.D., Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, 1885-1906  
 H. A. L. Fisher, M.A., Fellow of New College, Oxford  
 W. M. Geldart, M.A., Reader in English Law, All Souls' College, Oxford  
 The Rev. H. M. Gwatkin, M.A., D.D., Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Cambridge  
 Robert Hartley, M.A., Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford  
 F. Haverfield, M.A., Camden Professor of Ancient History, Oxford



Education—continued.

- H. L. Henderson, M.A., Fellow of New College, Oxford  
 A. J. Herbertson, M.A., Reader in Geography, Oxford  
 C. H. Herford, M.A., Litt. D., Professor of English Literature, Manchester  
 Dennis Hird, M.A., J.P., late Principal of Ruskin College, Oxford  
 Alfred Hughes, M.A., Professor of Education, Birmingham  
 W. E. Johnson, M.A., Fellow of King's College, Cambridge  
 M. W. Keatinge, M.A., Reader in Education, Oxford  
 C. W. Kimmins, M.A., D.Sc., Chief Inspector Education Department, L.C.C.  
 Robert Latta, M.A., D.Phil., Professor of Logic and Rhetoric, Glasgow  
 T. M. Lindsay, D.D., LL.D., Principal of United Free Church College, Glasgow  
 Charles Lowry, M.A., Headmaster, Tonbridge School  
 The Rev. the Hon. E. Lyttelton, M.A., Headmaster, Eton College  
 Hugh MacNaghten, M.A., Eton College  
 J. S. Mackenzie, M.A., Litt. D., Professor of Logic and Philosophy, Cardiff  
 The Rev. J. R. Magrath, M.A., D.D., Provost of Queen's College, Oxford; ex-Vice-Chancellor of the University  
 J. Saumarez Mann, M.A., Lecturer in Greek, Bedford, College, London  
 D. S. Margoliouth, M.A., D. Litt., Laudian Professor of Arabic, Oxford  
 J. Ellis McTearart, M.A., D. Litt., F.B.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge  
 Hugh Owen Meredith, M.A., Camb.  
 Henry A. Miers, M.A., Principal of London University  
 Rev. J. Hope Moulton, M.A., D. Litt., Professor of Comparative Philology, Manchester  
 J. H. Muirhead, M.A., LL.D., Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, Birmingham  
 Gilbert Murray, M.A., LL.D., Professor of Greek, Oxford  
 John L. Myres, M.A., Professor of Greek, Liverpool  
 E. W. B. Nicholson, Bodley's Librarian, Oxford  
 John Peile, Litt. D., F.B.A., Master of Christ's College, Cambridge  
 H. Rackham, M.A., Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge  
 J. S. Reid, M.A., LL.M., Litt. D., Professor of Ancient History, Camb  
 Sir John Rhys, M.A., D. Litt., Professor of Celtic, Oxford  
 R. D. Roberts, M.A., D.Sc., J.P., Registrar (U.E.B.) of London University  
 C. Grant Robertson, M.A., Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford  
 T. W. Rhys Davids, LL.D., Ph. D., Professor of Comparative Religion, Manchester  
 John Russell, M.A., Headmaster, King Alfred School, Hampstead  
 J. G. Robertson, M.A., B.Sc., Professor of German, London  
 M. E. Sadler, M.A., Professor of the History and Administration of Education, Manchester  
 E. B. Sargant, M.A., late Educational Adviser to Lord Milner in S. Africa  
 F. C. S. Schiller, M.A., Fellow of C.C.C., Oxford  
 E. de Selincourt, M.A., D. Litt.  
 Phillip E. Shaw, B.A., D.Sc.  
 Arthur Sidgwick, M.A., LL.D., Fellow of C.C.C., Oxford  
 Gilbert Slater, Litt. D., University Extension Lecturer  
 J. W. Slaughter, Ph. D.  
 The Rev. W. T. Southward, M.A., Mus. Bac., St. Catherine's College, Cambridge  
 F. Herbert Stead, M.A., Warden, Browning Settlement  
 The Rev. J. E. Symes, M.A., Principal of University College, Nottingham  
 H. W. V. Temperley, M.A., F. R. Hist. Soc.  
 W. Temple, M.A., Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford  
 T. F. Tout, M.A., Professor of Mediaeval and Modern History, Manchester  
 R. B. Townshend, M.A., Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford  
 A. W. Verrall, M.A., Litt. D., Fellow of Trinity College, Camb.  
 A. F. Walden, M.A., Fellow of New College, Oxford  
 James Ward, M.A., F.R.S., Professor of Mental Philosophy, Cambridge  
 H. A. Webb, M.A.  
 Howard Williams, M.A.  
 F. T. Wylie, M.A., Brasenose College, Oxford  
 Alfred E. Zimmern, M.A., Fellow of New College, Oxford.

(v.) Scientific Professions.

- Francis Sorell Arnold, B.A.  
 Francis A. Bather, D.Sc., F.G.S., M.B., B.Ch. Oxford, Assistant Keeper Department of Geology, British Museum  
 John Beddoe, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.  
 Arthur Berry, M.A., Fellow of King's College, Cambridge; Vice-Pres. London Math. Soc.  
 James Berry, B. Sc., F.R.C.S.  
 Dr. Thos. Bickerston, Liverpool  
 H. Langley Browne, M.D., LL.D., J.P.  
 H. E. Butler, M.A., Oxford  
 Dudley Wilmot Buxton, M.D., B.Sc., M.R.C.P., Consulting Anaesthetist, Paralysis Hospital, etc.  
 C. Callaway, M.A., D.Sc., late Inspector of Technical Education for Staffs. and Salop  
 H. C. H. Carpenter, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of Metallurgy, Manchester  
 J. W. Carr, M.A., F.L.S., F.G.S., Professor of Biology, Nottingham  
 R. M. Cavan, D.Sc.  
 J. Ellis Crisp, M.R.C.S., L.S.A.  
 David Drummond, M.A., M.D., D.C.L., Lecturer on Principles and Practise of Medicine, Durham  
 Prof. Grenville A. J. Cole, Royal College of Science, Ireland  
 E. MacDowell Cosgrave, M.D., Vice-Pres. Roy. Coll. Phys., Ireland  
 Francis Darwin, M.A., M.B., F.R.S.  
 C. V. Drysdale, D.Sc., M.I.E.E.  
 Washington Epps, L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.  
 Surgeon-General G. J. H. Evatt, C.B.  
 Bedford Fenwick, M.D.  
 J. W. L. Glaisher, M.A., Sc.D., F.R.S.  
 A. C. Haddon, M.A., Sc.D., F.R.S.  
 Marcus M. Hartog, M.A., F.L.S., Fellow of Royal University, Ireland  
 W. Hawker Hughes, M.A., Oxford  
 H. S. Hele-Shaw, LL.D., F.R.S., M. Inst. C.E.  
 W. P. Herringham, M.D., F.R.C.P.  
 S. J. Hickson, M.A., D.Sc., Professor of Zoology, Manchester  
 Sir Victor Horsley, F.R.S., F.R.C.S.  
 T. McKenny Hughes, M.A., F.R.S., Professor of Geology, Cambridge  
 John Humphreys, Birmingham  
 P. J. Kirkby, M.A., Exeter College, Oxford  
 C. G. Knott, D.Sc., F.R.S.E., Edinburgh  
 R. L. Langdon-Down, M.B., M.R.C.P.  
 W. P. Lawrence, Principal Cumberland C.C. Farm School  
 W. J. Lewis, M.A., Professor of Mineralogy, Cambridge  
 Sir Henry D. Littlejohn, M.D., LL.D.  
 Sir Norman Lockyer, K.C.B., Sc.D., D.Sc., LL.D.  
 Sir Oliver Lodge, M.Sc., F.R.S., D.Sc., LL.D., Principal, Birmingham University  
 H. C. MacBryan, Medical Superintendent Kingsdown House, Box.  
 R. R. Marett, M.A., Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford  
 Josiah Oldfield, L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., D.C.L.  
 W. Osler, M.D., Regius Professor of Medicine, Oxford  
 Karl Pearson, M.A., LL.B., F.R.S.  
 John Perry, F.R.S., LL.D., D.Sc.  
 J. H. Poynting, Sc.D., F.R.S., J.P., Professor of Physics, Birmingham  
 R. C. Punnett  
 A. Maitland Ramsay, M.D., Glasgow Royal Infirmary  
 A. S. Ramsay, M.A., Cambridge  
 Sir A. M. Rendel, K.C.I.E., Consulting Engineer, India Office  
 Hon. Bertrand Russell, F.R.S.  
 Ernest Rutherford, M.A., D.Sc., Professor of Physics and Director of Physical Laboratories, Manchester  
 C. W. Saleeby, M.D., F.R.S.E.  
 E. A. Schafer, F.R.S., Professor of Physiology, Edinburgh  
 A. C. Seward, M.A., F.R.S., Professor of Botany, Cambridge  
 R. Travers Smith, M.D.  
 Sir W. J. Smyly, M.D.  
 G. Johnstone Stoney, M.A. Sc.D., F.R.S.  
 H. H. Swinnerton, D.Sc., F.R.Z.S., F.G.S.  
 J. Lionel Taylor, M.R.C.S.  
 Silvanus P. Thompson, B.A., D.Sc., F.R.S.  
 Frederick Tonar, M.R.C.V.S.  
 Sir Frederick Treves, G.C.V.O., C.B., LL.D.  
 H. H. Turner, M.A., F.R.S., Savilian Professor of Astronomy, Oxford  
 V. H. Veley, F.R.S.  
 Abraham Wallace, M.D.  
 Alfred Russel Wallace, LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.S.  
 Augustus Waller, M.D., F.R.S.  
 R. Wharry, M.D.  
 Dep. Surg. William Watson, M.D. (retired)  
 F. E. Weiss, D.Sc., F.L.S., Professor of Botany, Manchester  
 G. Sims Woodhead, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.E., Professor of Pathology, Cambridge



(vi.) Literature and Drama.

William Archer  
J. M. Barrie  
Arthur C. Benson  
Sir Percy W. Bunting, Editor of  
"Contemporary Review"  
Edward Carpenter  
R. C. Carton  
Joseph Clayton  
Stanton Coit, Ph.D.  
Edward Conybeare  
John Beattie Crozier, LL.D.  
Henry V. Esmond  
James B. Fagan  
E. M. Forster  
F. J. Furnivall, M.A., Ph.D.,  
D.Litt.  
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John Edward Garnett  
J. Gibson  
J. T. Grein  
Thomas Hardy  
Rowland Hill  
Laurence Housman  
Jerome K. Jerome  
Thomas Kirkup  
John Masefield  
Aylmer Maude

Justin McCarthy  
George Meredith, O.M.  
Wilfred Meynell  
J. E. G. de Montmorency  
William de Morgan  
Neil Munro  
Henry W. Nevinson  
R. Barry O'Brien  
Rev. James O'Hannay ("George Birmingham")  
Louis N. Parker  
Eden Philpotts  
Sir Arthur Wing Pinero  
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Henry S. Salt  
W. Salt-Brassington, F.S.A.  
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G. Bernard Shaw  
Alfred Sidgwick  
J. G. Snead Cox, Editor of "Tablet"  
Harold Spender  
Alfred Sutro  
Herbert Trench  
H. G. Wells  
Richard Whiteing  
Lucien Wolf  
Israel Zangwill

(vii.) The Stage.

H. Granville Barker  
Dion Bouicault  
Arthur Bouchier  
Norman Forbes  
J. Forbes Robertson  
George Grossmith  
Edmund Gwenn

Sir John Hare  
Robert Loraine  
E. Harcourt Williams  
Sydney Valentine  
Hermann Veizin  
Henry Vibart

(viii.) Music and Arts.

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T. J. Cobden Sanderson  
Hon. John Collier  
Walter Crane, R.W.S.  
George S. Elgood, R.I.  
Joseph Farquharson, A.R.A.  
Charles Fletcher, Examiner R.C.M.  
Carl Fuchs, Professor, Manchester  
College of Music  
Ernest George, Pres. R.I.B.A. 1908  
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W. G. von Glehn, Chelsea  
Henry Holiday  
G. P. Jacomb Hood  
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Reginald Jones  
Arthur Lemon  
Prof. W. R. Lethaby, Architect to  
Westminster Abbey  
Edwin Lutyens

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Gallery of British Art  
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P. Wilson Steer  
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A. W. Wilson, Mus. Doc., Oxford

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Eustace Miles

J. E. Raphael, Oxford University  
and International Rugby XV.  
A. J. Webbe, late Captain Middle-  
sex C.C.

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John Brown, Manager Dock Milling  
Co., Treasurer Irish Industries  
Develop. Assoc.  
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British Steel Smelters Assoc.  
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## OLD FOGEYS AND OLD BOGEYS

BY

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

(Speech Delivered at Queen's Hall, June 7th, 1909.)

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IT is told of a little girl who had been brought up in a newly built town in a remote Western State of America that when she was taken to New York and saw for the first time the crowded horse-cars outside the mighty station of the Pennsylvania Railway, she cried out, "How cruel! They are using horses to drag the street cars! How barbarous!" This little girl had never seen anything but electric cars. Her town, being brand-new, had jumped over this antiquated absurdity of horse-traction.

The position of women offers an exact parallel. In strange, raw regions of America or the Antipodes the march of civilisation has jumped the political disabilities of women, and women from New Zealand, who have never known the want of a vote, come over here—to the capital of the Empire—and cry, "Englishwomen mustn't vote! How barbarous!" The other day, in a London drawing-room, everybody was saying how the vote would degrade and unsex women. A pretty young Englishwoman, exquisitely dressed, stood shyly by, taking no part in the discussion. Presently her opinion was asked. "Well, you see," she said, blushing delicately, and in a soft, musical voice, "I have always *had* a vote. I used to live in Melbourne."

Ladies and gentlemen, the time is fast coming—coming at motor speed—when in no civilised country will be seen cars without electricity or women without votes. The labours of so many brave and brilliant women for over half a century, culminating in the



splendid spurt in our own day, are about to receive the guerdon of victory, and from England the spirit of sex equality will spread all the world over, and England will once again recover her place as the Mother of Liberty.

Beside all these brave and brilliant women who are ready to go through fire and water for their cause, the mere man who is in favour of Women's Suffrage cuts, I am afraid, but a poor figure. Indeed, we poor male sympathisers have been described as "men of putty seduced by women of brass." Who invented this delightful description I know not; the suffragette who reported it to me was too shocked even to mention the author's name in her letter, but she begged me to protest publicly against it. I tried to soothe her by saying that *I* didn't mind, and that this was the sort of thing one must expect in politics, whereupon she replied that I was no gentleman. You will see, therefore, that my conviction that women should have votes is not based upon any superstition that women are invariably reasonable. But then, with our great opponent Lord Cromer, I quote Mrs. Poyser: "God Almighty made them to match the men."

### The Absurdity of the Situation.

It is indeed fortunate for us men that no test of intelligence—short of idiocy—bars us from the polling booth, and that we can even commit crimes of every degree without forfeiting our superiority to Mrs. Humphry Ward. Even a man of putty may have a vote. It is only when we men ask ourselves seriously *why* we have votes that the full absurdity of women *not* having them begins to break upon us. We are told—it is the great, crushing argument—women can't have votes because they can't fight for their country. But can *I* fight for it? Why, my only chance of shooting an enemy would be by aiming at something else. And yet I have four votes. We are told that women are incapable of understanding the affairs of State. But do *I* understand them? Does Mr. Asquith? Not according to Mr. Balfour. Does Mr. Balfour? Not according to Mr. Asquith. We are told that Female Suffrage would bring discord between husband and wife. Well, but I had a vote long before I had a wife. This particular argument always reminds me of what Josephus tells us about that old Jewish sect, the Essenes. The Essenes, says Josephus, do not marry "because marriage gives the handle to domestic quarrels."

This bogey of domestic discord is the very oldest of the old bogeys with which the old fogeys are perpetually terrifying themselves. Yet a distinguished New Zealand visitor has just been telling us that in his country the women of the family generally

vote with the man, with the result that the married man gets a larger vote than the mere irresponsible bachelor. This is just as it should be, and, indeed, reveals to us what an injustice it is over here that the settled man with a family should have no more voting power than the bachelor butterfly. In one point only our New Zealand visitor betrays the old Adam. He did not say that the women vote with the man, but with the head of the house. I must confess I know very few men who are the head of the house. For if woman's place is indeed the home, it cannot be man's place too. My observation of life leads me to the conviction that the partner who bears the children and does the housekeeping is really the predominant partner, so far as the house is concerned, and that man's true place in the home built up by women is more that of a paying guest than of a lord and master.

### The Final Argument.

Really, the more I think of it, the less I understand *where* my political superiority over the other sex comes in. Why have I four votes and no woman any? It can't be brains—there is Mrs. Humphry Ward. It can't be strength—there is the female Samson in the music-halls. It can't be courage—there is the lady lion-tamer, or Mrs. Despard. It can't be money—there was the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. A wild suspicion dawns upon me. Can it be beauty? I see I need say no more. We must fall back on the grand reason given by Mr. Austen Chamberlain at the Woman's Anti-Suffrage meeting in this hall, and repeated by Lord Cromer at that furtive dinner of the Men's Anti-Suffrage League: "It is because men are men and women are women."

"Because men are men and women are women." If this is what the opponents of Female Suffrage are reduced to—and this is what it always comes to in the last analysis—no wonder that the late Lord Salisbury said, "I know no argument against it." There *is* no argument against it; there is only a certain instinct against it due to centuries of custom, but the effort to find reasons for this instinct lands otherwise sensible people in a logic that has never been heard outside "Alice in Wonderland." Austen in Blunderland actually wound up his impassioned speech by urging the women of England to protest against a movement that would impose on them a burden unsuited to their sex. *Impose?* Why, who is going to drag them to the poll? Indeed, if, as Mrs. Humphry Ward contends, the overwhelming majority of women object to Female Suffrage, what finer way is there of checkmating the agitation than by granting women the vote? Parliament gives it to them; the overwhelming majority refuses to use it, and the Suffragettes are squashed. Each polling booth will show a few



forlorn female figures, but the great, sound body of British womanhood will remain safely barricaded at home. Seriously, was there ever anything in Gilbert and Sullivan more paradoxical than the Woman's Anti-Suffrage movement—this rush of women into politics to declare that politics is the ruin of womanhood? Why Mrs. Humphry Ward should drag these shrinking creatures into the hurly-burly of the platform, unsexing and degrading them, when there is such a short way with the Suffragettes, passes my comprehension. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, too, forgets another reason why it is impossible to *impose* the burden of a vote on any woman who objects to it. The law already sees to that. For a woman who, being given a vote, should refuse to use it, would be an idiot, and, as I have already pointed out, idiots are *debarred* from voting.

### Political Support.

And if most women won't use their vote, what becomes of that other bogey—that, since there are a million and a-quarter more women than men, England will come under Petticoat Government? Not, of course, that there *is* such a preponderance of women. I was taken in by this bogey myself once, so far as to point out that this vast predominance only showed more acutely the injustice of giving them *no* representation. But the fact is there are *not* a million and a-quarter more women than men. When I came to look at the statistics for myself, I found that they concern, not men and women, but males and females. In the female million and a quarter are included schoolgirls and children and babies, not to mention lunatics and convicts, the elimination of whom would largely reduce the supposed surplus of voting power. Only those females over twenty-one and not otherwise disqualified would be able to vote even under Adult Suffrage, and the idea that they would all cast their votes on the same side so as to dominate the men (who would similarly all cast their votes on the other side) is perhaps the most childish of all the bogeys conjured up against Female Suffrage.

"I know of no argument against it," said Lord Salisbury. And his successor in the Premiership, Mr. Balfour, a man who cannot often be accused of definite opinions, pronounced in its favour as far back as 1891. Mr. Balfour's successor, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, was so violently in sympathy that he actually instigated the militant methods for the conversion of his Cabinet. "Make yourselves a nuisance," he told the ladies' deputation, and they obeyed him like lambs. How is it, then, that with three successive Prime Ministers in favour of a reform whose righteousness was demonstrated by John Stuart Mill fifty years ago, Mr. Asquith

remains so antediluvian? Fortunately, even in *his* Cabinet there are several Liberals, and the very Home Secretary who treats the Suffragettes as criminals for drawing attention to their demand, has actually signed a declaration in favour of it. Mr. Lloyd George is likewise on the list of signatories, which further includes most of the greatest names in English thought. The intellect of England goes almost solid for Women's Suffrage.

Against this phalanx of the intellectuals the rearguard of reaction has been hastily brought up—men like Lord Cromer and Lord Curzon and Lord Milner. This trio is significant. A new danger has crept into British politics. The great pro-Consuls of Empire, men who have governed dusky Asiatic or African races, come back here with their autocratic notions and their disdain of the masses, and infect our British freedom with their unconstitutional outlook. This is one of the perils of Empire when it is not an Empire of freemen and equals. These great pro-Consuls, despite their brilliant record abroad, may easily become a force for evil at home. Lord Cromer is the chief spokesman of the Anti-Suffragists, but Lord Cromer has been away in Egypt for a generation, not spoiling but improving the Egyptians: spoiling only himself. He has lost touch with the movement of Western civilisation; he is ignorant of the new and splendid breed of women—the noble, free womanhood that has, happily, been growing up in these islands, and that is determined to do battle against the social evils which men have encouraged, or tolerated, or failed to sweep away. Lord Cromer's attitude is the more pitiable since, in his great book on Egypt, he points out that the test of a nation's civilisation is the position of its women. He comes here and talks of Englishwomen being sullied by being dragged from the drawing-room. He forgets that Egyptian women are sullied by being dragged *into* the drawing-room. *They* have to stay in the harem.

I know nothing more demoralising in English thought than the suggestion of the *Times*, so eagerly adopted by the Anti-Suffrage League, that to give our women a vote would undermine our prestige and power in our Oriental Empire, whose millions of dusky subjects would feel outraged to be ruled by women. If this is the price of Empire—to be slaves to our own subjects, to be dragged down to *their* ethical level—well may we ask ourselves the great question: What shall it profit a nation to gain the whole world and lose its own soul?

Lord Cromer tells us that the grant of votes to women would produce a social revolution. But the revolution has already happened. Lord Cromer reminds me of Noah's bear, which, being a hibernating animal, was carried into the ark asleep, and only woke up in the middle of the Deluge to growl that the sky



portended rain. The Deluge, with which Lord Cromer gloomily menaces us, is already half over; it has already swept away half the landmarks of the harem stage of civilisation.

And the humour of the situation is that no one has done more to lead women out of the drawing-room and into politics than the chief Anti-Suffragists. Only a few weeks ago we witnessed a great rally of the Women's Unionist and Tariff Reform Association, and on the petticoated platform, amid many other masculine enemies of women's emancipation, was Mr. Austen Chamberlain, dragging duchesses from their homes and fostering domestic disagreement with their dukes—for there *are* Free Trade dukes. This association, mark you, occupies itself with those high Imperial affairs which, according to Mrs. Humphry Ward, are beyond woman's brain. And what does Mr. Balfour tell this great union of women? He tells it: "One of the reasons why I so greatly value the co-operation you are giving to this cause of Tariff Reform is that *you* regard it from the national point of view, and still more from the Imperial point of view." And the same evening, on the other side of politics, the Liberal Social Council, a body entirely worked by women, foregathered under the auspices of nearly all the Cabinet, including Mrs. Asquith, while Miss Haldane seconded the motion of the day. And a few days earlier the Women's Navy League, representing both sides of politics, met to consider the high Imperial subject of naval efficiency. And then Lord Cromer talks of the vote causing a social revolution, and Lord Curzon babbles that the place of women is the home. Have the Old Fogeys, then, *no* sense of humour?

No, my dear Old Fogeys, if you really wish to go back to the old ideal, then make a counter-revolution, like the Old Turks. Take women away from the coal-pit and the factory; dissolve their trade unions; send them back to their little ones; dismiss them from the post-offices and the shops; banish them from their municipal positions, from your county councils and borough councils and parish councils and Royal Commissions, from your school boards, your boards of guardians, and your education committees; drive them out of Girton and Newnham; forbid them to work in your hospitals and to exhibit in your picture galleries; expel them from your Navy Leagues and your Primrose Leagues, your National Service Leagues and your Liberal Federations and your Tariff Reform Leagues; stop them from canvassing at your elections; put back the movement of evolution and the march of civilisation, and then you may begin to talk of woman's place being the home. But if you will not, or cannot, do this, then neither can you deny our noble professional women the dignity of a vote, nor our sweated factory women its protection. The Suffrage is not the begetter and forerunner of an impending revolu-

tion, but the seal and consecration of a revolution that has already succeeded.

And what is this vote that carries with it so much danger? What is this politics whose touch is so pestiferous? Woman, turning from the foolish fashion papers, is to study real questions; she is to be lured from the clubs where she plays bridge to the stimulating atmosphere of public meetings, from the school for scandal to the school for study. Our absurd party system makes politics sound like the prize ring. In reality, politics has more to do with the nursery. A woman studying politics—studying, that is, the best measures for the health of the State—is only attending, in a larger spirit, to her home and her children.

Cynics and preachers agree that women are unbalanced and hysterical, fond of luxury and finery, swayed by persons instead of by principles, yet we refuse them the one thing that may rationalise and spiritualise them. A modern Greek poet recently sent me his poems (fortunately there was a French translation). They were all about woman—woman the monstrous, voluptuous, fitful, inconsequent, Satanic sphinx, at once man's delight and his destruction. I told him that was not how women appeared to us in England, and he replied that he had noticed it himself with surprise. These queer Cleopatras are, in fact, a morbid product of the hothouse theory of womanhood. The cure for them is fresh air and Female Suffrage.

### The Statesman and the Politician.

"Yes, we will grant Female Suffrage," says Mr. Haldane, "as soon as the will of the people declares for it. I have always voted for Female Suffrage myself." What a strange remark for a man who has hitherto shown more signs of being a statesman than a politician. A statesman leads; it is only a politician who is led. That was not the way Richard Cobden brought Free Trade to England. That is not the way Joseph Chamberlain has tried to bring back Protection. Nay, on the very evening that Mr. Haldane made his time-serving remark, Mr. Winston Churchill, speaking in Manchester, announced the intention of the Government to promote compulsory insurance against unemployment. This policy, he said, was a new departure, and involved an element of compulsion and regulation which was unusual in happy-go-lucky English life, but he would work for such a policy because he knew no other way by which the stream of preventable misery could be cut off, and he would try to carry it through, even if it were a little unpopular at first, and he would be willing to pay the forfeit of exclusion from power in order to carry it through. That is an



utterance which puts Mr. Haldane's utterance to shame. A man who has always voted for Female Suffrage must use his power in the Cabinet to carry it through.

"I know of no argument against it," said Lord Salisbury; and I, who have heard every argument that the champions of stagnation have been able to scrape together since, even under the spur of their impending defeat, I can only repeat with Lord Salisbury: "I know of no argument against it." One-half of the so-called arguments may be brushed aside at the very start. They are the arguments involving in this or that shape the idea that Female Suffrage would lead to an increase in the illiterate vote and to mob rule. These arguments would prove, not that the vote should not be given to women, but that it should be taken away from the majority of men. These are the old, defeated arguments of 1832, the arguments against every Reform Bill before and since. These are the old *male* bogeys dressed up again in female clothes. One imagined they had been finally laid to rest in historical museums in 1867, when it was the Conservative and not the Liberal party that extended the franchise to the working man and the lodger. But, no; as the Old Turks continue their subtle, sinuous opposition against the Young Turks, so the Old Fogeys with their Old Bogeys seize the chance of vamping them up afresh. "The results will be disastrous," says Lord Cromer. "You may as well put up the shutters of the British Empire," says Lord Curzon. Who can fail to be reminded of the old Duke of Wellington before the Reform Bill of 1832? Yet, despite the Iron Duke, government by the people is such a success—with all its shortcomings it is so superior to government by peers or princes—that the demand for it is spreading like wildfire among races of every creed and colour. There is not a newspaper in Europe but supports the Young Turks. The very Czar of Russia orders the Shah of Persia to consent to a constitution. And do you suppose this movement for constitutional representation is going to stop short at that most subject of all subject races—the race of women? No; the movement for Female Suffrage is only one wave of a universal agitation. And therein lies the certainty of its success.

The reasons why representative government is in such demand are not far to seek. I see, indeed, that the other day Mr. Balfour, presiding over a philosophical lecture by Professor Masterman, concurred with him in the view that no Hobbes or Locke had yet appeared to explain the philosophic basis of modern democracy, into which the world had drifted without precisely knowing why. But I venture to think it requires no great philosopher to explain it. The ideal ruler should be all-knowing, so as to be aware of all social facts; all-wise, so as to understand how to better them; and all-good, so as to wish to do so. Such a combination cannot

be found on earth in any man, be he King or Pope, nor even in any group, be it noble or plebeian, but the nearest approximation to it lies in the whole people. Nature has confined political wisdom to no class, and by allowing every class to rise to leadership—a John Burns or a Lord Salisbury—we secure the best talent in the country. By allowing every class to be represented in Parliament we provide a network for collecting all possible knowledge of social needs, and we obtain a guarantee against legislation in the interests of any one class. Democracy is thus aristocracy (or government by the best) equipped with knowledge and armed against injustice. And if it is not *all-wise*, *all-knowing*, and *all-good*, it compensates for its inferiority to the ideal autocrat by promoting a healthy spiritual and educational activity among the ruled, instead of turning them into perfectly governed puppets.

If only for the spiritual profit of this activity Women's Suffrage would be desirable. But it is desirable also on material grounds. Man as a legislator for women may be all-wise and all-good; he cannot be all-knowing. Have not generations of men confessed or complained that they couldn't understand woman? And yet they have coolly gone on legislating for her. Even when the legislators have been chivalrous they have not been competent, and when they have protected their own interests at her expense—as in France—they have sullied their statute-books with abominable facilitations of cowardly immorality.

### The Real Foundation of Society.

And then comes the *Spectator*—England's great Christian organ—and tells us that all this is right and proper because women have no power to enforce their wills, and the foundation of society is brute force. The trouble with the *Spectator* is that it does not *spectate*. It is as blind to the real structure of society as it is to the real position and character of modern womanhood. I deny that society is held together by force. Society is held together by love. For what power, pray, has the male half of the population to enforce its will upon the female half? None at all. True, in theory, men can turn their guns on their mothers, sisters, and wives, but only in theory. In practice not only would they never wage such war, but, carried to its bitter end, it would, in exterminating the female sex, exterminate their own as well. And women have exactly as much compulsive power over men as men have over women—that is, none at all. Women, too, in theory, could exterminate mankind by simply ceasing to have children. But in dealing with a real issue like Female Suffrage, the bogey of a sex-war is too fantastic for consideration. Force must be dismissed altogether from both sides of the equation. No social



aggregate is held together by force. It is the mutual sympathy of its atoms that makes them cohere into a group. Even the Anti-Suffragists are held together by the sympathy of stupidity. Force is only necessary when hostile atoms—whether from within or without—try to destroy your group. Force may be the preservation of society; it cannot possibly be the foundation. And to this force that makes for the self-conservation of society the male and female atoms contribute equally.

“Nonsense!” shriek the *Times* and the *Spectator*. “Women contribute nothing to the State’s safety. They cannot be soldiers or sailors.” What a shallow view! As if the stability and security of a country rested solely upon its fighters! To imagine that our safety depends only on the man at the front is as crude as to imagine it rests on the dead piece of iron called a gun. And as important as the man behind the gun is the country behind the man—the country, with its resources and its *morale*—ay, and the woman behind the country, the woman who is the source and replenisher of its life. We cry out that without more Dreadnoughts the country must go under. But who pays for the Dreadnoughts? The common labours and sacrifices of the men and women who sit at home weaving the daily fabric of the Empire. A million soldiers and sailors will not save a country if it cannot equip or provision them, or if it lacks the temper to struggle and endure. The wars of Sparta were waged as much by the Spartan mothers, who told their sons to return with their shields or on them, as by the sons themselves. Men at least may see the glory and glitter of the battle, enjoy the noise of the captains and the shouting; but the mother, who has already risked her life to bear her soldier son, must endure a longer agony when he fades from her vision to the sound of the drums and the trumpets.

### The Hidden Workers.

Deep down in every Dreadnought, far from the panoply and pageantry of war, far from the flags and the guns, is a stokehole, where grimy, perspiring figures for ever shovel coal on blazing furnaces. Above may be the roar and splendour of battle; they must go on shovelling coal. This is the centre of the ship’s life, without which your Dreadnought would drift and flounder at the foe’s mercy. Yet who ever thinks of the stokers? Not for them the thrill of the combat; theirs but to shovel coal, though shells shatter the bunkers around them, though they go down with the ship like rats in a cage. Not altogether unlike theirs is the part played by women in the protection and conservation of the State.

In the actual fighting they may take no part; but because their work is not on the surface, because, unseen, they feed the fires of life, they are treated as clinging parasites, creatures who contribute nothing to the State’s stability.

This barbaric blindness must cease. There is a division of functions. Who denies it? “Men are men and women are women.” But greater than the sex difference is the human one-ness. Men and women are alike citizens of the State, alike contributors to its strength and security, and alike entitled to a voice in its destinies and their own.



# The Struggle for Political Liberty,

BY



**CHRYSTAL MACMILLAN, M.A., B.Sc.**

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**VOTES FOR WOMEN.**  
**National Women's Social and Political Union.**

**Offices: 4, Clements Inn, Strand, London, W.C.**  
Telegrams: WOSPOLU, LONDON. Telephone: Holborn 2724 (three lines).

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The Women's Social and Political Union are NOT asking for a vote for every woman, but simply that sex shall cease to be a disqualification for the franchise.

At present men who pay rates and taxes, who are owners, occupiers, lodgers, or have the service or university franchise possess the Parliamentary vote. The Women's Social and Political Union claim that women who fulfil the same conditions shall also enjoy the franchise.

It is estimated that when this claim has been conceded, about a million and a quarter of women will possess the vote, in addition to the seven and a half million men who are at present enfranchised.

The Women's Social and Political Union claim that a simple measure, giving the vote to women on these terms, shall be passed immediately.

**Constitution.**

**Objects.**—To secure for Women the Parliamentary Vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

**Methods.**—The objects of the Union shall be promoted by—

1. Action entirely independent of all political parties.
2. Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the franchise is granted.
3. Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government candidate and independently of all other candidates.
4. Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
5. The organising of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
6. Education of public opinion by all the usual methods such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence, and deputations to public representatives.

**Membership.**—Women of all shades of political opinion who approve the objects and methods of the Union, and who are prepared to act independently of party, are eligible for membership. It must be clearly understood that no member of the Union shall support the candidate of any political party in Parliamentary elections until Women have obtained the Parliamentary Vote. The entrance fee is One Shilling.

**The Struggle for Political  
Liberty.**

By Chrystal Macmillan, M.A., B.Sc.

(A Lecture given on February 16th, 1909, the day of the Opening of Parliament.)

When the history of the twentieth century comes to be written it will be told how its first years witnessed a great revival of interest in and enthusiasm for the fundamental principles of liberty, and freedom and justice, an awakening to the fact that, if in theory men hold these things good for all, in practice they are a monopoly of certain privileged classes. This awakening is not confined to one country nor to one race. The Russians, the Turks, the Persians, the Indians have realised that it is not consistent with their dignity as rational and moral beings that they should be compelled to obey laws they have no share in making, or that they should be denied the responsibility of shaping the destinies of their countries. The unrepresented in these countries have risen and demanded recognition, and in a certain measure the authorities have yielded to their just claim. To Russia and Turkey have been granted constitutions, with partial freedom of representation, and to the Indians a larger share in the government of their great country.

But when time has brought us to a point where we shall be able to see the events of to-day in a truer perspective, the struggles and victories of the men of these countries will sink into insignificance beside the struggle for freedom which women are now waging in all the so-called civilised countries of the world. The efforts of these men will but take their places as parallel to similar efforts in which the governed have asserted their right as "the people" against the assumed divine right of those holding hereditary power. The plebeians of Rome fought that they might be represented by Tribunes of their own choosing; the Barons at Runnymede compelled an unwilling king to sign away his hereditary power; the people of England did not let the divine right of Charles I. save him from the scaffold; the clamour of the people forced the landlord House of Commons of 1832 to share its hereditary power with a large unrepresented class.

These struggles have many points of similarity. In all, those



born to the ruling class unwillingly yield to the pressure of the people. They resist always in the belief that they are acting only for the good of the people, and as anxious to save them from responsibility; while the people insist that they best know what is for their own good, and claim the right to share in the responsibility of governing themselves. The governing class bases its hereditary claim on the natural or the divine order of things, and shuts its eyes to the fact that what it takes for a natural order is merely a passing political custom. The people assert that the natural qualification for taking a share in the government is simply that they are the people for whom the Government exists.

Women in their fight have all these difficulties to face; for men, who are the ruling power to-day, are unwilling to share that power with the women of the country. Men resist the claims of the women professedly on the ground that they are acting, not only for the good of the country in general, but for the good of the women themselves, and because they are anxious to save the women from responsibility. The men base their claim on the natural order of things—sometimes even on the divine order—forgetting that their right is merely hereditary and founded on custom, and that what seems to their limited outlook the natural order of things is no more than a political custom of their own time and country.

But over and above, women have to face the further difficulty that they are as yet unrecognised as "the people." Women in all countries are realising this. They are rising, and not only are they organising in their separate countries but they are organising internationally. At the conference in Amsterdam in 1908 twenty-one different countries were represented. Delegates were present from all parts of the world—from the United States and Canada, from South Africa and Australia, from Spain and Russia, from Bohemia and Bulgaria—and from women of all nationalities it was possible to realise how widespread is the agitation and how the suffrage is everywhere considered the fundamental question. Though so many different races and countries were represented, the remarkable fact is that, just as in this country, the Women's Suffrage Societies, whether constitutional or militant, party or non-party, unite in the form of their demand; so all these different countries make the same demand—in the words of their resolution, "to ask for the franchise on the same terms as it is now, or may be, exercised by men," leaving any required extension to be decided by the men and women together. Be the franchise wide or be it limited, it must not exclude women on the ground of sex. In other words, women demand that they should be recognised as "the people."

### The Storm Centre.

But if this agitation for the enfranchisement of women is active in every part of the world to-day, there is no question, as the President of the International Alliance said in 1908, that the *storm centre* of the movement is in this country, and that the women of the world are looking to us with hope that our speedy enfranchisement

will do much to encourage the women of other countries to work for the successful issue to their fight. And as the storm centre is in this country, so is this day of the opening of Parliament and of the reading of the King's Speech a reminder that the storm will continue to rage until its cause has been removed by the placing of our Bill upon the Statute Book. For though there is opposed to us *conservatism* and the brute force of the established power, and although our friends the "Antis" even go the length of declaring that the right of the franchise can only be based on the might of the stronger, time is on our side—as it always is on the side of those who have the courage to believe in the ultimate triumph of right over might—and time will show that this right principle will triumph and that soon the women of this country will no longer be classed with aliens, criminals, and lunatics, but will enjoy the right of which they have been too long deprived—that of being free citizens of their own country.

To-day, then, is a very special centre of the storm, for the omission of our measure from the King's Speech brings home to us most clearly that we are shut out from the common council of the kingdom—that we have no constitutional means of suggesting the amendment to that Speech which we most need and desire. The most urgently needed and the most urgently demanded reform has not been mentioned—and why? Because those who demand it are not represented. The House of Commons, which should owe its very existence to the consent of the people, presumes to legislate for the people without having asked the consent of one-half of the people.

What is this Parliament? Whence does it derive its power? Is that power exercised as it should be?

Political philosophers tell us that governments are established to carry out the will of the people. In primitive States the government, as a rule, is in the hands of a chosen king, and he selects his own councillors. This is the most elementary form of representative government by the consent of the people.

The United States of America express this representative or democratic principle in these words:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident:—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their *just* powers from the *consent of the governed*."

Notwithstanding these high-sounding words, the United States, no less than this country, has built up a government in which one-half of the community—the women—are governed without their consent, and are therefore *unjustly denied their inalienable right of liberty*.

If in our own country we have not so explicitly stated these principles in a written constitution, we at least assume them at



every turn. The right to live is definitely recognised. We always speak of this as a free country—as a land of liberty. One of our most characteristic national songs insists that “Britons never shall be slaves.” Whatever may be the practice—in theory at least—it is evidently assumed that we are to take credit to ourselves as living in a free country. The phrase “deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed” is merely expressing what we mean by “liberty” in other words.

That American formula, then, does very well express the point of view of the people of this country. The right of each individual to life, freedom, and happiness, and the joint consent of the governed are the essential points.

Governments are good in so far as they give the fullest life, freedom, and happiness to the governed. They are stable or possible so long as they have the consent of the governed, for no government can last without that consent.

### The Great Charter.

The chief landmarks in the history of the development of a constitution are those times at which the governed have ceased to give their consent to the established government, and the result has been either alteration in the form of government or civil war. Such landmarks in the history of our own country are the struggles which led up to the signing of the Great Charter, to the passing of the Bill of Rights, to the Declaration of Independence of the American Colonies, to the passing of the Great Reform Bill of 1832.

It is usual to date the constitutional history of England from the signing of the Great Charter at Runnymede. That Great Charter contained many provisions which are now obsolete, but it also set down the principles of liberty—not quite in the same form as in the American declaration, but the essentials are there. The three main sections of our Great Charter are these: (47) “To none will we sell, to none deny, to none delay right or justice”; and (46) “No freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned, or disseised, or outlawed, or banished, or anyways destroyed; nor will we pass upon him or commit him to prison unless by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.” This is the provision forbidding arbitrary robbery or imprisonment. The other important section is: (14) “No scutage or aid shall be imposed in our kingdom, unless by the common council of our kingdom, except to redeem our person, and to make our eldest son a knight, and once to marry our eldest daughter; and for this there shall only be paid a reasonable aid.”

This scutage was the military service due to the king from tenants in chief. I have sometimes seen it stated that women did not give this service. They cannot always have been exempted, for in early times at least both lords and ladies were summoned to meet the king cum equis et armis (mounted and armed) when necessary.

The important point in this paragraph is the provision that no aid—that is tax—shall be levied without the consent of the common council of the kingdom. This is an explicit statement that there is to be no taxation without common consent—“no taxation without representation,” as the principle is expressed to-day. It also implies the existence of a common council.

This Great Charter did not lay down absolutely new principles. The principles in it had been commonly recognised before. King John had set aside these principles. Being in the position of supreme power, he had found it convenient to forget to apply them. He had levied taxes and arbitrarily imprisoned his subjects till they rebelled and compelled him to alter his constitution, or, at least, the principles of government he was putting into practice. At the point of the sword he was forced to sign a written statement of the principles of government under which the people would consent to be governed.

### The Bill of Rights.

Another example of such a landmark in the development of our Constitution is the Bill of Rights, in which the old principles were re-written and signed. Charles I. was in the habit of imposing taxes without the consent of the common council, and had asserted his divine right as king to act independently of that common council. John Hampden has become famous in history principally as a passive resister—as an advocate of the principle that taxation involves representation. More than once he refused to pay taxes levied by the king without the consent of Parliament. When I was at school years were spent in instilling into me an admiration for his defence of the principles of liberty. I wonder if such dangerous doctrines are taught the youth of the country to-day. When compulsion was put upon him he appealed to the protection of the law, but the Court decided against him, one of the Judges saying: “I have never read or heard that *lex* was *rex* (the law was king), but it is common and most true that *rex* is *lex* (the king is law).” The majority of the Judges gave similar opinions, declaring that the law could not bind the king. The Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland said of him: “I wish Mr. Hampden and others to his likeness were well whipt into their right senses.” The tyrant, however, went too far, and he was condemned to die in vindication of the principles of the Constitution.

The two later Stuarts were also inclined to overstep their rights, and it was again found necessary to set down in writing for the signature of the sovereign the fundamental principles of the Constitution.

William and Mary were invited to become king and queen only on condition that they recognised these principles of liberty by signing the Bill of Rights.



That Bill of Rights reiterated the recognised constitutional principles. Its more important sections are:—

(1) That the pretended power of suspending laws, or the execution of laws, by regal authority, without consent of Parliament, is illegal.

(4) That the levying of money . . . without grant of Parliament . . . is illegal.

(5) That it is the right of the subjects to petition the king, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal.

(12) That all grants and promises of fines and forfeiture of particular persons, *before conviction*, are illegal and void.

Section 1 reaffirms the principle that laws can only be enacted and repealed with the consent of the governed; the second (4), that taxes can only be imposed with the consent of the governed. Section 5, referring to the right to petition the king, had always been recognised, and now it is definitely set down. Section 12 again lays down the principle that no one is to be punished before conviction.

As the Great Charter marked the beginning of a more settled time and a better application of the principles of justice, so the Bill of Rights made clear what the rights of a subject are, and since that time no sovereign has made any very serious attempt to override or set aside these rights. The Great Charter had said that there must be a *common council*. The Bill of Rights had set forth that the wishes of that common council can not be arbitrarily set aside, that without its consent no laws can be made and no taxes imposed. In the middle of the eighteenth century, however, the demand for the recognition of constitutional principles began to take a different form. It began to be recognised that the *Commons* as then constituted had ceased to represent the people. They were, in fact, not a *common council*. They represented only a section of the nation. "There is a time when it is clearly demonstrated that men cease to be representatives. That time is now arrived."

#### A Reasonable Demand.

From that time till to-day those who have taken their stand on the fundamental principles of liberty have put these demands in a new form. They have asked for direct representation in the Common Council, because they recognise this to be the only way in which it is possible to have a *common council*.

To understand the position of the reformers in the eighteenth century and to appreciate how reasonable their demands were I must explain who at that time had this right of the franchise. There were three kinds of franchise for the House of Commons—the county franchise, the burgh franchise, and burgh franchise.

(1) The first franchise to be established was the county franchise, and the first Act making provision for the election of representatives was passed in the seventh year of Henry IV. That Act sets forth that "all they that be present at the County Court . . . as well suitors duly summoned . . . as others . . . shall attend to the election of Knights of the Shire," as the county members are called. The County Court was attended by women as well as by men. We know this because there are records of women receiving special exemptions, and even of being fined for non-attendance. This, then, was the first franchise. It was really adult suffrage, because it was open to anyone to attend the County Court. The same statute provides that the indentures of the members returned "should be under the seals of all them that did chose the Knights." This provision was never carried out in practice—only a few of the more prominent voters present signed the indentures. In the county of York for some years it was the custom for the indentures to be signed, not by the freeholders themselves, but by their agents or attorneys. Certain of these returns were signed by the attorneys of the great ladies as well as of the great lords. In 1411 Lucy, Countess of Kent, signs such an indenture by attorney, and in 1414 Margaret, widow of Sir Henry Vavasour, does the same. In that county, then, there is evidence that the woman's right to vote was recognised.

#### Women not excluded.

Later the franchise in counties was limited to freeholders with certain qualifications, but women were never expressly excluded. If they did not vote in large numbers, they certainly sometimes did vote. There is in the British Museum a manuscript account of a Suffolk county election at Ipswich. This is how the story runs:

"A short and true relation of the carriage of the election of the Knights for the county of Suffolk at Ipswich, which began there upon Monday morning, October 17th, this present year 1640, and ended upon the Thursday morning then next ensuing.

"The said High Sheriff, having sat out all Wednesday from morning till night without dining, did at last, notwithstanding the violent interruptions of the said Sir Roger Norby"—the poll was going against that gentleman—"and others, finish numbering the votes that day. . . . 'Tis true that by the ignorance of some of the clerks . . . the oaths of some single women that were freeholders were taken without the knowledge of the said High Sheriff, who, as soon as he had notice thereof, instantly sent to forbid the same, conceiving it a matter very unworthy of any gentleman and most dishonourable in such an election to make use of their voices, although in law they might have been allowed, nor did the said High Sheriff allow of the said votes upon his numbering of the said poll, but, with the allowance and consent of the said two Knights themselves, discount them and cast them out."

This account shows that women freeholders must have been in the habit of voting. It appeared to them the natural thing. The



Sheriff, knowing the votes to be legal, required to ask the consent of the candidates before he could cast them out.

(2) The towns or burghs were not represented in Parliament so early as the counties. Just as the first councils of freeholders were summoned to Parliament by the king that they might be taxed, so, when the towns began to grow wealthy, certain of them were asked to send representatives to Parliament in order that they, too, might be taxed. The towns appear to have themselves regulated the method of selecting their representatives. In Scotland the practice in all the burghs was uniform. For many years the old Town Council elected the new Council, and the two together appointed the member to represent them in Parliament. In England practically every town made its own rules. Sometimes the electors were the burgesses, who might be women; sometimes the residenters. The ordinances of Worcester enact that the election of members of Parliament shall be "openly in the Guild Hall of such as ben dwelling within the franchises of the burgh and by the most voice."

(3) Besides the burgh members returned by towns of considerable size there were members returned by certain small burghs in which there were not more than half-a-dozen electors. In a few cases the lord or lady of the manor as individuals returned the members. There are the two well-known cases of Dame Dorothy Packington and Dame Elizabeth Copley. These ladies, Dame Packington in the reign of Elizabeth and Dame Copley in the reign of Philip and Mary, each returned two members to Parliament for their small boroughs. They were the only voters in their constituencies. These returns are so well authenticated as to be recorded in a Blue Book of the House of Commons, published in 1878. That is a Blue Book which gives a list of members returned from the different constituencies from the earliest times.

There is also preserved in a collection of old letters one referring to Dame Copley's borough of Gatton. It was written in connection with an election in the borough of Gatton at a time when the daughter-in-law of the Dame Copley mentioned above was the only voter. It is written by Queen Elizabeth's Secretary of State, Walsingham, to two gentlemen, asking them to do all in their power to prevent Dame Copley sending her nominees to Parliament. The interesting point is that the Secretary of State did not wish Dame Copley's members returned, and yet it did not strike him that he might question her right to return them. If there had been any doubt of the woman's right, surely when he was so anxious about the return he would have discovered this simple way out of his difficulty. The fact that he did not do so is clear proof that he and the Lords of the Council, on whose behalf he is writing, were convinced of the woman's right.

Up to the time of the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832 the state of representation in the country remained much as I have described it. Broadly speaking, the freeholders voted in the

counties, the burgesses in the towns, and a large number of small decayed burghs, with no more than one or two voters, also returned members. Many large towns, such as Manchester and Birmingham, were quite unrepresented. This was the state of representation, when, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the struggle for constitutional liberty began to take the form of a demand for direct representation—for the right to vote for a member to sit in the common council.

As King John asserted his hereditary right against the wishes of the people, and as King Charles presumed on his position to try to limit the power of the people's assembly, so in the eighteenth century the House of Commons asserted its hereditary right against the wishes of the people, and presumed on its position to deny the right of the people to be represented in the common council.

### Champions of the Unrepresented.

In England there was a certain John Wilkes who was one of the champions of the right of the people to be represented in the Commons. He was the editor of a paper called the *North Briton*. Because in that paper he published a condemnation of the King's Speech he was imprisoned (1763). His arrest was illegally carried out. The Secretary of State of the day—no doubt acting on the instigation of the Government—issued on his own authority a warrant for the arrest. No such warrant has since been issued. After his release Wilkes was elected to the House of Commons, but the Commons refused to admit him. Pitt, who early realised that the House of Commons could not dictate to the people, brought in a Bill to declare that the Commons had no power to reject a chosen member; and Wilkes ultimately was accepted. Later, both Pitt and Wilkes brought in unsuccessful measures advocating the reform of the Commons.

In Scotland one of the champions of the unrepresented was Thomas Muir, an advocate, or barrister, at the law courts of Edinburgh. He went about the country preaching reform and founding societies to propagate his ideas. He pointed out the rotten state of many of the small burghs and how the large towns were unrepresented. His demand was for adult suffrage. For this he was (1793) charged with sedition, the sedition being that he advocated a change in the Constitution.

"We do not worship the British Constitution . . . as sent down from Heaven," he said; "but we consider it as human workmanship, which man has made, and man can mend." He pointed out in his eloquent defence that it was no more sedition to ask what he asked than for Pitt to have brought in a Reform Bill. Judges and jury, however, had made up their minds to condemn him, and to their lasting disgrace he was found guilty and sentenced to fourteen years' exportation to Botany Bay. To show how the prejudice of that day coloured the point of view of the Court I quote the following words from the decision of one of the judges: "The landed interest alone has the right to be represented . . . the



rabble has only personal property, and what hold has the nation on them." This was as much as to say that those who were not landed proprietors were outside the Constitution.

In his defence Muir said: "The records of this trial will pass down to posterity, and when our ashes shall be scattered by the winds of heaven the impartial voice of the future will rejudge your verdict." And so it has proved, for there stands to-day on the Calton Hill—that finest site of our beautiful city of Edinburgh—a tall monument—it is called the Martyrs' Monument, for it was erected by the advocates of reform in Scotland, in memory of that Thomas Muir, in recognition of the debt that Scotland and the rest of the country owed to him and his fellow-martyrs. What they asked and were condemned for asking, once granted was considered a great progressive reform. "Let them call it mischief. When it is past and prospered 'twill be virtue." It was so then, and it will be so again.

It was not till twenty years later, however, that the question came to be recognised as one of practical politics. It is difficult at this distance of time, and with our more developed ideas of the rights of all classes, to realise that the representative system of that day found politicians to defend it when such towns as Manchester and Birmingham were unrepresented, and when Old Sarum, a ruined hamlet, returned a member. The arguments of prejudice were the same then as they are to-day. So late as 1820 the Prime Minister—Liverpool—wrote: "The grant of representation to the large boroughs would be the greatest evil conferred on those towns. It would subject the population to a perpetual factious canvass, which would divert more or less the people from their industrious habits, and keep alive a permanent spirit of turbulence and disaffection among them." Have these words not a familiar ring to-day? The difference is that to-day they are used against women, custom having made the franchise for men appear a wholesome and useful institution.

Ten years later, on the eve of the actual passing of the great measure, the Duke of Wellington, one of the most strenuous opponents of parliamentary reform, was so blind to the signs of the times that he said in the House of Commons: "I have never read or heard of any measure up to the present moment which could in any degree satisfy my mind that the state of the representation could be improved or rendered more satisfactory than at the present moment. I would go further and say that if at the present moment I had imposed upon me the duty of framing a legislature for any country, and particularly for a country like this, in possession of great property of various descriptions, I do not mean to assert that I could form such a legislature as we now possess, for the nature of man is incapable of reaching such excellence at once; but my great endeavour would be to form some description of legislature which would produce the same results." The Duke was of the contented mind. He was evidently satisfied that he had found what we are all looking for or seeking to establish—that best of all

possible worlds. He did not realise that this speech proved his incapacity as a leader. When he sat down, his neighbour whispered to him: "You have announced the fall of your Government."

### The Reform Bill of 1832.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century the agitation steadily grew, and in the twenties it was universal. After the Reform Bill had been twice introduced in 1831, and thrown out once by the Commons and once by the Lords, the consequences are thus described: "At Birmingham the bells were muffled and tolled. The mob at Derby broke into open riot. The gaol at Nottingham was burnt down. Two troops of Kentish Yeomanry tendered their resignations because their commanding officers had voted against the Bill; and meetings were held in almost every county to support the Government."

Among the opponents of the measure was a certain Wetherall. It was necessary for him to attend the Assizes at Bristol. When he entered the town he required to have his carriage guarded by 300 or 400 mounted gentlemen. He was received with hisses and yells, and stones were thrown at him. When the business of the Court should have been taken, there was such an uproar that the Court had to be adjourned. In the riot which followed the Mansion House was attacked and a great deal of damage done. The Bishops' Palace and part of the town were burnt. One man was killed, and several were wounded. Wetherall himself had to flee the town.

With the usual want of imagination and failure to recognise the possibilities of the procedure of the House, it seemed as if the Government were about to let the Bill drop after its rejection by the Lords. A feeble attempt in the Commons was made to propose a resolution lamenting the fate of the Bill. As was natural, the resolution met with opposition, and would have dropped had not Macaulay pointed out the only straight path to honest men in a speech which made it possible to reintroduce the Bill. "At the present moment," he said, "I can see only one question in the State—the question of reform; only two parties—the friends of the Bill and its enemies. The public enthusiasm is undiminished. Old Sarum has grown no bigger; Manchester has grown no smaller. I know only two ways in which societies can be governed—by public opinion and by the sword."

When the Bill was next introduced it passed the Commons by a large majority, but there was still the difficulty of the Lords. The Commons, however, had had enough of the disturbances in the country; they were determined to have the Bill carried, and to make this certain they threatened to create sufficient new Peers to make a favourable majority in the Lords. The Bill was then carried, and the long struggle ended. That Bill disfranchised the rotten boroughs and gave representation to the large towns. Its general effect was to enfranchise the middle class, but it was not till 1867 that the working man was granted voting rights, and that, too, only



after a long fight to have his claims recognised. The same arguments were used against him which were used against the giving the right to the £10 householder. This right, too, was carried by an unwilling House of Commons, and only in response to agitation in the country.

With each extension of the franchise the House of Commons has approached more nearly a common council. Each extension has been brought about because the governed had ceased to give their consent to the particular form of government under which they were compelled to live. Women now universally recognise that it is not in accordance with their dignity as rational beings that they should live under laws in the making of which they have no share, or that they should be denied the responsibility of shaping the greater destinies of their country. A few women have always realised this, but it was not till the middle of last century that the feeling became widespread in this country and in America.

#### Women Unrecognised as "the People."

But the special difficulty with which women have to contend is that they are still unrecognised as the people. Their interests are not considered to rank as of equal importance with men's. They are only considered of value in so far as they promote the interests of men. We all know the sentimentalist who sums up this point of view by saying that woman is the helpmeet of man, using helpmeet in a narrow sense of servant to carry out the wishes of the master. This is an unworthy view, for woman is not the helpmeet of man if she allows him to remain in that state of mental blindness in which he fails to recognise that he also is bound to be the helpmeet of woman, and that the good of the country is best promoted when she, too, is considered of value, and when her interests are not made subservient to his, but when the capacities of both are allowed to be developed.

This fallacy of denying that a woman is of value in herself is the assumed major premise of much of the writing and much of the legislation of all time, and of not a few judicial decisions in the law courts of our own country.

I take as typical examples of statements which assume this fallacy a few of the recent utterances of Mr. Asquith in his speech on the constitution of the House of Lords. I choose him because, as Prime Minister, he may be taken as representing—I do not say the people—but the governing class, that is the voter of to-day. He forgot the women of South Africa and that they are not free when he said that Briton and Boer have been brought together to co-operate side by side in the working out of a "free responsible self-government." He forgot that if the members of the House of Lords when they carry their hereditary votes into the lobby of their House "represent nothing and nobody but themselves," women are as much overlooked when the hereditary male voter goes to the ballot box representing nothing and nobody but *himself*.

The vote of the man is as hereditary as that of the Peer. Both acquire their right to vote by an accident of birth.

He forgot that if the exercise of the veto of the House of Lords "would surely to all who love liberty and believe in democracy be a call to arms, no less is the House of Commons' veto of the Woman's Suffrage Bill last session, and the Government's omission of our measure from the King's Speech to-day, a call to arms to the liberty-loving women of the country.

The fallacy appears at every turn—women are only recognised as citizens in certain connections. It is left to the discretion of the casual administrator to say when the Great Charters of the liberties of the people are to apply to the whole people, and when they are to be limited to one section—to men. Now, this is a point of very great importance. I think it is failure to recognise this which makes for so much of the injustice under which women suffer. I do not say that this injustice is due to men only. We, too, are to blame for not having seen it, and still more are we to blame if we *do* see it and do not point it out.

To go back to our Great Charter, and the principles which are there supposed to be laid down for all. In many ways, women have not profited by it. It lays down that taxes are only to be imposed with the consent of the common council of the realm. Women are not represented on that common council, and yet it professes to be a common council. To call it a common council is to deny that women are part of the nation, and this is exactly what is done over and over again.

Again, we are told that no one is to be imprisoned except by the trial of his peers, and it is often stated that this is the law of the country to-day. To make this statement is again to deny that women are part of the nation, for they are never tried by their peers. But they are sometimes even denied the right to a trial. It is only a few years since an attempt was made to secure the decision of a law court that a man has the right to imprison his wife. The attempt was partly successful, although ultimately the House of Lords decided in favour of the woman's right to her own person. The case is known as the Clitheroe case. A man had locked up his wife for refusing to obey him. Her friends applied to the Court to have her released. The lower Courts decided that the man had the right to the person of his wife, and that he might compel her to live with him. This decision was directly opposed to the clause in the Great Charter making arbitrary imprisonment illegal. The Judges simply overlooked the fact that the principle applies to women as well as to men. Fortunately for that woman and for all women she had wealthy friends, and they were able to appeal to the highest Court—the House of Lords—and the Lord Chancellor had the courage to set aside the masculine personal equation, and to declare that there never had been in this country any such law or custom, and that the woman had the right to her liberty. But in every connection it is serious for women that the



law between men and women should be administered only by men, for there are no prejudices so deepseated as those which deny to women the right to equality of treatment either by custom or before the law. You remember the case of *Chorlton v. Lings*. That was the case in which a woman claimed the right to be placed on the parliamentary voting register after the Reform Bill of 1867 under the clause conferring a new franchise. The new franchise was conferred on "every man not subject to any legal incapacity." I am not going to discuss the argument then brought forward with reference to the legal incapacity, but am going to illustrate my point by the argument on the word "man." At the time of the passing of this Act there was on the Statute Book an Act called Lord Brougham's Act, which provided that in all future Acts "words importing the masculine gender should be taken and deemed to include females except where the contrary, as to gender, is expressly provided." To the lay mind the provision in this Act seems quite clear, and yet what do we find in practice? The Act is calmly set aside. This is how they proceed. Justice Willes says: "It is not easy to conceive that the framer of the Act, when he used the word 'expressly,' meant to suggest that what is necessarily or properly implied by language is not expressed by such language." One of the other Judges, in his effort to interpret the expression in accordance with his preconceived ideas, tried to point out that the Legislature could not really have meant what it said. All it could have meant was, "where the contrary intention does not appear." To the unbiassed mind "expressly," if it means anything at all, does not mean "properly implied," but the reverse, and it certainly means a great deal more than the contrary intention appearing. I am not impugning the whole judgment, but only pointing out to what absurdities prejudice will lead otherwise sensible men.

In that decision the Judges simply talked away a perfectly definite law. It was not to be made to apply because it was to be applied to a woman and—so runs the assumption—laws are not to be administered equally between men and women. That is the root of the whole matter.

#### The Scottish Graduates' Case.

Then take the decision in the graduates' case, that "women" are not "persons." Here, again, we have the purely arbitrary setting aside of the obvious interpretation of the law. The interpretation given by the House of Lords in that case when applied to the statutes in question produces contradictions and absurdities in these statutes. It was denied that the meaning of the statutes is to be inferred from them as they stand. And why? Because the privilege is so exceptional, because it is fundamental constitutional law and a principle of the Constitution that women do not vote—a principle!

The highest Court of the country has decided that courts of law may at their discretion draw an arbitrary line saying so

much we may infer from the statutes but no more; that is to say statutes are to be taken as meaning what they say only up to a certain arbitrary point. It cannot be inferred that an exceptional privilege has been granted to a woman.

We need to-day, as men did 700 years ago, a Great Charter setting forth the rights of women.

In that Charter it must be laid down—

That women, as well as men, are the people.

That privileges shall not be denied to women simply because they are great.

That women shall not be taxed without their consent.

That a Government shall be established in this country deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed, both men and women.

That such a Government can only be established by giving Votes to Women.



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2. Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the franchise is granted.
3. Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government candidate and independently of all other candidates.
- 4. Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
5. The organising of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
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The Militant Methods of the  
**N. W. S. P. U.**

(Being the verbatim Report of a Speech by Christabel  
Pankhurst, at the St. James's Hall, on October 15th, 1908).

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

We have been working for the vote for forty years, but I do not think we shall have to wait very much longer. It is true that the Liberal Government is bitterly hostile to the reform that we are fighting for. The members of the present Government do not want to give votes to women. But man proposes and woman disposes; and whether they like it or not, when the womanhood of the nation demands political enfranchisement, the Government has to give in. I say the present Government is hostile to Woman Suffrage. Probably some of you will retort—those of you who are not politically experienced will retort—that we have friends in the Cabinet. What about Mr. Lloyd George, what about Mr. Sydney Buxton, and certain other Cabinet Ministers who tell us that they believe that women ought to have the vote? Well, we say that anybody with the smallest knowledge of constitutional matters will be well aware that membership of a Government which as a whole denies votes to women is quite incompatible with friendship to our cause. No man who believes in Woman Suffrage can possibly remain a member of the present Government. His membership of this Government means that he is hostile to our claim.



Now, where any other question than that of Woman Suffrage is concerned, everybody recognises the truth of what I have said. Would it be any good for any member of the present Government to plead that he was a Protectionist? You would say, "My good man, then what are you doing in a Free Trade Government?" Would it be any good for a member of the present Government to try and curry favour with the opponents of the Licensing Bill by saying that he was opposed to the Licensing Bill? They would say, "Then, my friend, your place is out of the Government, not in it!" And so with Woman Suffrage. What is the good of Mr. Lloyd George trying to persuade intelligent women like us that he is in favour of Woman Suffrage while he remains a member of this Government? Now that is why we are against the members of this Cabinet as a whole, and that is why we fight them every one. That is why we do not draw any distinctions in favour of those Cabinet Ministers who claim to be in favour of votes for women. We know perfectly well—and they will have to learn it too—that neither Mr. Lloyd George nor anybody else can run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. They have got to choose between Woman Suffrage on the one hand, and a place in the present Cabinet on the other.

This is an appropriate moment, I think, to speak of the rank and file Members of Parliament who say that they support our movement, because there are a great many Liberal Members of the House of Commons, and a good many would-be Liberal Members of the House of Commons, who say, "Why oppose us? We are in favour of Woman Suffrage." Well, we must oppose them, because they are sailing under a hostile flag. Fancy a rank and file Member of Parliament or a Liberal candidate trying to persuade us that he is a friend to Woman Suffrage and wants to help us, when he accepts service under Mr. Asquith and the present Government! The day has gone by when we could be induced to believe that Mr. Jones or Mr. Robinson, a follower of the Government, was a friend of our cause, although his leaders were against us. We know perfectly well where the private Member stands: we know perfectly well what the limitations of his power are. The plain fact is that rank and file Members of Parliament are counters in the game, and that they are entirely at the orders of their political leaders. That is why every follower of Mr. Asquith is regarded by us as a soldier serving in a hostile army, and, just as Tommy Atkins cannot plead with the enemy not to shoot him because he does not believe in the war that he is waging, so the Liberal Member of Parliament and the Liberal candidate must realise that where we can strike at him, we shall strike at him; not for his own sake, because, poor man, he is helpless, but because he is a unit of strength on the side of the enemy that is opposing us—on the side of the Liberal Government.

You must know that what we are working for is the enactment

of a Bill to remove the political disability of sex. There is a Bill now before the House of Commons that meets our views exactly—the Women's Enfranchisement Bill. That is the Bill we want carried, and we want it carried now; and we ask how it is that the Government, if only for the sake of stopping the disorderly proceedings of which they complain, do not carry that measure into law, especially as the second reading of it has already been carried. Of course, they say that they have not time, but that has been the excuse ever since this movement began. The Prime Minister, in reply to a letter we lately sent him, tells us he cannot carry this Bill because some weeks ago he said that he was not going to carry this session any private Member's Bill which was of a controversial character. But something Mr. Asquith said some time ago is really no barrier against the enfranchisement of women. There is too much of this "What I have said, I have said!" We must teach them, ladies, that when they have said and decided upon something which is not expedient from the point of view of public policy, they must learn to eat their words, and upset their own arrangements.

Now, this measure of which they all seem so much afraid—what is it? It is a Bill to give to those women who are qualified, as men voters are qualified, the right to exercise the Parliamentary franchise. They are all obliged to admit that our logical position is absolutely unassailable, and that the principle of the Bill is sound. It is sound in justice, and is in harmony with the principles of the British Constitution. What will be the immediate effect of this Bill if it is carried? It will extend the present franchise to women on the same terms as those upon which it is exercised by men. The ultimate effect of the Bill will be to enable women to share with men the benefits of any future improvement in the franchise.

### The House of Lords.

There are two excuses for neglecting to carry this Bill with which I propose to deal. Liberal Members of Parliament raise the first. They say, "What is the use of carrying the Bill in the House of Commons? The House of Lords would throw it out." Are not Liberals thankful for the House of Lords! Where could they turn for an excuse for inaction if there were no House of Lords! I know why they have dropped the House of Lords campaign; they are afraid that their mock warfare might turn into a warfare in earnest, and that somehow or other, without really intending it, they might destroy the House of Lords. This would be a terrible thing; for there would not then be a single bulwark between themselves and their Liberal principles! But what we have to say upon the question is this. Let the House of Commons deal with the matter first, let them do their duty,



and if the House of Lords prove obstinate—well, we shall have to take measures to secure their adherence to the principle we have at heart. Let us take one thing at a time. The Women's Enfranchisement Bill has not got through the House of Commons yet, and I venture to prophesy that the House of Lords will not prove so obstinate or so reactionary as the House of Commons has.

One Liberal journal has said—and here comes the second excuse—that we are asking for impossibly early action when we ask for the immediate enactment of our Bill. Ladies, there is really a limit to our patience. We have worked longer for this than people have worked for some reforms that are already on the Statute Book. It seems to me that it is impossibly late, except that one knows it is better late than never. Certainly nobody, even the most inaccurate person, can claim that we are claiming the enactment of the Women's Enfranchisement Bill too early. When this Government first came into office, the Liberals' cry was, "We cannot commit political suicide; we have only just come into power, and now you want us to go out again. We could not carry Woman Suffrage without going to the country, and that would mean an immediate dissolution." How tender their conscience becomes when they are dealing with voters! They do not mind legislating without asking our opinion when we are outside the franchise, but they insist that when we have got the vote they must lose not a moment in giving us an opportunity of expressing our views at the ballot box. But this argument has now lost what force it ever had, because this Parliament is waxing old, not to say decrepit, and it is about time that it went in for a death-bed repentance.

We must face the position with all seriousness. If our Bill were carried this session, we should not be in a position to vote till 1910, because the Register will be made up next Autumn, and that Register will not come into operation until January 1st, 1910. If the Bill were carried next session, unless it were to receive Royal assent before the electoral lists are made up, then we should not be able to vote until 1911. The next General Election will certainly not be delayed beyond that year. Therefore, this is a matter for haste. If we do not achieve our purpose soon, this Parliament will run its course, and another Parliament will come in before we get the vote, and then will be re-told the same old story, "You cannot expect us to enfranchise you now. Wait until this Parliament is nearing its close," and so on, world without end. We are not prepared to face such a prospect. There is no time to be lost. Delay is dangerous. "If it were done, it were well it were done quickly."

#### **The Promised Reform Bill.**

But, ladies and gentlemen, there is another very great reason for haste in settling this question, and that is the Reform Bill.

Now, I am greatly suspicious of that measure. I view with mistrust the prospect that Mr. Asquith has opened out in announcing the introduction of a Reform Bill. I am afraid he seeks to mislead us into a swamp where we must sink and sink and sink, until he hears no more of our inconvenient clamour.

What is to be the nature of this Reform Bill? It is to be introduced in a form applying, if you please, only to men! Now, why a Reform Bill for men? Are men fighting for franchise reform? Do they ever speak of it? No, my friends! The fact is that they are to be carried on our shoulders a stage further on the road to another measure of electoral reform. It is our agitation that has prompted the Government to the contemplation of this Reform Bill. Men do not think it worth while ever to ask for more votes for themselves. They think other matters more important. If they had to choose between more votes for men and, say, a measure dealing with unemployment, they would rather have the latter. They think they have a good many votes already, and they are in no haste to get more. But I do not want you to misunderstand the position. Men are prepared to stand for votes for women, because they realise that although they have three-fourths of the political loaf, the women have not even a crumb of it. Then why is Mr. Asquith in hot haste to give more votes to men? The answer is, that he hopes, by improving the men's franchise, to raise up a stronger barrier against the enfranchisement of women.

Well, this Bill is to be introduced applying to men only. What chance have women of getting a claim for their enfranchisement included in that Bill? Mr. Asquith makes an unprecedented suggestion. It is strange for Liberal Prime Ministers to create a precedent! It is not their custom quite; but heaven knows to what desperate straits they will be driven when they want to evade the women's claim to votes! I will tell you what is the unheard of suggestion that he makes. It is that the women's claim to vote shall depend upon the fate of a Private Member's amendment, and that the Government shall reject all responsibility in the matter. Now, I say that to deal with the question in this way is to insult the women, and to show no sense of public duty. We are not content, even if we pinned any faith whatever to the Reform Bill, even if we were sure it would be introduced, even if we were sure it would be carried, we are not content that our claim should be treated in this insolent manner.

As women have no votes, Mr. Asquith mistakenly thinks—though I believe he will not think so much longer—he vainly thinks that he can afford to trifle with their claim in this manner. He tells us that it is open to a Private Member to move a Woman Suffrage amendment. Of course, it is open to a Private Member to do that. Surely, the Private Member is not quite so reduced



to impotence that he has no right to move an amendment! Yes, poor man! he may still move amendments, though he cannot get them carried! But, supposing this Private Member's amendment is moved. Will Mr. Asquith then give it his support? No! he is not going to do that! He is going to be neutral. No, he is not going even to be neutral. Conditional neutrality describes his attitude towards this Private Member's amendment. Now, what are the conditions with which this offer of neutrality is hedged round? Those conditions are two, and both of them may be so interpreted as to become impossible of fulfilment. The first condition is that the amendment must be drafted on democratic lines. Now, I feel full of suspicion when a Liberal begins to talk about democracy. I am sure there is something wrong somewhere. I am convinced that Mr. Asquith is not speaking in good faith when he asserts that the amendment must be democratic. Why are we not told precisely upon what terms Mr. Asquith will approve our enfranchisement? Because, friends, he wants, when the critical time comes, to be able to rake up this condition, and to oppose the amendment on the pretext that it is not on democratic lines. By means of this condition he thinks either to prevent the Woman Suffrage Clause getting through the House of Commons, or failing that, to leave its rejection to the House of Lords on the ground that it is too wide in its scope. But in case this first device should fail, he has another string to his bow, and I will tell you what that is. It is the threat that he will oppose the Woman Suffrage amendment unless it can be shown that the enfranchisement of women is demanded by the majority of the men and the majority of the women of the country. What do you think of that! Did they wait for the majority of men to claim the vote in the old days? Certainly not. Gladstone repudiated the idea that it was necessary to show that the majority desired enfranchisement. When the Tories argued against the Bill of '84, that the agricultural labourers did not want the vote, Mr. Gladstone laughed them to scorn, and said: "It is the business of the statesman to anticipate the people's demand for enfranchisement, not to wait until he is asked." But, my friends, the present Liberal Government have dragged that high ideal of statesmanship into the mire; it is waiting now for others to raise it once again. The present Prime Minister is not going to give us the vote until he is badgered into giving it, shamed into giving it, until he is hounded into giving it!

Let us deal further with this point. The Prime Minister says that before women shall have the vote the majority of men must show they support the proposal. But, ladies, we are not talking about votes for men; we are talking about votes for women. Our claim to the vote would be valid, although not a man in the country were with us. Did anybody wait, before giving votes to

men, to see if the women approved of it? It is equally absurd—and if some men were not so full of male arrogance that they are absolutely blind, they would see it—it is precisely as absurd to say that women must not have votes till the majority of men approve of it. But, happily, we can fulfil that condition to our satisfaction and to yours. The men and women of the country are with us to-day, as we have shown Mr. Asquith at many a bye-election!—as we shall show him at many bye-elections yet. But, my friends, it would be some guarantee of his own good faith if Mr. Asquith would deign, in his high-and-mightiness, to inform us what he would recognise as proof that men and women of the country believe in votes for women. As to the men, I think he will be driven to accept as proof of their support of our claim the verdict of the bye-elections. But we want to know what he will accept as proof that the women themselves want the votes. Well, somebody put that straight question to him in the House of Commons, and he refused to make any reply whatsoever. What conclusion are we to draw from that? I say the man is tricking us—or trying to trick us. He wants to retain the power to say, whatever proof of the popular demand for women's enfranchisement we adduce, that he is not satisfied yet. He is afraid of laying down terms; he is afraid of saying: "If you do such and such a thing I shall be satisfied." Why is he afraid of saying it? Because he knows that whatever he lays down, it is in our power to do it. Well, as he won't give us the necessary guidance, he must not complain, and nobody can complain if we try to find out for ourselves the best way of showing him that the demand is not only so wide, but so intense that he cannot stand against it any longer.

One more word on the subject of the Reform Bill. Supposing the Woman Suffrage Clause embodied in it is carried, what is going to happen to the Bill as a whole? Why, ladies, if any of you are inclined to pin your faith to the Reform Bill, take notice that Liberals are saying in the most bare-faced and open manner that they do not expect that the Bill will be carried. They think to make it a sort of battle-cry at the next General Election, and the settlement of our question is to be delayed accordingly. At all costs we must prevent that. We intend to win the vote, not only before the next General Election, but before the Reform Bill is introduced. If you doubt that to defer the enfranchisement of women until the Reform Bill is brought in would be fatal, look at what is to be the nature of that Bill. It is to be coupled with Re-distribution (so we are told by one Parliamentary correspondent, who is at the same time a Member of Parliament), and that means that the whole difficult and controversial question of Irish Representation will be raised. It is to deal, so people are saying, with Second Ballot, Payment of Election Expenses, Shorter Parliaments, and a host of other matters. Well, my friends, the



Government are riding for a fall when they introduce a Bill of that kind. They want it to be thrown out; it will make something to go to the country on. We are not going to lend ourselves to that kind of thing. Let us get the sex disability removed; let us fight for that; let us wash our hands of the Reform Bill; don't let us trust in it. It is a vessel that is meant to founder. We are being sent to sea in a leaking ship, when we are invited to step on board the Reform Bill!

The attitude of the Government being so unsatisfactory, the question of methods is one of great importance. How are we to get the vote? Time presses; the cause is of great importance to us. We must get to work; we must not stand upon ceremony. Enough of this punctilio! Let us cast aside all doubts and fears, and "let us up and at them"! Let us stop talking; let us stop arguing with our opponents. We are only degrading ourselves when we plead with people whose ear is deaf to our pleading; when we argue with people who know our arguments by heart, but do not intend to give them heed. The only womanly thing to do is to fight against the Government, who are fighting against us. I think our enemy is beginning to respect us, and to fear us. Do you remember the debates in the House of Commons in the old days? Why, they did not so much degrade us, as they degraded the men who took part in them! You remember the tone of those debates? You remember how they would have disgraced the lowest public-house in our country? There is one thing that reading those debates tells you, and that is that you want to raise the tone of the House of Commons, you want to purify the atmosphere, you want to get rid of the tittle-tattle, of the low thoughts, and of the small views and the ungenerous ways of looking at things, and the distrust of the women of the country. Ladies, you may judge of the character and the calibre of a man by the things he says about women! When you hear them mouthing platitudes on other questions, you might really not suspect what some Members of Parliament are until you have heard them discuss the Women's Question. We did not know, until Mr. John Burns and Mr. Lloyd George were confronted at their meetings, that they had such lack of dignity. Therefore, we say it is a very good thing that we are teaching men to respect us. We cannot blame them. How can we expect them to be better when they have not had the influence of free enfranchised women brought to bear upon their character, and upon their modes of thought? It is our conviction that all will not be well with women, and all will not be well with men, until the sexes are upon an equality. Therefore, it is not with any feelings of rancour that we speak of these rulers of ours; they are the victims of the circumstances in which they have been brought up, and it would be well if they would understand that we are seeking to work the most beneficent revolution in human

affairs that the world has yet seen. We are prepared to take the words of one Cabinet Minister from his own mouth, and apply them to our agitation. We are prepared to say with him that protest against injustice is the only way of keeping the soul undefiled by injustice. We are prepared to say with him that it is right to meet oppression by making constant resistance to it. That is what we are doing. We are fighting against the Government for the good of our own souls, and for the improvement of the souls of the men. We are fighting also for a practical object; we are fighting to defeat the Government, and to wrest the vote from them. Now, everybody knows that we cannot get the vote without bringing pressure to bear upon the Government. You cannot get anything done without bringing pressure to bear upon the Government, and when you are saying that you are not saying anything against the character of any particular Government; you are simply stating a fact. We are bringing pressure to bear upon the Government, and when we do that we are not doing anything more, or other than men politicians do; the sole difference is that men politicians have got a constitutional means of bringing pressure to bear—they have got the vote. Now, we have not any constitutional means of achieving our end. I know some people try to persuade us that we have. They say that we ought to abandon the militant methods, and use constitutional methods instead. Well, that is just what we are only too anxious to do, and what we shall do when the vote is ours. But they will not give us the vote, which is the sole constitutional weapon, and then they try to tantalise us by saying, "Use the vote," and then snatch it away. It is just like a schoolboy's trick, that. "Would not you like it?" and then snatch it away. Well, we are grown up, and we understand business, and we understand politics, too. We say that if you won't give us a constitutional means, we will use an unconstitutional means.

### **The Bye-Election Policy.**

What means do we use? What kind of unconstitutional methods do we employ? Well, it sounds rather Irish to say that one of our unconstitutional means is a very constitutional one. It consists in asking men for the kind loan of their vote; that is to say, that at every bye-election we urge the electors to help us by voting against the Government. Is our opposition to the Government effective? Do we turn votes? Well, ask that question of any Liberal candidate. Why, in the first place, the poor man cannot even get an audience! The electors would rather listen to us, because, you see, our question is a living one. The people want to hear about votes for women. They are rather tired of the dry-as-dust political speeches that the ordinary politicians offer to them. They are much more



interested in this "side issue," as politicians are fond of calling the votes for women question. A side issue in a politician's mouth means, you know, a question that he prefers the electors not to take any notice of, and when, as is the case nowadays, it is said on the defeat of a Liberal candidate, that side issues had much to do with that defeat, you may know that "votes for women" has been the real issue of the election! You must have noticed, too, frequent denunciations by Liberal candidates and their supporters of the "outside organisations" which enter the field at each bye-election in opposition to the Government, and one Member of the Government, Lord Crewe, has said that their activity must be suppressed by law. I can assure them that they will find it impossible to prevent the Women's Social and Political Union, which is the most important and active of these "outside organisations," from putting a finger in the pie at election times. We will allow no Act of Parliament to restrain us from making our appeal to a higher power than the Government themselves. We cannot get justice from the Government—the inferior court; we will appeal, even if it means imprisonment, against their decision, to a higher court, to the electors. Yes, if the present Government—who, after all, are the servants of the people—if they deny us justice, we shall, whatever repressive measures may be used against us, call for the support of the men who have votes. But we are interested and encouraged by the proposal in question. We know perfectly well that the outside organisation which they fear the most, that they fear more than all the others put together, is the Women's Social and Political Union. As yet they do not openly admit it. Ask a Liberal Member of Parliament whether we prevent the election of Liberal candidates. He will say, "Oh, no; nonsense. These women have no influence at all on the elections." Well, I ask you, why not? These Members of Parliament think they have influence themselves. They speak in support of their friend, the Liberal candidate, at a bye-election, and they think they can turn votes. Well, I am sure that the women in our Union can turn votes if they can! We are as good speakers as the men. We know as much about politics. We are not so vain as to suppose that it is by our own ability; we know it is by the greatness of our cause that we win our way in this country. It is the strength rather than the manner of our appeal that turns votes against the Government. Now, we have got a good cause, while the Liberal Party have a bad cause. So, of course, we defeat the Government at bye-elections. I have not time to lay before you all the evidence on this point, but I will give you the evidence of a Liberal Member of Parliament. Sir Charles Maclaren has publicly stated that we women are responsible for the Government defeats which have been attributed to the work of the Tariff Reformers. Well, now, let us convince our Liberal friends that it is no good trying

to hide their heads in the sand. If we are influencing the electorate, we are influencing it, and no amount of denying that fact will make any difference. Liberals are apt to refuse to see a thing until it hits them in the eye. They did not believe there was a Labour Party until thirty Labour Members walked into the House of Commons. And they are now trying to believe that there is no women's movement. But this, like other illusions, will disappear as they find it more and more impossible to get elected to the House of Commons, because the women are there, barring the door against them.

Well now, that is what the men do to help us: they vote against the Government because the Government deny us political justice. How have we gained the support of men? It is by the militant methods that we have done it. It used to be said that we were alienating the country; but it is now recognised that by the new methods we have roused a feeling of chivalry in the electors and have stirred them to help us. It is quite true that when we began the militant campaign people did not understand, but now the people are with us—with us in our demand and with us in what we do to press it forward. And as we rise in the public esteem, the Government and their supporters fall. Knowing that we have the people with us, we are prepared to look our enemy straight in the face, and to fight him with more skill and more vigour and more enthusiasm than ever. The sight of women fighting for their rights, disregarding risks, hardships, penalties, has fired the imagination, touched the hearts of the people, and finally won them over to our cause. Their love of fair play, their admiration of a good fighting spirit, their desire to see the right triumph, are making them stand for us and against the Government. We have not alienated the people, we have won them by the militant methods.

### **Protests at Cabinet Ministers' Meetings.**

Apart from the opposition to the Government at bye-elections, we have two other means of attack. First, there are protests at Cabinet Ministers' meetings, and most useful and effective those protests are. This same method was adopted by men before they got the vote. In addition, they went in for storming the platform, and sending Cabinet Ministers flying in danger of their lives. We have a little more mercy for the enemy, but we adopt the same tactics in a modified form. We make no apology for doing this; we know it to be both necessary and right. Cabinet Ministers complain of being thus treated, but let them give women the vote. To deny us justice and whine at the consequent punishment is undignified and poor-spirited. Dr. Cooper, a Liberal Member of the present Parliament, tells us that, "Before the Reform Bill was carried, not a single opponent of Men's Suffrage



could get in a word at a public meeting." We ourselves are not afraid of interruptions. We go out into the market-place and we speak to our countrymen and women. We are not afraid of them; we are not afraid of their opposition. We meet it fairly. We win them over by argument. Why do not Cabinet Ministers try that method? If they were prepared with an answer to our question, "Will you give women the vote?" all would be well. But because they will not give that answer they fear our question. They are not prepared to do us justice, and, you know, the knowledge that he is in the wrong makes anybody a coward. They can win us over by giving us the vote. And, my friends, the straits to which they are reduced are really extraordinary. They dare not face a public meeting, so their meetings are packed. In fact, in the matter of packed meetings the Liberal Party have broken the record. They can never more abuse the Tory Party; Tories have never gone to such lengths in order to escape their political opponents. Not long ago we protested at a Peace meeting addressed by a member of the Government. From this, as from other Cabinet Ministers' meetings, our members were violently ejected. The question of peace is of vital interest to women; and the question of national defence is of vital interest to us. Do we escape scot-free if the country is invaded? The questions discussed at that meeting were women's questions; and before very long we women must have the vote and take our part in deciding these great issues. When we see possible war and bloodshed ahead, do not you think that, as public-spirited human beings, we ought to fight for the vote as we have never fought for it before? Well, we went to the Peace meeting—and we did not find that the principles of peace were carried into practice. Never mind, we do not complain of that. Unlike the Prime Minister, we do not want artificial protection. We are ready to face the hardships of political life, while these frail men, the members of the Liberal Government, cannot bear to hear a word of opposition to them.

Members of the Union lately attended a Liberal meeting at Swansea. Some of us have been accused of inciting to violence. Well, we will not say more of that just now, but I want you to notice this—that Liberal Cabinet Ministers have set us a very bad example. At our meetings, when a man interrupts—as he very often does—you do not hear us say to the stewards: "He must be ruthlessly flung out." No; we leave that to Mr. Lloyd George. But I want to point out to you that when a man in his position uses such words, it is taken by the ordinary unthinking hooligan to mean that he can do what he likes to the suffragettes. If the Government had not used force against us, if they had not had us arrested and imprisoned, if they had not insulted us by charging us with being hirelings, by telling stewards to throw us out, we should not have been in the daily physical danger that

some of our women are in. We have been brought up to believe—some of us—that men's desire was to protect women from the hurly-burly and dangers of life; and yet, although Members of the present Government know that by denying us the vote and applying methods of coercion to us, they are placing us in danger of life and limb every day that we live, they continue to refuse our demand. In their own defence, however, they do not hesitate to collect 6,000 policemen, leaving the rest of London at the mercy of robbers and thieves.

My friends, before I leave this question of protesting at meetings, I will tell you why we do it. We do it, in the first place, to draw attention to our grievance and to educate the public. Cabinet Ministers will not do this for us—they shirk this question—we have got to do it for ourselves. In the second place, we know it to be an excellent way of harassing Cabinet Ministers. It is nothing to us to be interrupted, but to them it is a very serious matter. You see, they have not the sense of humour that we have got, and that means that they have no sense of proportion. Therefore Cabinet Ministers think their own speeches of vast importance. They like to deliver those speeches to a unanimous and enthusiastic audience, and as they cannot secure such an audience at an ordinary public meeting, they try to secure it by packing their meetings with partisans. They are bent on getting this unanimous support, even if it is a little artificial in its character. On the day following their meeting they like to read in the press verbatim accounts of what they said, and it makes them feel a bit sore when they find there is more in the newspapers about what the women have said than about what they have said themselves. When they get to the House of Commons—well, you know what men are about ridicule; they cannot bear it. They are very much like a pack of schoolboys in the House of Commons, you know; they tease each other so. Then they cannot go to the club or anywhere without receiving humorous condolences on account of the trouble they have had with the suffragettes. I need not say more. Everybody who knows what kind of persons these politicians are will realise what a very good idea it is to go and make protests at their meetings.

### Deputations to the House of Commons.

Next we must consider the deputations to the House of Commons. Recently we approached the House supported by thousands of the citizens of London. If men took this means of influencing Parliament it would be wrong, and I will tell you why—because they have representatives sitting in the House of Commons. It is right for us to do it; it is our duty to do it. It would be wrong for us not to do it, because we have nobody to represent us inside the House. If the House of Commons had



any sense of logic, they would understand this point. The whole world, apart from them, understands it; and I do not—I will tell you between ourselves—I do not despair of succeeding, by constant repetition of an obvious fact, of driving that fact inside the minds of Members of Parliament. There have been leading articles in the newspapers condemning our recent action. Nobody else except the writers of those articles (perhaps not even they) has this opinion. As a matter of fact, those leading articles are most encouraging—among the best things that we have had yet. Why, they are the next best thing to getting the vote! When we are told that we are a nuisance, that we are upsetting London, that we ought to be put down with a strong hand—well, we are not far from victory.

Before I close, I want very briefly to speak of the example that stands before us in pursuing these militant methods. Let us begin with Magna Carta. It is a long time to go back, but still in Magna Carta we have the title-deeds of British liberty. Magna Carta was secured because of the fear that the people succeeded in implanting in the mind of King John. We must make Mr. Asquith as much afraid of us as King John was of the Barons. I need not go through all the other struggles waged in this country for constitutional liberty, but I would remind you that the people who fought as we are fighting are now regarded as the saviours of this country. It may be we shall never retrieve our reputation—at least, the reputation that people pretend we have got—it may be that history will judge us as being not altogether ladylike, but, my friends, we shall have won the vote, and that is what we are fighting for.

The Reform Bills—how were they obtained? Were they obtained by milk-and-water methods? Were they obtained by coaxing the Government, by trying to win their sympathy? No. They were got by hard fighting, and they could have been got in no other way.

Listen to what John Bright said. If we who called on the public to help, as on October 13th, incited others to commit an unlawful act,\* so did John Bright. He said: "If you fill the streets, from Charing Cross to the venerable Abbey, with men seeking a Reform Bill, you will get justice." Why were no proceedings taken

\* The famous handbill calling on the public to help the Suffragettes to rush the House of Commons on October 13, formed the subject of the trial at Bow Street, as a result of which Mrs. Pankhurst, Christabel Pankhurst and Mrs. Drummond were sent to prison. The present speech was delivered during an adjournment in the hearing of this case. (See "The Trial of the Suffragette Leaders." The Woman's Press, 1d.)

against him? Well, because there was not then such a ridiculous Government in power as now. They gave men the vote instead.

Some forty years ago there were Fenian outrages in Manchester, and the blowing up of Clerkenwell Gaol. What did those two terrible events prompt Mr. Gladstone to say? He said that they had drawn the attention of England to the fact that there were grievances in Ireland. What did those two events prompt him to do? He disestablished the Irish Church! How anybody after that can say that militant methods are not effectual, I do not know. Remember, what did Mr. Chamberlain say just before the passing of the County Franchise Bill in 1884? He said that if it was not carried he would march a hundred thousand men from Birmingham to London to get the vote or know the reason why. I do not know why the Liberal Government then in power did not take proceedings against Mr. Chamberlain. He incited to riot—why did not he get six months? His action was discussed in the House of Commons, and even there they held him innocent. They refused to pass a vote of censure upon him, and yet we, who have spoken far less violently, we stood in the dock yesterday—I do not know where we shall be this time next week.

Let me quote what Mr. Gladstone said on the subject of political revolt. I think these words should be written on the mind and heart of every member of the House of Commons, and, above all, every member of the Liberal Government. He said, in defence of Mr. Chamberlain's threats and words of incitement to violence: "I am sorry to say that if no instructions had ever been addressed in political crises to the people of this country except to remember to hate violence, love order, and exercise patience, the liberties of this country would never have been attained." He spoke a great truth, he expounded a great law. Friends, if we are found guilty by the law of this land, we shall hold ourselves to be innocent by a higher law.

There is a thing within the memory of the youngest here, a battle for the franchise to which I must draw your attention now. The Uitlanders in South Africa found they could not wait five years to get the vote (though women wait a lifetime, and do not get it, and are by some condemned for protesting against so great a wrong). Yet, in order to satisfy the impatience of these men, you plunged this country into war, you sacrificed thousands of lives, and now you say that we must not take a crowd of people to Westminster to get the enfranchisement of women. Turkey has won the constitutional rights of which we are still deprived, and the Liberal Government is loud in its congratulation. Mr. Asquith is actually to be heard rejoicing at this triumph of democracy. Oh, hypocrisy beyond belief! The very Prime



Minister who refuses to grant even the elementary rights of citizenship to his own countrywomen—who says, in answer to their call for justice, "Go to prison," who sees them look death in the face many a time, that Prime Minister who behaves in this wise—has the effrontery to say he approves of the revolution in Turkey. Consider, too, the action of two other Cabinet Ministers. One\* of them taunts women with their presumed weakness. He says: "Do you think to succeed with a policy of pin-pricks? Why not use weapons that hurt?" Is not that inciting to violence? And yet he has never yet stood in the dock. But, my friends, he and his colleagues will be branded by public opinion in the future as wholly guilty.

Then there is Mr. Herbert Gladstone, who in the House of Commons admits that argument alone is not enough to move the House of Commons. He says to the women who are hanging on his words, who are waiting for what he, on behalf of the Government, has to say upon this question—to them he says:—You have won the victory of argument, but it is not by that that you can succeed. Something more is needed. It is by *force majeure* that Governments are moved to action. And when we act upon his words, when we fight for our vote, as he has counselled us, he, as head of the police, proceeds against us, and tries to get us imprisoned, so that for a season we may be out of his way.

But we are going on with this battle. It may be six months' imprisonment for us this time; it may be more hereafter. But did you ever know a great movement for human freedom that could be crushed by repression and coercion? No. The more they repress us, the more heavily they punish us, the more they fire our indignation, the more determined they make us to get the vote for women, if it costs us life itself.

\* Mr. Haldane.

THIRD EDITION

# THE FAITH THAT IS IN US.

BY



[Bassano.]

Emmeline Pethick Lawrence.

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VOTES FOR WOMEN.  
**National Women's Social  
and Political Union.**

Offices: 4, Clement's Inn, Strand, London, W.C.  
Telegraphic Address: WOSPOLU, LONDON. Telephone Holborn 2724 (three lines).

COMMITTEE:

Mrs. PANKHURST (Founder) } *Hon. Secretaries.*  
Mrs. TUKE }  
Mrs. PETHICK LAWRENCE, *Hon. Treasurer.*  
Miss CHRISTABEL PANKHURST, LL.B., *Organising Secretary.*  
Mrs. WOLSTENHOLME ELMY. Miss MARY GAWTHORPE.  
Miss ANNIE KENNEY. Miss ELIZABETH ROBINS.  
Miss MARY NEAL.

*Bankers:* Messrs. BARCLAY AND CO., 19, Fleet Street, E.C.

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The Women's Social and Political Union are NOT asking for a vote for every woman, but simply that sex shall cease to be a disqualification for the franchise.

At present men who pay rates and taxes, who are owners, occupiers, lodgers, or have the service or university franchise, possess the Parliamentary vote. The Women's Social and Political Union claim that women who fulfil the same conditions shall also enjoy the franchise. It is estimated that when this claim has been conceded about a million-and-a-quarter women will possess the vote, in addition to the seven-and-a-half million men who are at present enfranchised.

The Women's Social and Political Union claim that a simple measure, giving the vote to women on these terms, shall be passed immediately.

**CONSTITUTION.**

**Objects.**—To secure for Women the Parliamentary Vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

**Methods.**—The objects of the Union shall be promoted by—

1. Action entirely independent of all political parties.
2. Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the franchise is granted.
3. Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government candidate and independently of all other candidates.
4. Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
5. The organising of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
6. Education of public opinion by all the usual methods such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence and deputations to public representatives.

**Membership.**—Women of all shades of political opinion who approve the objects and methods of the Union, and who are prepared to act independently of party, are eligible for membership. It must be clearly understood that no member of the Union shall support the candidate of any political party in Parliamentary elections until Women have obtained the Parliamentary Vote. The entrance fee is One Shilling.

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THE FAITH THAT  
IS IN US.

BY

MRS. PETHICK LAWRENCE.



# The Faith that is in us.

BY

**MRS. PETHICK LAWRENCE.**

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*(A Verbatim Report of a Speech delivered at the Aldwych Theatre.)*

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It may be that there are many here for the first time who have been attracted perhaps by mere curiosity, perhaps by some deeper interest, because action or drama stirs a chord even in people who have never thought about a question like this at all. The fact that women go to prison, the fact that when they come out other women think it worth their while to prepare such a welcome for them as my fellow-members of the Women's Social and Political Union have given me, makes people think, makes them ask questions, and when they hear that there is to be a public meeting, they say to themselves, "I think I will go. I will see what those women have got to say for themselves. I will see if they can tell me anything that can explain this extraordinary action, if I can find out what it is that makes women, not in twos



and threes, but in their hundreds, endure a long term of imprisonment."

### Cheap Martyrdom.

Now, did I hear somebody say in their hearts or under their breath, "Cheap martyrdom!"? That is what critics say sometimes, you know, that is how they explain it—"cheap martyrdom." Well, now, friends, let us look at this phrase. *Martyrdom*. I can assure you that the members of the Women's Social and Political Union have not given that name "Martyr" to themselves. We could never consider ourselves worthy of such a name as that! Our enemies have put this name upon us; we esteem it an honour—an honour of which we are not worthy. It is always our enemies who give us the best things, it is our enemies who have decided that we shall stand in the same list—along with Joan of Arc, who to-morrow is to be beatified by a great concourse of people in Rome; along with all the splendid, all the great, all those people who have been in advance of their time and have had to suffer for their convictions. They have put the right adjective to the word "Martyrdom" when they prefix the word "cheap." *Cheap!* A thing is cheap not because of its cost, but in relation to that which it is to purchase. If you buy a thing that is rubbish for a penny it is dear at the price. But the man who found the pearl of great price, when he went and sold everything that he had in order that he might buy it, thought it cheap. And so our martyrdom, friends, is cheap. Two months', three months', a year's imprisonment, two years', three years' imprisonment, if necessary—what would it be to buy that which we are going to achieve by it? Not the Vote only, mind you! Not the Vote only, but what the Vote means—the moral, the mental, economic, the spiritual enfranchisement of Womanhood; the release of woman, the repairing, the rebuilding of that great temple of womanhood, which has been so ruined and so defaced. Is not what they say true? *Cheap martyrdom!* Yes, it is cheap martyrdom.

Now, what is the good of going to prison? It would take me a very long time to explain the whole of the good, but one good in going to prison is that it teaches those who go there very much. It takes these things that we hear about—commonplace axioms, truths that we have heard since we have been children—and it burns them into us as living realities. Have you ever seen what they do with clay when they want to fashion the vessels? First of all, they mould the clay vessel. A touch will spoil it, a fall would ruin it. It is not ready for use. What do they do with it? They take it and they put it in the fire—into the oven—and when it comes out of the oven you have the perfect thing, finished and

ready for use. Friends, just what the oven is to the clay, that Holloway Prison is to the Suffragettes!

Let me give you an illustration. You have heard, until you are tired of it, until the phrase conveys no meaning to you, this principle enunciated: "Taxation and representation shall go together." Well, yes, you accept that. I have a birthday-book that was got out for a church bazaar. Mr. Asquith was asked to write his favourite quotation, with his signature. What is Mr. Asquith's favourite quotation? I was very interested to see it. "Taxation without representation is tyranny"! (Laughter.) I am very glad to hear that is Mr. Asquith's favourite quotation; but, you see, he is like a great many other people. What he thinks he believes, he denies by the action of his life.

What did the great Gladstone, whom Liberals believe in, and follow, and look up to, say on the subject? He said that taxation without representation is "legalised robbery." That was his opinion, and yet, after all these years, the Liberal Party, that profess to believe in him, continue to go on robbing women because they can do it legally. They go on robbing women, and if we protest about it they throw us into prison.

### In Prison for Non-Payment of Rates.\*

Let me show you how this Liberal principle was burnt into me in prison. One day I was asked if I wanted to go to the service in one of the wards. I was not allowed at that time to go to chapel, because I was in hospital. The chaplain called an old woman up to him, right in front of me. I had noticed this old woman; I was struck by her face. He called her to him, and the conversation I could not help overhearing.

"What is your name?" She told him.

"What is your age?"—"Seventy-six."

"Are you married or single?"—"Single, sir."

"What are you in prison for?"—"Debt, sir."

"Have you ever been in prison before?"—"No, sir."

"How much is it?"—"£3 16s."

"Rates, of course?"—"Yes, sir."

\* The Tax Commissioners have power to commit to prison any person refusing or neglecting to pay his taxes when on his premises there are not sufficient goods on which to levy distress for this amount. With regard to rates, a magistrate may make an order for payment of rates. If this order is not carried out, and it is held that the defaulter has the means to pay the amount ordered to be paid, and has neglected or refused, the magistrate has power to commit a defaulter to prison for a term not exceeding six weeks.



"How did it happen?"—"I keep a tenement lodging-house. It has been a very bad winter for my lodgers, and they were not able to pay me."

This woman was good enough to pay rates—this old woman of seventy-six—and to go to prison when she could not meet the charge! And yet she was not accounted fit to exercise a vote. I saw her many times after that, with her wrinkled old face, sitting opposite to me, looking so puzzled, so patient, so humiliated. One day the chaplain came in, and she did not at once stand up, and I saw a young wardress—not roughly, not cruelly, but officially (there is a great difference, you know; I do not want to say one unkind word of anybody in Holloway Prison)—I saw that young wardress come up to that old woman and catch hold of her shoulder, and drag her up to her feet; and I saw the colour come over the old woman's face, I saw the tears fill her eyes, she did not know where to look. Never in prison till she reached the age of seventy-six, and then because she could not pay £3 16s. for her rates! Now do you see what I mean by saying that what you see in prison burns a thing into you? That is it all along the line. Women are held responsible, women must fulfil the duties of citizenship, women must pay, women must be punished, but when it comes to exercising those rights and privileges which are supposed to go along with responsibility, then—well, these privileges don't apply to women. Then the difference comes in; then we hear about this sex bar! No sex bar when it is a case of the tax-collector. No sex bar when it is the police-officer who comes with the summons to the police-court. Only the sex bar when there is a man to be returned to Parliament to represent the taxpayers and the ratepayers of the country.

### Woman's Place is the Home.

I will tell you another sentiment of which we women have often felt the keen irony. Our opponents say, "Woman's place is the home." I shall not be able to tell you what I felt the first time I heard the cry of a little baby in Holloway Prison. I often heard that cry, and I used to look through the windows on the passage, and see the women at exercise. Among them was a woman carrying her little baby round and round the yard. Woman's place is the home, but if she breaks the law she is taken from her home and sent to prison. Who talks, then, about her place being in the home? She can leave her home if she *breaks* the law, but she is not to leave her home to *make* the law. And it is not only women who break the law who have to leave their homes. There are women who have to leave their homes to go out to earn wages

because they have people dependent upon them. How about that? A woman who is a Suffragette, a member of another League, told me in prison (this was her third imprisonment), that at one time a nail from the boots that we have to wear pierced her foot and set up blood-poisoning, and the authorities, finding that they were going to have trouble, turned her out of prison. She was feeling very ill and very bewildered, there was nobody there to help her, for she had been turned out quite suddenly. And a young girl came along, and said: "Can I help you? Are you in trouble?" My friend told her what had happened, and she said, "I saw you come out of there. It is a dreadful place, isn't it?"

"How do you know?"

"Oh! I have been there."

"You! What did you go there for?"

"Stealing."

"Stealing! But you are not a thief." She looked the girl up and down; she could not believe her ears.

The girl said: "Well, I want to ask you what *you* would do. My husband deserted me, and left me with a little baby to look after, and my mother, who is old and sick, is absolutely dependent upon me. I go out to work; I only get 8s. a week, and sometimes I do not get that. What would *you* do if you had a little baby and a mother to provide for, and if you could not get work? Would you go on the streets, or would you steal?"

"Steal!" That is what my friend said. She looked the girl straight in the eyes, and she said, "I would steal; I would never go on the streets!"

The girl said to her: "Yes; and that is what I did."

What do I hear people say? "She could go to the workhouse." "Women's place is the home." And if no home is provided for them they can go to the workhouse. That is what they are fit for, and I can imagine the man who says it one who, like the man we read of in the paper this morning, makes a corner in wheat, and steals the food of the people, or one who in business would not hesitate for a moment to do a shady thing or a questionable thing, if it were within the limit of the law, in order that he may get an advantage, in order that he may make and amass a greater fortune than he has already.

### Votes and Wages.

Yes, this question stares us in the face—the wages that our women workers are being paid. Friends, do you know how it works out? Do you know that, taking the high wages that women earn as teachers, as inspectors, or in various higher grades



of work, the average wage of women in this country is 7s. a week? Now what do our opponents say? They say: "What has the vote got to do with that?" They say that one of the most misleading things we assert is that here is any connection between the wages of women and the Vote. How carelessly they speak—how thoughtlessly!

Let us take the most obvious illustration. Who is the greatest employer of labour in the whole country? The Government. Does the Government employ women? Yes, thousands of women. Does it pay them, for the same work, what it pays men? No. What did Mr. Lloyd George say in the Albert Hall last December? He said that if women had the vote it would be absolutely impossible for the Government to maintain a double standard of wages. Here is an admission from a member of a hostile Liberal Cabinet, and yet, in the face of such a testimony, people say that the Vote has nothing to do with women's wages. Take, for instance, the wardresses in prison. The chaplain came up to me one day and said: "I have heard a good deal about you, Mrs. Lawrence. You have started holiday homes for young girls?" "Yes," I said. "Well," he said, "I wish you would start a holiday hotel for wardresses. You see they work very hard. They work twelve hours a day." (They talk about an eight hours' day for miners, but you don't hear about an eight hours' day for the women employed by the Government.) "Yes," I said, "I know they do." He said, "They very often break down, and they haven't enough money to go away for a holiday." I looked at him, surprised. To think that a Government servant should come to me—a voteless woman—and suggest that I should supply a deficiency because they did not pay their women servants enough! I thought to myself, what in the world will they ask women for next? I daresay you will find Liberal Members of Parliament thinking it was quite the right thing. It is no worse than expecting to have women canvassers doing all the dirty work to put men into Parliament, who, when they get into Parliament, not only withhold women's rights, but openly insult them with degrading taunts. Well, friends, the Government does not give equal pay for equal work, and Mr. Lloyd George has admitted—we need not go any further—that such a thing could not happen if women had the vote.

Then, don't you see that the Government sets the standard for the rest of the country? The Government is supposed to be the model employer. Last year there was a Co-operative Congress held in Lancashire and the question of the minimum wage was being discussed. Now a minimum wage is calculated upon the lowest level upon which a human being can actually exist, and keep himself in complete life—shelter, food, warmth—just the

absolute necessities of existence. And someone in that Congress got up and asked whether the minimum wage should be the same for women as for men. The chairman ruled the discussion of that question out of order by saying that the Government paid its men and women on a different scale, so, of course, the minimum wage would be different.

### An Amusing Instance.

I read in the papers of a very amusing little instance that happened the other day, showing how the law has fixed the value of the women of this country. Three people came to give evidence—a man, a woman, and a boy. When the woman got out 2s. 6d. was given her for her fee. She found that the boy was paid 5s., and the man 7s. (Shame.) So she went back into the witness-box. (Women don't take these things as they used to do, you know—our movement is responsible for that.) She went back into the witness-box, and she asked why she had been given 2s. 6d. Now the magistrate tried exactly the same tactics that have been used from time immemorial against women demanding their rights. He tried to browbeat her, he tried to make her give in by saying all kinds of insulting, humiliating things. He tried to cover her with shame. The day has gone by for women to be beaten by ridicule or rudeness. She stood her ground, and at last she brought him one step further. "Well," he said, "as you are not a married woman I will give you 5s. Of course, if you were a married woman you would not have been able to make good your claim to more than 2s. 6d." I do not know why a married woman is supposed to be of less value than an unmarried woman! But the woman would have none of it. She said: "I don't want your 5s. It is not the money I care for, it is the justice; and if you won't give me a man's fee—my time is as valuable as that man's who has given evidence—you may keep your 5s.; I want none of it." So, you see, it has been determined by the law of the land where a woman stands. That is how she is valued by her nation. Now, friends, do you not think it is time that women had the Vote, in order to protest against this sort of thing?

But it is not only woman's status as regards wages—that is important enough; there are things perhaps even more important. I want to tell you something I heard the other day. A friend of mine, who lives out in Epping Forest, sent her little girl up to a High School in London. She travelled with two other little girls. These young girls found themselves followed by the same man day after day, who got into the carriage with them.



One day this man committed an act in their presence which is criminal. The children had the common-sense and the judgment, when they got to Liverpool Street, to go straight to the station-master and to tell him what had happened. The station-master told them to say nothing about it, to go to school, and to come back and take the same train home, and that it would be all right. They came back, they took the same train they always did. The man was waiting for them on the platform. He followed them, and he got into their carriage, and another man followed them, and he got into the carriage. The last man was a detective. The man was arrested and eventually sent to prison. The three children went up to the court to give their evidence, and each little girl went with her mother. When they came into the witness-box to be cross-examined, the *mothers were cleared out of the court*. They were not allowed—they, the natural protectors of these children—to remain in the court, and those children were questioned and cross-examined by men in the presence of men only.

The law as it affects women is a jumble! The woman is held responsible in many matters, in others she is treated as an irresponsible being. The law is very hard on her if she neglects her child; if she fails to do her duty, she has to go to prison, and very often for longer than the father, who is the only legal parent. In a police-court, only a little time ago, a magistrate gave an exemption order to a woman for vaccination. The clerk objected, but the magistrate was a man who had more common-sense than knowledge of the law. He said, "Pooh, pooh; nonsense! Of course, the woman is the parent of her child." And the authorities took the trouble to reverse the magistrate's decision; the husband had to lose a day's work and go up to the court because, forsooth, a mother is not the parent of her own child in the eyes of the law of this land!

Friends, I do not want to dwell upon this side of things. I do not want to dwell upon the grievances of women. It is inevitable that there should be grievances. We know perfectly well that the rights of the unrepresented cannot be understood, cannot be properly dealt with. I think if the women had had to make all the laws for the country the men might have been in the same plight as we are. We are all very human. I have told you these things because we are challenged to give these facts. I want to tell you this—that if there were no grievances to be redressed, if there were no hardships under which women specially suffered, if there were no bad wages and no trouble at all, it would not make the least bit of difference to our demand. Our demand rests upon the fundamental assumption that our enemies are so fond of quoting—you cannot make a man into a woman, or a woman into

a man. They are different, they have got a different point of view, they have got a different work to do in the world. Very well; that is exactly the reason why they should both be represented. Don't you see that? It is because women are different, it is because they are womanly, it is because women are women and men are men that we must have different representation.

You know, friends, some people are under the delusion that this movement is an anti-man movement that is making for severance between men and women. I tell you that the very contrary is the truth. The law of union between men and women is crying out for vindication. Men and women must live together, they must work out their future together. In the beginning, in the old stages of civilisation, men and women together made the home. They together carved out those rough steps by which civilisation has ascended higher and higher. The old law that prevailed in the simpler society must prevail in the more complex civilisation. Men cannot go out into other kingdoms and leave the women behind. Unless they go together no extension of freedom or life that they win can be assured to their children. The progress of the human race depends upon their being united, not separated as they are to-day.

Now I want to deal with one more critic. He is generally either a Liberal Member of Parliament or the candidate who wants to be one. It is the particular attitude of a man who wants to get into Parliament, or wants to stay there. This is what he says: "Oh, yes, of course, I believe that women ought to have the vote. Certainly. But I consider it a subject of very little importance compared with the questions that are now pressing for solution. What, after all, is the vote—a very poor thing—many men don't use their votes. The vote has not done what we hoped it would do; I do not think very much of the vote."

### The Vote in South Africa.

Now let us see what the nation thinks of the vote. A few years ago we spent millions of money, we sacrificed thousands of lives. What for? "Equal rights for all whites." Because in a country thousands of miles away an obstinate old man wanted to make the disqualification for the franchise for the Uitlanders last longer, wanted to keep English settlers on a longer probation than we in this country thought either right or fair or just. So in order to get votes for men, we shed blood; we and they committed all kinds of violence; we and they spent millions of treasure. Perhaps some of you will say that was not the real reason. Well, that was the



ostensible reason, and you can't take in a nation with an ostensible reason that carries no conviction. That was the ostensible reason—"We seek no goldfields, no territory; all we want is equal justice for all whites." A man of very great authority said that, and the country did not hesitate to make that sacrifice. Again, during the course of that great war some of our fellow-citizens took up arms against the Crown. Now, that, from the point of view of the Government in power, was the most heinous, the most unforgivable sin. From the Government point of view these men had to be punished, and what did the Government decide was the adequate punishment for this disloyalty? They felt that five years' disfranchisement was a sufficient punishment for the rebels in order to mark their sense of the horror of their crime. And yet, friends, we women, we are to be disfranchised all our lives, and I do not know what crime we have committed, except that we were born women.

When I was in prison I read the Blue Book that has just been published on the Poor-Law Commission, and I find there that one thing that is dealt with very drastically by the majority and by the minority is this question of disfranchisement for those who seek relief. We read that this disability prevents those men who ought to have medical assistance, who really ought to lay their case before the Poor Law, from doing so. They are unwilling to pay the price. It is the "stigma and humiliation of political disability" that bars a man from going to the relieving officer to get relief when he or his wife or little children are ill. That is how they talk about the vote when it is a case of men.

We are told that the Government has no time to bring in a Votes for Women Bill. But they have time to bring in an Electoral Bill for London, which, we hear, is coming on next week, to deal with votes for men. Now is it not time we saw through this policy? Is it not time we said to Members of Parliament, "Be honest, talk about the vote when it is a case for women as you talk about the vote when it is a case for men. talk about the 'penalisation' of women, talk about 'the humiliation and the stigma' when women are shut out from the vote, talk as you do when men are shut out from it"?

### The Militant Tactics.

Then we come to the very last objection. A great many people say, "Oh, yes, we agree with you; but where you go wrong, where we do not agree with you is in your militant tactics." Now, friends, I simply cannot understand such an attitude as that. I find it easier to understand the attitude of the man or the woman

who says that he or she does not believe in the vote than to understand the attitude of those who say that they believe in it, but that those who are prepared to fight for their convictions are wrong. Perhaps I should understand that attitude if the objectors were against all forms of militant action, if they did not believe in war, if they believed that under no circumstances was it right for soldiers to defend their country, under no circumstances was it right to do violence, either by way of justice or retribution. Then their attitude would be logical; but why they believe that it is right for soldiers to fight for the defence of their country even though they do so at the cost of destruction and bloodshed, and yet believe it is wrong for us to fight for the defence of our freedom and dignity, although we in our warfare do no violence either to life or to property, I cannot understand.

Sometimes they say, "Oh, but it is all so sordid. You are not fighting with the Government, you are just fighting with the police." But don't you see that all war is like that? When our soldiers are sent to fight, they do not fight with the kings, the rulers; they fight with the common soldiers. When we went out to fight those people in South Africa, we fought with peasants, we fought with farm hands, and labourers. War is not dignified, war is not a pageant, war is not pleasant. When you put on your new uniform, when you ride in all your splendour, why then you are having a field day; that is what we had to-day in our procession. But when soldiers go forth to fight, do you think they are not dirty and muddy and begrimed? Do you think that they are fit to have their photographs taken? War is horrible—it is dirty, it is squalid, it is miserable, and it is only dignified because there is a great ideal behind it. Well, that is the case with our war. The police are the soldiers sent out to oppose women. We have to meet them when we go forth on a deputation to the Prime Minister to lay before him the claim of women taxpayers to representation. They are sent by those behind, who are the real enemy. We have to maintain our right to petition against injustice, against the coercion put in force against us to turn us back. We are there because we have a duty to perform, just like the soldiers, who fight for their nation and honour.

The people who criticise our militant action, are they absolutely ignorant of all history? Don't they know that every great political reform and every great enfranchisement of the people has depended for its success upon its fighting policy? Have they never read of the days of King John, when the Barons came to the king and at the point of the sword forced him to put his signature to Magna Charta? Do they not know that in 1832 when the great Reform Bill was passed, the reason given by the Government to the House of Commons for passing it, was that it



would be otherwise impossible to keep peace in this country? Have they never read of the patriot Garibaldi, who raised his country from the very ashes of the grave to be a living nation among the nations? Don't they remember how Mazzini preached three things—Education, Organisation, but, above all, Militant Agitation? And it is the same to-day. I do not say education ought not to have come first. It did. For forty years education has been going on—too long! Militant agitation ought to have come before. I will tell you when it ought to have come. It was quite right that this movement should confine itself to education at the beginning; it was right that it should have great meetings that it should organise great petitions, that it should do everything it could to make its principles known amongst the people, that it should go to individual Members of Parliament, that it should win the pledges of Members of Parliament to support a Bill in the House of Commons. That was quite right; but when, in 1884, these promises deliberately made, and pledges deliberately given, were deliberately broken; when the Suffragists who had trusted in the Government found themselves deliberately betrayed, then, in 1884, they ought, seeing that other things had failed, to have had resort to a fighting policy. They preferred to yield, they preferred to submit, and the agitation which was entrusted to the hands of those representatives died. I tell you this, friends, and I say it very seriously, the representatives of the women's movement in the year 1884, whether intentionally or unintentionally—I think unintentionally—betrayed the women's movement, were traitors to it. It is to them that we owe this battle that we have got to fight now. You understand—men understand it, and you women understand it—in politics it never does to admit that you have fired the last shot in your locker. If you give in, well then nobody is going to take any notice of you. The militant agitation has been too long delayed. Let us be thankful that we have found out the secret now of successful action.

But, friends, it is not only tactically right, it is not only the very best, in fact the *only* tactics, but if there was no chance of the militant agitation being successful, even then to fight would be morally right; it would be the only self-respecting, the only dignified, the only right course to take. I do not say for one moment that these tactics are justified by success; I do not take that line at all. I say, whether they were successful or whether they were not successful, I and the many women and men with me would rather stand and fight for our freedom—yes, and die for it—than we would bow our necks to consent to dishonour. I pity those poor souls who have so little sense of honour that they want life and peace at any price. Life without honour is not worth anything at all, and if we could not

fight for our honour, success or no success, then I say we are not fully evolved human beings. Do not make any mistake about it—the militant agitation is tactically right, but above and beyond and deeper than that it is morally right. Friends, those who have died fighting for freedom without success are the noblest names on our roll-call of history. What should we have done without them? Movements do not always succeed, not at the time. We have only to think of Joan of Arc again. How she was put to death as a criminal, and for many years the stigma of the criminal's execution was upon her and her family, and now to-day, the Church is making her a saint. She had to wait 400 years for her justification. Don't you see that if you are fighting for the right thing, and if you don't succeed, it is as when they plough back the harvest into the soil in order to enrich it for the harvests to come? It is those who fight in the present who enrich the future.

### We are the Reapers.

But we in this movement are not like that, for we are the reapers. I say that our tactics are not *justified* by success, yet I claim for them the most wonderful and unmistakable success that for many years has distinguished a movement. Why is that, friends? It is because the fulness of time has arrived, and every sign is here to show us that the fulness of time has arrived. We are not here to sow; we come as the reapers to gather the harvest, and this movement is the outcome of the thoughts that have been going on in the hearts of women for generation after generation, and are going on in the hearts of women to-day all the world over. That is why we see success. Who would have thought—I should never have thought for one moment four or five years ago—that the women of the upper and middle classes would lay aside their traditions, would lay aside those things which seemed their very life, would lay aside their luxuries, their comforts, would put behind them public opinion and reputation, and would go in that long procession through those gates of Holloway Gaol to experience the same life that is thought the necessary discipline for the criminals and for the outcasts of society.

This is indeed an amazing sign of the times. It means that a great force is at work, a force uncalculated and irresistible. Its effect cannot be stayed. The field of humanity is whitening again to harvest. But the reapers are few.

This movement calls to every woman to-day whose soul is alive. It calls for your service. It calls for your self. You are needed; urgently needed. Give your life to it and you shall find your life



a thing of undreamed-of significance and value. If you have been stirred to interest to-day—you who have hitherto remained untouched by this wonderful awakening—do not let another day go by, but throw in your lot with us now. Write at once to the Honorary Secretary, of 4, Clement's Inn, and ask her to send you more information about the movement. Ask her to send you a membership card. Enrol yourself in our ranks. Take part in the work, step in to relieve those who have been doing your business all the time when you were asleep to your responsibility. Come and help to arouse the electors at the by-elections. Enter with heart and soul into every scheme of our organisation for bringing this gospel of Votes for Women to the people.

Make up your mind that you will be found on the next deputation that goes to Mr. Asquith. Submit yourself to the result if the Prime Minister refuses to receive you and orders your arrest and imprisonment. Why should you refuse imprisonment as a test of your faith when hundreds of women have already accepted it? They have led the way. There are hundreds more in this hall who could follow. Let everyone ask herself, "Why not I?" What prevents you? Are you thinking of domestic ties? Do you then imagine that the women who have been in prison had no domestic ties? Are you thinking of your husband, your children, your mother, or others whose lives are bound up in yours? Do you think that the women who have gone to prison had no bonds of this kind? Do you think it was easier for them to break these bonds than it is for you?

There are very few things—there are some things, but very few things—that can serve as an excuse to keep you out of the battle now. The way has been made easy; the greatest part of the price has been paid. The least thing you can do is to come forward now and bear your part in the great work of emancipating the womanhood of your country.

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# Annie Kenney.



## Character Sketch

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Offices:—4, Clements Inn, Strand, London, W.C.

Telegraphic Address: WOSPOLU, LONDON. Telephone: Holborn 2724 (three lines)

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A. G. SAYERS, Chartered Accountant, 19, Hanover Square, W.

*Colours:* Purple, White and Green.

The Women's Social and Political Union are NOT asking for a vote for every woman, but simply that sex shall cease to be a disqualification for the franchise.

At present men who pay rates and taxes, who are owners, occupiers, lodgers, or have the service or university franchise possess the Parliamentary vote. The Women's Social and Political Union claim that women who fulfil the same conditions shall also enjoy the franchise.

It is estimated that when this claim has been conceded, about a million and a quarter of women will possess the vote, in addition to the seven and a half million men who are at present enfranchised.

The Women's Social and Political Union claim that a simple measure, giving the vote to women on these terms, shall be passed immediately.

**Constitution.**

**Objects.**—To secure for Women the Parliamentary Vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

**Methods.**—The objects of the Union shall be promoted by—

1. Action entirely independent of all political parties.
2. Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the franchise is granted.
3. Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government candidate and independently of all other candidates.
4. Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
- 5.—The organising of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
6. Education of public opinion by all the usual methods such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence and deputations to public representatives.

**Membership.**—Women of all shades of political opinion who approve the objects and methods of the Union, and who are prepared to act independently of party, are eligible for membership. It must be clearly understood that no member of the Union shall support the candidate of any political party in Parliamentary elections until Women have obtained the Parliamentary vote.

The Entrance Fee is One Shilling.

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**Character Sketch:**

**ANNIE KENNEY.**

“**S**OME thing above all others my mother impressed upon us—  
always to fight for the weak.”

That was what Miss Kenney said to me a few days ago, and in a flash I understood the pluck and determination of the sensitive woman who stood before me.

“Always to fight for the weak.” Aye, and in this Western Civilization of ours those who would fight for the weak must come right out into the open; they must be willing to expose their own person to many a hard blow, and many a cruel gibe; but they must turn neither to the right hand nor to the left from the course they have marked out for themselves.

Only must they be in earnest—in deadly earnest—and the gates of earth shall open to them as if by magic, because they have placed themselves in accord with the Divine forces of life to which victory in the end is ever assured.

But the way will ever be hard and rough, and in the battle there will be no quarter to be given or received.

It has been so all down the ages since before history was written; it has been so with the noble men and women of our own time.

Some have suffered the extreme penalty like John Brown, who resisted the curse of slavery to the death, and

Whose body lies a mouldering in the grave  
While we go marching on.

Others, no less heroic, like Lord Shaftesbury, lived out their full span, a mark for scorn and ridicule; for the weak are without words to give thanks, while those who are stung into action, which they would otherwise avoid, have no epithets too abusive to hurl at those who bear the brunt of the battle.



But there is no other way; the whole history of reform tells us that those who go forward to win new liberty for others must be prepared to suffer violence and reproach.

Particularly when a woman stands out to champion the cause of the weak is it easy for the dead-weight of pharisaical respectability to point at her the finger of scorn, to level upon her the most biting invective and withering malice.

"Unwomanly," "unsexed" are the mildest of the epithets which women who have done pioneer work all over the world have had to encounter.

Miss Kenney's task is the regaining for women of that status which, in a more chivalrous age, was accorded them by right. In this demand Miss Kenney has come face to face with the uglier forces of our age; she has found that in spite of the deference which is alleged to be paid to women, their requests are simply ignored, their protests are jeered at, their wishes flouted; and she has been forced, in championing their cause, to come out into the open, to take up the cudgels in grim earnest, and to win for herself the ribald sneers of the unthinking and the censure of those excellent people who do not understand the law of life which ordains that the day of deliverance tarries till one is found ready to draw down upon his own head all the shafts of the opposing forces of evil.

Miss Kenney does not belong to the type of those whom these things do not hurt. With a keen perception of the beautiful and delicate in nature and in art, with a love of poetry and literature, Miss Kenney is one of the sensitive women of our day. The work which she has taken upon herself is work that costs her dear. But when she knows that she must resist, because to yield means to betray the cause she has at heart, no man or woman is more staunch than she, or more ready to sacrifice herself to loyalty.

#### Women are Unrepresented.

From her childhood up she has watched, and seen, and understood; she has realised that those of her own sex have been deprived of the equal right to the development of their gifts. As children, the better wages earned by the boys, because they are boys, give them the means to take advantage of educational opportunities. In the workshop the women are less able to protect themselves than the men. In the home the father has his hours of work and his hours of leisure; the woman has no time when she may read or widen her outlook upon life. And these things do not stand alone.

Miss Kenney has striven in factory and workshop to gain for women a better economic position, but she sees that behind these things lies the inferiority of woman's status, typified in the inferiority of her political status, and that this must be put right if woman is to regain her position.

To-day, while men are voting for their member of Parliament to stand out for them and fight for their privileges, the women, who as members of a trade union are paying their levy towards his support, have no voice in the selection of that member.

"Can any working man," says Miss Kenney, "who rightly insists that his point of view shall be heard in the House of Commons, think it right that when questions come on for treatment in Parliament vitally affecting our position, we working women should be entirely unrepresented? Laws are being made regulating the labour of women in various ways; it is utterly wrong if those laws are carried by men not responsible in any way to the women whom they will affect."

"It is not that we believe that the interests of men and women are antagonistic! On the contrary, we believe they are essentially bound up together; but that is only one reason the more why we should have our voice heard in all things that affect those interests."

"Then, again, we believe that men and women are not the comrades to-day that they should be, because the women have been denied the means of widening their lives. Give the women the right of citizenship and the dignity of citizenship, teach them that they must use it on behalf of the best things of life: the home will be a better place, the husband will have far more respect for the things which the wife holds dear, the wife will be a better comrade for her husband."

\* \* \* \* \*

Miss Kenney is 27 years old, or, as she herself prefers to reckon it, 26—"because the whole of my first year was spent in my cradle doing nothing, and seeing nothing, and being nothing, and I refuse to count that year!" Her birthplace was Lees, near Oldham. At ten years old she went to work as a half-timer, and became a "little tenter;" at thirteen, a full-timer, and after four years was promoted to the position of "big tenter," having charge of a pair of frames and having one-third share of the services of a "little tenter" to assist her.

Her works were those of the Wood End Factory, and here Miss Kenney conducted a regular literary campaign among her workmates. Not merely were propagandist newspapers introduced each week and handed assiduously from girl to girl, but more permanent works of poetry and literature and art were eagerly sought after and obtained. The employer was a considerate man, and for a time everything went well.

#### Organising Workgirls.

But one day the girls learnt that the factory had gone bankrupt, that the works were to be shut up, and that some 40 or 50 of them were out of work. Then followed 15 weary months. Rising at 5.30 day after day, and tramping from factory to factory looking for work and finding none. The Wood End girls had the reputation of being specially good workers, and yet there seemed no place for them. One day they were standing outside one of the factory gates in the early morning waiting to know the manager's pleasure; he came out to



them and said that there was no work for them that day, but that they had better come again to-morrow. Miss Kenney went up to him and said, "Do you think it is right you should bring us all here morning after morning asking for work? Is there any likelihood of your being able to take any of us on, or is there nothing in it at all?"

Struck by her manner the manager saw that she was a woman above the average, and admitted that he had one or two places vacant, and that she could start at once. In the course of the next few months Miss Kenney succeeded in having introduced, as the factory developed, the great majority of her old workmates who had not found places elsewhere. But she found that the management were taking advantage of their position to keep wages down below the amount to which they were entitled. Accordingly, every day in the dinner interval Miss Kenney talked to the girls about their position, urging on them the necessity of standing out; at last one day they determined to follow her advice, and to demand an increase, and in consequence a slight concession was made them; but prompted by Miss Kenney they refused to return to their work unless the just rights were accorded, and the management seeing that the girls meant business acceded to their request.

After that the women insisted that Miss Kenney should represent them upon the district committee of their Trade Union. On that body she was the one woman among a large number of men. And the men soon found out that her presence as representing the women in the Union was of great value, and that she could speak for and organise the women in a way that would have been impossible to men alone.

While she sat on the committee she received 1s. 3d. a fortnight as fee, and this sum she made use of to become a corresponding student of Ruskin College, Oxford, a study which she has, unfortunately, been unable to continue in the stress of her present work.

Meanwhile, she was brought into contact with an increasing number of workers, and went to organise the women operatives in various parts of the district. It was while talking to them that she realised how essential it was to women to obtain the vote, and determined to devote herself more and more to urging forward this reform. An opportunity speedily presented itself. She was offered the post of organiser to the Women's Social and Political Union which was starting active work in Manchester; she willingly accepted it, and from that time to this has given herself, her strength, and all that she has to this movement.

#### At Sir Edward Grey's Meeting.

She and Miss Christabel Pankhurst took a leading part in the famous meeting in the Free Trade Hall, addressed by Sir Edward Grey, the story of which was so completely mistated in the public Press.

The real facts were these: Miss Kenney and Miss Pankhurst, knowing that for 60 years the question of women's suffrage had been

deliberately trifled with by Parliament, determined to obtain from all political candidates a definite indication of the line they intended to take upon it in the House of Commons. Accordingly they went to the meeting to put a definite question.

At the meeting Sir E. Grey spoke, and made no allusion to the subject. Questions were invited, and they accordingly wrote down on a piece of paper, and sent up to the platform, the following:—

Will Sir Edward Grey undertake to urge upon the next Liberal Government the necessity of bringing forward Women's Suffrage as a Government measure?

They saw that the question was placed in the hands of Sir Edward Grey, who read it over to himself, and showed it to the chairman, and they waited for his reply. They listened patiently all through the speech till he came to the final peroration, and then, when they saw that he proposed to ignore the question, as it had often been ignored before, they determined to act.

First Miss Kenney and then Miss Pankhurst rose in the body of the hall, and exhibiting their banner "Votes for Women," demanded to know whether their question was going to be answered.

As no reply was given they refused to give way, and were dragged from the hall by police. Outside, Miss Kenney started to address the crowd, and as the two women would not give up their attempt, they were pinioned by the police and dragged off to the police station.

#### Put into Prison.

In the Court next day they were charged with an assault of a disgraceful character upon the police, an assault which they had not committed. A garbled account of the proceedings inside the hall were given by the police as part of the evidence against them, and they were asked to say what was their defence. They started to give their account of what had happened inside the hall, but were prevented by the magistrate, who said they must confine their remarks to what had happened outside. They thereupon refused to make any defence, and were sent to prison, Miss Pankhurst for one week and Miss Kenney for three days. The picture of Miss Kenney which is given on the front page was taken in her factory dress.

Meanwhile two monster meetings of protest were held in the open air in Stevenson Square, one on the day of the trial and one on the day on which Miss Kenney was released, and a third in the great Free Trade Hall, which holds 5,000 people, on the day on which Miss Pankhurst came out of prison. They were all enthusiastically attended, and resolutions condemning the action of Sir Edward Grey and the officials responsible for their illtreatment were carried with acclamation.

Moreover, the action of the two girls was discussed all over England, and the contemptuous boycott of the question in the press and elsewhere was broken down.



## Interrogating Asquith.

Shortly afterwards the Liberal Government took office, and the Cabinet was formed; and the next action of the suffrage party was at a Liberal Meeting in the Queen's Hall, when Mr. Asquith was the principal speaker. The question of women's suffrage was asked from the body of the hall, and no answer was given. Then Miss Kenney, who was seated on the platform, got up and protested, and continued to do so until she was thrown out of the building by several Liberal officials.

A few days afterwards the great Albert Hall meeting was held, at which "C.B." spoke. Before the meeting Miss Kenney sent a special letter to him to ask him to express himself upon this question, which was vital to women all over the country. She said she would be in the audience representing thousands of organised working women, and asked that he would refer to it in the course of his speech, as she thought that the women had a right to know his views upon the subject. But no mention of it was made. And accordingly Miss Kenney, rising from one of the boxes, put the question to him direct, and receiving no reply, unfurled her banner, and would not give way till she was dragged by Liberal officials outside the hall. When all was quiet, the scene was re-enacted by Miss Billington in another part of the building.

This policy was continued at Winston Churchill's meetings at Manchester, Asquith's meeting at Sheffield and at Huddersfield, "C.B.'s" meeting at Liverpool and Glasgow, Sir Edward Grey's at Handley, H. Gladstone's at Leeds, and Lloyd-George's at Aldringham, and several more.

On February 19th she addressed a crowded meeting at the Caxton Hall, where a resolution was passed regretting that Women's Suffrage was not mentioned in the King's speech. On March 2nd she went with several other women to the residence of the Prime Minister and asked for an appointment, and receiving no answer they went again on March 9th, and as they refused to go away were taken into custody, but were shortly after released.

This incident, however, produced this effect, that whereas Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had up to that time refused to see any deputation he now consented to give them an audience, and the date was fixed for May 19th.

Meanwhile, Miss Kenney was in the Ladies' Gallery on April 24th, when Mr. Cremer used insulting language in the House of Commons towards the Women's Movement and Mr. Samuel Evans talked out the resolution. She took part with the other women in making a demonstration in the gallery, and was ejected and was forbidden to go to the House again during 1906. This action brought down upon her head considerable abuse at the time, but has since been admitted to have been one of the necessary steps in awakening public attention to the demand for reform in this matter.

On May 19th Miss Kenney formed one of the Deputation to see the Prime Minister, but as only one speaker was allotted to the Women's Social and Political Union and Mrs. Pankhurst was appointed to fill that position, Miss Kenney did not address the Prime Minister, except that, after she had listened to his reply, she made this one remark "Sir, we are not satisfied."

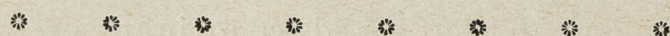
However, she took to heart his advice to bring pressure to bear upon the members of his cabinet who were opposed to this reform,—being also encouraged by Mr. Lloyd-George, who at his meeting at Liverpool on May 24th, said, "Why do not the women go for their worst enemy?—the audience supplying the name "Mr. Asquith."—She accordingly went to Cavendish Square in company with other women and asked to see the recalcitrant minister. It was on that occasion, that after the butler had made them a number of statements which they subsequently found to be untrue, Mr. Asquith took flight through the back door.

On the following Thursday, June 21st, she went again and before she got to the door was stopped by a policeman. Refusing to abandon her projected visit she was arrested and brought up at the Marlborough Street Police Court and sent to prison for six weeks for refusing to be bound over to keep the peace. While there she was treated with all the rigours of prison discipline, wearing prison clothes, eating prison food, and being refused, except on rare occasions, all visitors. When she came out, although she was considerably pulled down by the treatment, she declared herself ready to serve an even longer sentence, if it would help on the movement for the vote. Meanwhile the news of her action had spread throughout the country, and everywhere she was received with great enthusiasm, crowds numbering from ten to fifteen thousand persons gathering in each place to hear her speak, and everywhere she carried resolutions by overwhelming majorities. Among other places she visited East Fife, and compelled Mr. Asquith to receive a deputation of women to whom he showed some signs of weakening in his opposition.

On October 23rd she went with a number of other women to Palace Yard, but took no part whatever in the demonstration either inside or outside the House of Commons, but when she saw Mrs. Pethick Lawrence being ejected by force by the police, she ran up to her and said, "Oh! I hope they have not hurt you," whereupon she was arrested. Mrs. Pethick Lawrence seeing this said, "You shall not arrest this girl, she has done nothing," and they took them both into custody. At the Police Court they were charged with using abusive language, and although no evidence was given in support of this charge and although they were unconvicted, the magistrate sent them to prison for two months for refusing to be bound over to keep the peace. At the end of one month, however, the Government released them and Miss Kenney at once proceeded to address meetings at the Huddersfield By-Election where she was received with immense enthusiasm.



On Tuesday, December 11th, she was entertained in company with the other ex-prisoners at a banquet at the Savoy Hotel, organised by Mrs. Fawcett on behalf of the older Suffrage Societies. And on December 29th a similar welcome was extended to her by a great social gathering held at Caxton Hall.



A few people still are found to speak disparagingly of the 'methods' of Miss Kenney; she can afford to leave these benevolent individuals to their own complacent self-satisfaction. To them Miss Kenney does not appeal. But to those who are conscious of their weakness, who ask for their deliverance, she cries, "for the love of justice, home and the little ones, women of England, I ask you to stand shoulder to shoulder with us in demanding our political freedom! Remember, 'those who would be free, themselves must strike the blow.' We have *asked, pleaded, and prayed* for over 60 years; now we must fight."

Hers is not the easy task or the smooth way, but victory is sure to crown her efforts. For in her eye is the light which only comes to those who are certain of their comrades, who are certain of their cause, who are certain of the issue of the struggle.

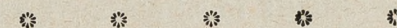
F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE.



## PRISON FACES.

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**O**H! you women, who are in your prison cells, shall I ever forget your faces? If I get weary of the toil of life, weary of man's inhumanity to man, your faces will come before me as a sign of the work which I have yet to do. If I live my three score years and ten your faces will never leave me.



I see the face of one of the prisoners at this moment as clearly as when we were standing in line ready to go out for exercise. Our eyes caught each other. I am wondering now, as I did then, "Who are you? Have you a home? Have you a sister? a brother? a father? Most important of all, have you a mother?"

She was only sixteen at the most! She looked more like fourteen. She had the soft truthful brown eyes that are full of life. If something amused her they would brim over with merriment. Poor child! Her eyes always told the warder when someone had whispered a word that amused her, and called down upon her the sharp reproof. She had an oval face, fair brow, and brown wavy hair.

Our eyes met every morning. She would scan the line opposite until she found me, and then a smile would break over her face. She used to put her little fingers in such a way as to give me to understand how long she was in for.

When she had been in for three days I looked for her, but she did not come. The fifth day she came; she was weary. She had lost her elastic step, she walked round as though she did not know where she was, and she looked so miserable. When we passed each other she muttered something which I could not hear, and her eyes were full of tears. The next round I said to her, "Never mind, cheer up." I was not able to speak to her again; the warders suspected us.

### As Ships that Pass in the Night.

The following day she did not come. I was in three weeks after that, but I never saw her again, and how I used to wonder if she was



ill or well. In the night time if I heard a moan I felt it was hers. We were truly as ships that pass in the night.

Now, what sin can a child of her age have done that the law of a civilized country should sear her youth with the brand of our odious prison system? Do the law-givers of our day think that they have removed the evil cause that brought about the sad effect, no matter what it might be? Why, we children whose only education has been in the bitter school of experience, could make better laws for the community than these.

Will they still keep punishing ignorance instead of teaching it? Must they still make criminals in order to keep up Law Courts, and find work for magistrates? What wise and clever people they must be to send a fair young child among criminals, and tell us that this is the law of England.

\* \* \* \* \*

But her face was not the only one that ought to make the men of this country hang their heads in shame. I saw one young woman who looked about twenty-five. Her eyes struck me as being extraordinarily big and bright. One day I came face to face with her. I looked in her face, and I searched the look in her eyes. I knew then what lay behind that look. There was a little soul. I knew, on its way to our world, and the little body was already formed beneath that woman's heart. And I was quite right. One day I whispered the question. She said "Yes."

Oh, men of England, how I hated you then! You men who make such laws as this are not worthy to be fathers. If you say, "But it was her own fault that she was in prison," then I turn with irrepressible repulsion from you.

#### Men Know Not What they Do.

Cowards! that you will allow laws to exist that will force a woman into prison on the eve of her confinement, and at the same time withhold from all other women any power by which we could help to abolish such a cruel and inhuman system. You do not know, you cannot understand, what such a thing means to a woman. It is torture and shame too great for even the most hardened and degraded woman, if such woman exist. It is crime committed against the unborn, greater than the crimes which you punish so harshly.

You are not wantonly cruel; oh no, but so clumsy, and so blind. You try to mend the broken stem, and life itself withers under your bruising touch. Your logic that you boast of does not lead you to the hidden fount of wisdom. You cannot know the mystery of a woman's heart interwoven by all its life-threads round the pre-natal being within her. You talk of parental responsibility, but your laws

are a proof that you know nothing of its real meaning. You blunder on in your own complacent superiority, and you wonder that the race degenerates, and that the wreckage of human life is strewn about your feet.

\* \* \* \* \*

One day as I was scanning the faces of the prisoners filing up the aisle of the church I noticed a fresh face. Of course, there are fresh faces every day, but this woman struck me more forcibly than the rest. She came and sat two rows in front of me. She appeared to be between seventy and eighty years of age. I watched her coming along. I saw her hands trembling as she held her Prayer book.

She was the first on a fresh row, and being the first she was against the boards at the right-hand side of her. Naturally, she leaned against the boards. But no! The warder told her to sit up straight, as if she had been a child at school. Being spoken to in this way made her very uncomfortable, and as she was old and feeble, and there are not any backs to the seats, she became very fidgety and restless as the service went on.

I saw her face to face. She had grey hair, her eyes were blue, but looked very dim, and her face was the brown colour of the autumn leaf, and so full of wrinkles. Her shoulders were beginning to stoop. As I looked in her eyes, and at the grey head, and at the wrinkled face, it flashed across my brain what everyone of those wrinkles meant, and when I saw her trembling hands turning over the pages, I wondered what sort of life this poor old woman had lived. She knew every prayer, she knew just where to find all the lessons, she knew the tune of the hymns, and her weak eyes would fill with tears when we were singing what most of us had learned as children. She had a good face, she had a big heart one could see.

I looked at her hands as well as I could. They were hands that were used to hard work. I could see by the fingers and nails there had not been much time in her life for those hands to rest.

#### The Lines in the Face.

I could see lines in her face that told me of poverty. I saw lines that told me of death. I saw lines that told me of the troubles of a mother, and I saw the hand creep up to her face in just the same way as I have seen it with many a woman when she has received the small weekly wage, and she is wondering what bill to start with first, or when she has been expecting a good week, and one of the children has come home ill. I saw all these things in that old woman's face. When I looked on her left hand I saw the worn wedding ring, and my thoughts flew back to forty or fifty years ago when this woman would be looking upon life and asking what it had to offer her. Yes, that old woman's face was one of the lessons I had taught me in prison.

The magistrate who sent me for six weeks to Holloway said: "I am going to deal with this case severely. These women must understand that the law is stronger than they are." He does not know



himself, perhaps, how much he has done for me. He could not have sent me to a better school. If he had wished to brand the wrong done to woman on my memory, if he had wished to forge my will in the furnace of hot indignation, and send me forth determined as never before to fight on to the finish, he could not have chosen a better way to do it. The law may be stronger than I am, but if I may not change the wicked law that holds in bondage the smitten womanhood of this country, I will at least die in the attempt to change it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another face that I saw when I was going in the Prisoners' Van to jail haunts me still, and will haunt me I think, for ever. It was a woman about thirty-five. She had a baby twelve months old with her. I was speaking to Mrs. Knight, who was going to prison with me for the same cause, about the Unemployed, when I looked at the woman who was opposite me. Her eyes were full of tears, so I said to her, "You seem to know about the Unemployed."

Her reply was: "There would not be so many people stealing if there was better employment." She then told me she was a mother of four children under six; she had the youngest with her. Her husband was an invalid. She had been making shirts at sevenpence per dozen. She had sat up sewing for a few nights, and had finished a number of shirts. The cupboard was bare. Her four children were starving. In a fit of desperation she pawned the shirts, hoping to be able to redeem them in time to take them to shop. But, alas! she was taken up, and judged by men and man-made law. Of course, she was far too frightened and far too ignorant to plead the want of food and the want of sleep that had led to the utter nerve exhaustion and the consequent rash deed. And she was sentenced to two month's imprisonment.

A poor forlorn creature she looked, but she was clean as a new garment. That woman was going through torture not knowing what would become of her three little ones and her sick husband whom she had left. I heard a warder tell her afterwards that the baby was too old to stay in with her. She told them the position she was in. The reply was: "Then it must go to the workhouse until you have done your time."

I heard the mother sobbing as though her heart would break, but it was no use. The baby had to go. And when I remember that this is not the only case, but that there are hundreds like it every day, I feel as if my heart would break, and my conscience smites me that I have not done more in the past to help those poor, desolate, lonely women whose life is all dark.

These are the women who are eating their hearts out in our prisons while you and I are out enjoying God's sunshine.

ANNIE KENNEY.

ONE PENNY.



# The New Crusade.

BY . . .

*Emmeline Pethick Lawrence.*



PUBLISHED BY

The National Women's Social and Political Union,

4 Clements Inn, W.C.



## How Women can help.

- BY BECOMING MEMBERS.** Women are invited to join the Women's Social and Political Union and so place themselves in line with the many thousand other women who are working for the political recognition of their sex. The address of the National W.S.P.U. is 4 Clement's Inn, W.C., Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Pankhurst, and membership is open to all women who are prepared to act independently of party.
- BY SUBSCRIBING TO THE FUNDS.** The National Women's Social and Political Union has already spent over £5,000 in fighting the battle of women for the vote. It has used this money to hold several thousand meetings up and down the country, to take a prominent part in twelve bye-elections, and to leave no stone unturned to bring the question before every section of the community. A further £20,000 is being raised to carry on the campaign, and contributions towards this sum are urgently needed. The Treasurer is Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, 4 Clement's Inn, W.C.
- BY CIRCULATING LITERATURE.** The National W.S.P.U. has a flourishing literature department. Much valuable work can be done by buying our books, pamphlets or leaflets, studying them and passing them on to other women.
- BY GETTING UP MEETINGS.** Women are requested to get up drawing-room meetings and public meetings, at which the need for the vote can be discussed. The National Women's Social and Political Union will be glad to send speakers to meetings when requested.
- BY GIVING TIME AND SERVICES.** Women are wanted for speaking and lecturing, for secretarial work in the office, for canvassing, for organising meetings at bye-elections and elsewhere, and for many other things. The Hon. Sec. of the National Women's Social and Political Union will be glad to know of any women able and willing to help in any of these ways.
- BY MISSIONARY WORK.** Women can use their influence with the men and women of their acquaintance, asking them to write to their member of Parliament on this question. They can obtain from the W.S.P.U. offices forms for signature of women in favour of the franchise, and ask their friends to fill them up. They can induce other women to become members, to subscribe and to help in various ways.
- BY GETTING INTO CLOSER TOUCH WITH THE MOVEMENT.** There may be women who are not prepared to do any of these things and yet would like to know of what is being done. They are invited to get into correspondence with the Hon. Secretary, to come to some of the Women's Social and Political meetings, in particular to come to one of the "At Homes," held every Monday from 4 to 6, and every Thursday from 8 to 10, at 4 Clement's Inn, where they will have the opportunity of meeting the leaders of the movement and learning more about it.

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## THE NEW CRUSADE.

(A speech delivered by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence at Exeter Hall on May 30th, 1907.)

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The other day I heard of a Boys' School which met to debate the aims and methods of the Women's Social and Political Union; they passed a resolution approving heartily of the methods, but not of the aims of the Society. This verdict pleased us greatly, for it had the charm of novelty.

"Oh yes, I approve of your aims, of course; I have always believed in the justice of the claim that taxation and representation should go together. But I don't approve of your methods, you know: they are unpleasant, they are unladylike; they do more harm than good."

We get a little tired of this sort of thing, we hear it so often. When men say this, we smile. Sometimes they are Members of Parliament, who we know by experience would have preferred to be left alone to forget all about us. But even other men pretend to be shocked sometimes.

They know perfectly well in their own hearts that it is all nonsense, they know that women have at last adopted the only political methods that will win a political victory for those who possess no foothold in the political constitution. You may depend upon it that men's enthusiasm for women's enfranchisement is a very frail and tender growth, if it is chilled by our militant methods. In fact now that we are succeeding so well, the doubters of yesterday begin to affirm that they always knew that women would get the vote if they made a sufficiently loud and determined demand.

We accept the objection of women to our methods much more seriously. We do not expect that women will understand and approve all at once the straight and direct method of winning a concession from an opponent. The direct method is so completely new to them. In the past they have been so hampered and bound by legal and conventional restrictions that, finding direct resistance to opposition useless, they, like any other people in a similar position, have been forced to adopt indirect methods in order to attain their end. Women have been not only individually helpless, but they have been in the past isolated in their respective homes, economically dependent on their respective owners. They have been forced, in the absence of any standing ground of equality as human beings, to fall back upon the only power which they could bring to bear upon men, the power of sex attraction. The use of this power has been developed into an art, with all sorts of refinements and delicate differentiation. Women have learnt to gain their end by flattery and cajolery, by pleading and persuasion, by smiles and frowns, by sweet and pleasant manners, by display of personal attractions, by assumption of helplessness and admission of inferiority.



They are now beginning to learn that though the practice of these arts may be potent to win favour from those individuals who come under the spell of their personal fascination, they are of no account whatever in the sphere of political or industrial competition. The game of practical politics is played by another set of rules altogether. Women of spirit and pride welcome the direct methods of striving for their human rights. But the timid say that it does not do for women to use unpleasant and unladylike methods: they are sure to lose by it.

Lose what? Lose the approval of men, the smile and favour of the social world?

Yes, we know that we lose that. Women who work for women politically, lose socially; women who work for men politically do not lose socially. We lose more than that, for we recognise the law of life which decrees that no new extension of life can be purchased for the human race except by those who are content to lay down their personal life to gain it. It may be that some of these women who are not prepared to join us or to help us, though they want the end for which we are striving, have come into this hall to-night. If there is one such here, I would say "My dear madam, are you not like the little boy who, when asked what he would wish to be when he was a man, replied 'A missionary—at least, I mean, a *returned* missionary;' certain pictures of cannibal feasts had put him off the methods of a missionary's career, without destroying his ultimate ambition. Like many older people, he preferred the verb *achieve* to have one tense only, and that the perfect tense."

You would like to have the vote. You would like, as a woman, to have the dignity and honour that only free citizenship in the State can give, but you are not prepared to pay one jot of the price! But you who approve of our aims and not of our methods do not see that in politics, as in every department of life, people who want to succeed and to win have to "play the game." We have not invented the game. We have to take it as we find it. We have to understand its rules and play as other people play. Practical politics is a game. We women do not make it, we take it as we find it. The rules of the game are that those who want any reform carried must make as much noise as they can, must hit as hard as they can, and must bring as much pressure as they can to bear on the Government which is in power, for the Government is a machine which can only act under pressure. The worst Government is that which does not respond to any pressure until it becomes a danger and a menace.

I want to ask the fathers and mothers here a question. "If you had two babies and they both awoke together in the night at the hour when they are accustomed to receive refreshment, and one of them lay smiling and contentedly sucking its thumb, and the other began to scream loud enough to wake up the whole house, which of these babies would you attend to first?" (laughter). I see there is no hesitation in your minds about the answer. You would go to the one that was making the most noise.

But what about your theories of patience and good temper that should be rewarded, and all that sort of thing? Well, they are forgotten at the moment in the desire to stop that child's mouth; so you see that even human fathers and mothers are to a certain extent machines that act under pressure. Is it any wonder, then, that a Government is a machine that acts under pressure? Then the Government is in a much worse position than you could be as parents of two children simultaneously demanding your attention, for the Government has more than two children; it has any number, and they are all crying for its attention, and all these babies except one are screaming through a megaphone, for you know the ballot box is a megaphone which lends volume and significance to quite a small cry, whereas we women have no megaphone. We cannot cry through a ballot box, therefore we have to make it up by exercising our own lungs to the fullest possible extent. That is our only hope of getting any attention at all. It would be of no use for us to wait patiently until all the others were attended to, for long before then the poor old paternal Government will have tumbled back into bed and have gone to sleep, quite worn out with its exertions.

Now you know we have been called "The Shrieking Sisterhood," but you see now what this "shrieking" really means, and how much it is needed. It is the duty of every woman here to come and help. Perhaps you say you don't know how. Come and join the Women's Social and Political Union. We will teach you. Have you heard the latest definition of the difference between the suffragists and the suffragettes? If not, I will tell you. It was overheard the other day in Euston Station, just at that time when the suffragettes were fighting the Stepney Election, and the suffragists had taken the field in Wimbledon. Two people were standing by the bookstall, looking at the day's newspaper posters. "Jim," said the young woman, "what's all this about the suffragists and the suffragettes? What are they? And what is it they want, and what is the difference between them? Do you know?" "Why yes," said the man in a lordly manner, "of course I do." "Well, tell me, Jim; I want to know." "Well, yer see, it's like this here. The *suffra-jists*, why, are *suffra-jists*, yer know; they *jist* wants the vote, yer see; and the *suffra-get*, well, a *suffra-get*, yer see, is going to *get* it." The beauty of this story is that nobody need take offence at it, for all women can be both *suffra-jists* and *suffra-gets*. We can *jist* want the vote, and we can be determined to *get* the vote, too.

I have been talking about playing a game, but I also have something to say to-night about fighting the fight. You know the two things are very closely connected. A battle is a game, and most games are mimic battles. The soldier, at the moment when he is under fire, thinks of little beside the game, and how best to play it, but, behind the confusion of the battlefield, where, for the moment, everything seems given over to violence and strife and death, there are great causes and great ideals, and the dearest faiths of a nation.



So it is with the women's movement, and in the din and strife of strenuous political warfare we women realise the greatness of the cause for which we are fighting. There are great forces behind this movement—forces of nature, forces of destiny, forces of divine and human will. There are great ideals—the old ideal of human and civic freedom which has fashioned the modern world, freedom which is as dear to women as it has been to men in the past, freedom for which, if men now wish it, women can die as men themselves have died in the past, with women to console them and women to mourn for them. There is a great faith behind it, faith in the future, faith in the possibilities of race evolution, when women have won the right to their own bodies and souls, when they no longer have to sell themselves for bread, either in the city streets or in the economic-marriage market, when, as citizens, economically, politically and intellectually free, they can join together with men in building up a more perfect human race, and can help to make and mould the human world in which their children have to go out and live.

There are forces behind this movement of which the politician has no conception, which he has never for one moment taken into account; forces which are bound to sweep away all resistance. You cannot stop the awakening of the soul of women. I have called our movement a great fight; I go further and call it a great crusade. "But," you say, "the crusaders wore as their sign and symbol a cross. Do you claim that you are soldiers of the cross?" We do.

Evolution means conflict. When a great new ideal is born into the world, it runs counter to the whole conception of life which has been accepted by the world. The new ideal crosses the old conception. And this is the Cross upon which the regenerators of Humanity are crucified. They are sustained by the vision of the Future, for they know that by their pain and shame they pay down the price of a new redemption of Mankind.

The new conception of life which has been given to us is that of the woman, possessor of her own body and soul, free from degrading servitude, and also from ignoble exemptions from honourable service, free to develop within herself the thought and purpose of her Maker, unsubservient to the will or desire of man, responsible for the conditions of the human world in which she lives, and responsible for the future generation. This new ideal is not only the cross, it is also the sword. "I came not to bring peace on earth, but a sword." This word, spoken by the Prince of Peace, is one of the great paradoxes of which life is full.

I call upon the men and women here to-night, those who have vision, to take up the cross, to grasp the sword of this new conception, and with it to wage holy warfare against prejudice and custom, and the instinct of dominance, which enforce bondage and hold the woman's body and soul in subjection, and thus crush out the possibilities of race evolution. Come and join our crusade. You do not know, if you have never tried, the wonderful worth and dignity which participation in such a movement as this will lend to your personal life.

I appeal to the men and women here. I appeal first to the men, you who love the freedom which your fathers won for you; pay your debt to your forebears by winning freedom for your daughters. I have spoken of warfare, but this crusade is no sex war. The best men are on our side, and every woman who joins us brings one man at least to take his stand beside her. I am not going to tell the men here how they are to help us. Men, by their work and vote, have freed the slaves in the past, have emancipated the working-man, have saved the little children from commercial servitude, and they can free the women of this country if they will, and they will know the best way to set about the business.

I appeal especially to the *women* here. I can tell them just what they ought to do. Every woman, loyal and self-respecting, and worthy of her womanhood, must be with us out and out. I appeal to you to join our Union. Can you speak? Can you organize? Are you inventive and resourceful? Come, then, and help us. Come and teach us. The work is so great and so growing, we are desperately in need of more good speakers, good organisers, inventive and resourceful initiators. Do you say, "I have no gifts, I cannot organize, I cannot speak, I cannot do anything!" Come and join us; we will teach you. We will organise your work, and develop in you some gift. We need you badly. At the present moment we can organise the services of hundreds of women just like you. Send your name to-night or to-morrow to the Honorary Secretary, Women's Social and Political Union, 4 Clement's Inn. You will soon see how much help you can give us. If you have an influential position, socially or professionally, we want you. If you have much to lose by joining our movement, you should be happy, for that means that you have much to give. If you are a working woman, burdened with incessant labours and manifold cares, we want you. We want you specially; it is your sympathy we crave most of all, for it is *your* battle essentially that is now being fought. If you are a woman we want you, and want what you have to give—time, service, heart, everything.

I also appeal to all men and women who are with us to generously support this movement with money. I am never afraid to ask for money. I know both how much and how little money can do, of how much and of how little value it can be. I know that where the spirit is, there it will draw to itself the material. I know that money will come. Money that represents enthusiasm, self-sacrifice and devotion. That is the money we want. When I came into this movement a year ago, there was no money at all. There was not a penny to hand over to me as treasurer. There was love, devotion and self-sacrifice. Bills were paid out of the personal savings of half a dozen women dependent upon their own work for their livelihood. Since then money has come in and money has been spent to the sum of nearly £3,000, as you may see in the first year's Report of the Union.

The movement will still go on, with or without money. A year ago I found the leaders of this Union coining their very flesh and



blood. They are still prepared to do it, I know. There are more ways than one of laying down one's life. But I say to you men and women that we dare not allow it. We cannot afford it. We shall want our leaders more than ever when the vote is won, for then the real work of this Union will begin. You must do your part. Money must be forthcoming to do the work of money and human flesh, and blood and spirit will do the work that no other power can accomplish.

To win this great reform, there must be a great national agitation, as great as any national campaign that has ever been fought in the past. Hundreds of thousands of pounds were raised as a campaign fund by the men who brought about the repeal of the Corn Laws. Great sacrifices were made by men and women who took their political and moral faith seriously. The emancipation of the slaves in our own Colonies cost several millions of pounds. The emancipation of the women of our own race and country is worth more than can be expressed in terms of finance.

We must go into every town and village in the land if possible, and preach to the women there the word of freedom, and bid them rise up now and work out their own salvation.

Railway fares are amongst those things that cannot be paid for in flesh and blood, or spirit, but must be paid for in hard cash. Halls must be taken for public meetings. At every bye-election, the women's cause must be kept to the front. The electorate must be educated by letters and circulars sent through the post. This national propaganda work must be supported by a National Fund. You may depend upon it that in this Union not a penny is wasted. Women know how to economize. They know how to make a pound do the work of twenty shillings, and a little more.

Our greatest asset is the inspiration, the love, the courage and devotion of the women who are in the forefront of this movement. Is there anyone who says: "I care very much for this question and I wish I could help, but I am really not in a position to give anything towards its support." Well, then I say: "Sir or Madam, you never cared for anybody or anything in this world, otherwise you would know that love must give, love cannot help giving; it is the very law of its being. If you care, you must give."

It is because we count upon the true heart of the people of this country that we boldly and confidently ask for the sum of £20,000 for this great national campaign. We ask for 10,000 names of men and women who will give a pound a year until women are enfranchised, and we ask those who can give larger sums to raise the remaining £10,000 between them. Help us to fight this great crusade. We go forward into the future with glad heart, regardless of opposition, violence, imprisonment. Victory is assured, for ultimately Truth prevails.

15TH THOUSAND.

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# Woman's Franchise:

## The Need of the Hour.—

By

E. C. Wolstenholme Elmy.

THIRD EDITION.



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## *Woman's Franchise: The Need of the Hour.\**

SOME of us who have been working hard for more than forty years to secure for women the restitution of their ancient political rights, extended and adapted to meet modern conditions and uses, share to the full the indignation of those brave younger spirits who are resolved that this great act of human, national, and social justice shall no longer be delayed in the interests of political parties, or to suit the personal convenience of party leaders.

We demand our immediate enfranchisement on the same terms as men:

(1) Because we have, by long and painful experience, proved the absolute impossibility of securing any further redress of the many legal wrongs from which we still suffer, and because we fully realise the great danger of further careless, mischievous, and unjust legislation, greatly imperilling the well-being of women.

(2) Because the equal citizenship of women is essential to the growth and development in men of the sense of social and political justice.

(3) Because the enfranchisement of the women of Great Britain and Ireland will hasten the enfranchisement of the women of all civilised nations, and will thus lead to the development of a higher social and political morality all the world over.

It may be convenient to give here a brief summary of the salient facts of the woman movement in this country up to date, including therewith the restitution and extension of the local electoral rights of women, and their right to sit on local administrative bodies, and the efforts—some successful and many fruitless—to change some others of the exclusively man-made laws from whose injustice women have suffered and still suffer.

It should, however, be here stated that the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies strictly limits its action to the acquisition of the Parliamentary franchise, and does not affiliate local societies having any further object. Many of the most ardent and vigorous supporters of Women's Suffrage are consequently in no way associated with the National Union, but are to be found in many independent bodies working also for other issues, such as the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Women's Liberal Federation, and more particularly in the Women's Social and Political Union, an active offshoot of the Independent Labour Party. It is to the activity of this body and to that of the Lancashire and Cheshire Women Textile Workers Committee and of the Women's Co-operative Guild, more than to any or all others, that the present living force of this question is especially due.

\* Reprinted, with alterations, from the *Westminster Review*.



In explanation of the phrase "restitution of their ancient political rights," it should be remembered that in the earlier periods of English life women had unquestionably possessed and exercised electoral rights as "suitors" in the County Courts, and as "burgesses" in various boroughs. The advancement of boroughs to the *status* of Parliamentary boroughs was in those early days largely a matter of royal caprice or interest, but wherever this *status* has been achieved the women burgesses had the same Parliamentary electoral rights as the men. In those days, however, these rights were frequently regarded as burdens, because the constituents were bound to pay the Parliamentary wages of the representatives, and in the case of county constituencies, the giving of the vote usually involved long and troublesome journeys on the part of the "suitors," men and women, who were the electors. In this *limited* sense, the plea of Lord Salvesen, in the case of the Scottish Women Graduates, was correct, the exemption of women from voting duties, which were not then valued as "rights," began as a sex privilege. The note at the end of this article gives some interesting facts as to the very ancient voting rights of women in Scottish burghs. The cases there referred to were of infinite service to women in England and Wales during the brief, sharp, and happily successful struggle in 1869 for the restitution of the municipal vote.

For the story of the first statutory exclusion of women from voting rights by the Reform Act of 1832, up to which time there had been no statutory discrimination of sex against women, I would refer every reader to Mr. Keir Hardie's admirable pamphlet *The Citizenship of Women*,\* to which this is little more than a supplement. This statutory exclusion of women from Parliamentary voting rights was followed by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, which resulted in the exclusion of women from the exercise of the municipal franchise in England and Wales. Both these measures enlarged the voting rights of men, whilst they extinguished for the time those of women, for whom freedom has not "broadened down from precedent to precedent," but far otherwise. Happily the exertions of but few persons, of whom the present writer had the privilege of being one, were successful in 1869 in securing the restitution of the municipal vote to women, who moreover during this period of exclusion from the municipal vote, were still voting as ratepayers, equally with men (and this whether married or single) in districts not subject to the Municipal Corporations Act, and in matters not within the jurisdiction of the Town Council, such as the election of churchwardens, way-wardens, Poor Law Guardians, and for the appointment of overseers and sale of parish property.

The case of *Regina v. Harrald*, heard in the Court of Queen's Bench in January, 1871, decided that a married woman, though qualified by occupancy and by payment of rates, and

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put on the burgess list, cannot vote at the election of town councillors; and further, that a woman, who is rightly on the burgess list, but married before the election, is also disqualified from voting. In favour of the married woman it was argued by Mr. Charles Crompton that women are capable of voting, and do vote, that no exceptions were made by statute with regard to married women; and that "coverture" being no longer a bar to the holding of property, should, therefore, be no bar to the enjoyment of the incidents of property, such as voting. On the other hand it was argued by Mr. (Lord) Herchell that a married woman is not a person in the eyes of the law. She is not *sui juris*. Curiously enough the words of the Lord Chief Justice (Sir A. Cockburn), in giving judgment, show plainly that it is possible, in the discharge of the highest judicial functions, to determine questions affecting the civil rights of women, and yet to be painfully ignorant of all matters relevant to the point to be decided upon. The Lord Chief Justice was obviously quite unconscious that women had possessed voting rights from time immemorial, and spoke of the Act of 1869 as though it were the first concession of them, instead of being merely the restitution of such of them as had been taken away thirty-four years before. It scarcely seems fitting that questions so gravely affecting the interests of women—present and future—should be thus lightly determined upon by persons ignorant of so many of the relevant facts.

This decision was given *after* the passing of the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, which enabled a wife to own and hold her own earnings, and thus to enjoy some at least of the benefits of property. Since then the Married Women's Property Act of 1882 has given to all married women fuller rights of property and contract, and with regard to women married since then has virtually abolished "coverture" with regard to property. Nevertheless, the ruling of *Regina v. Harrald* is still followed, and married women, however qualified as ratepayers, are in England and Wales still (Nov., 1907) treated as not being persons in the eyes of the law for the purpose of voting at county or municipal elections.

The Local Government (England and Wales) Act of 1894 only enables married women to vote as parochial electors, for guardians and urban or rural district councillors or for parish councillors, and this in spite of the pledge given by Sir Henry Fowler, who was in charge of the Bill, that he would secure their full enfranchisement for all local government purposes. Moreover, this Act and the subsequent Acts for Ireland and Scotland, provided that husband and wife shall not be electors in respect to the same property, a limitation which is not introduced in regard to any other relationship, and which is a survival of the legal doctrine that a married woman is not a "person" in the eyes of the law. With this exception the subsequent Local Government Acts for Scotland and Ireland secured to Scottish and Irish wives the full right of voting on



precisely the same qualification as men, including the owner, lodger and service franchises, which seem moreover to be far more liberally interpreted and understood than in England,—whilst in England and Wales (outside the County of London) wives are still in the farcical hybrid position of being “persons” for the purposes of the minor elections, but not for borough or county council election purposes. Throughout the County of London they approach more nearly to the dignity of Irish and Scottish wives, thanks to the Act to assimilate the county and borough council franchises in London, passed in 1900.

The net result of all this tinkering legislation is that, for all *local administrative purposes*, women in Ireland and Scotland, whether married or unmarried, vote on precisely the same terms as men, but throughout England and Wales women do not possess the owner, lodger, or service franchises, whilst married women may not vote for borough or county councils, unless they are fortunate enough to live within the county of London, where they are empowered to vote for the county council and the borough councils.

With regard to the eligibility of women to public offices and to membership of local administrative bodies, it would appear to the plainest common-sense that in a country which since the Norman Conquest has been ruled by five Queens Regnant, the exclusion of a woman from public office on the sole ground of her sex, no matter how great her fitness for its duties, is an absurd barbarism. When the Education Act of 1870 became law, so little did those responsible for it share this modern view of women's disability, that both Mr. Gladstone and Mr. W. E. Forster, *assuming that women were eligible*, personally advocated the election of women as members of the “School Boards” created by it, although not one word appears in the Act defining the qualifications of candidates for office under it. At the first elections women were returned, not only in London, but in various parts of England, and in some instances headed the poll. One result of the return of women to the School Boards was that women were thereby encouraged to offer themselves for election as poor law guardians, no sex qualification or disqualification being embodied in the legislation which created Boards of Guardians. The first woman guardian was returned in 1875, and the first married woman guardian in 1881.

In 1888 came the Act establishing county councils for England and Wales, and as that Act neither expressed nor implied any sex disability for the office of councillor, at the first election under the Act Miss Cobden and Lady Sandhurst were returned as councillors to the London County Council, while Miss Cons was elected Alderman by the Council itself. Hereupon Mr. Beresford-Hope, whom Lady Sandhurst had defeated at the poll, brought the question before the Law Courts, and the Court of Appeal decided that women were not

eligible as county councillors. On this occasion it was that the late Lord Esher, then Master of the Rolls, gave utterance to the astounding dictum, “I take it that neither by the Common Law nor by the Constitution of this Country, from the beginning of the Common Law until now, can a woman be entitled to exercise any public function.” Yet at the very time Lord Esher spoke, women were acting as overseers, waywardens, churchwardens, poor law guardians, and members of school boards, which can scarcely be considered private functions, to say nothing of the fact that he himself exercised his judicial office by virtue of the authority of a female sovereign! Moreover, both then and on more recent occasions, it seems to have been quite forgotten that 13 Vict. cap. 21, sec. 4 expressly enacts “That in all Acts words importing the masculine gender shall be deemed and taken to include females, unless the contrary is expressly provided.” Yet in all recent legislation on this subject, Parliament has not merely disregarded this provision, but also the old and sound constitutional view (practically illustrated by the numerous offices held by women through centuries, and more recently by their membership of school boards and boards of guardians), that disability is not to be presumed, but only admitted when declared and expressed. The Appeal Judges substituted for this the notion, historically indefensible, that “No woman is entitled to exercise any public function unless it is expressly in set terms granted,” and thus enormously enlarged the scope of sex disability. The final judgment of the Court of Appeal, given on April 16, 1889, declared women incompetent to sit on county councils. Four days later the House of Lords rejected the Bill qualifying women to sit as county councillors by 108 votes to 23. Five weeks afterwards, in the early days of July, the Scottish Local Government Bill, creating county councils for Scotland, passed through committee. Section 9 of the Bill (now Act) opens by declaring that “No woman shall be eligible for election as a county councillor,” a direct consequence of this legal decision. It is by means of this clause in the Scottish Act that women were shut out from being county councillors in Ireland. The fourth schedule of the Irish Act provides that the section (of which this is one provision) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act of 1889 shall apply to Ireland.

As a further result of this changed view of constitutional law, it was held necessary, when the Local Government (England and Wales) Act of 1894 was before Parliament, to safeguard the eligibility of women as parish councillors, urban and rural district councillors, Poor Law guardians, and as members of the London Vestries, by enacting, in *each separate case specified*, that “No person shall be disqualified by sex or marriage for being a parish councillor,” &c., a strange and lumbering mode of removing specific alleged disabilities, *whilst strengthening the false assumption on which alone the alleged disability rested.*



One special new disability was imposed upon women by this Act, in spite of the protests of Sir John Gorst and other friends of justice, when, on New Year's Day, 1894, Clause 22 of the Bill was under consideration. The Bill provided that the Chairman of a District Council "unless personally disqualified by any Act, shall be, by virtue of his office, a justice of the peace for the county in which the district is situate." On this occasion Sir Henry Fowler proposed to introduce the limiting words, "unless a woman," thus taking the opportunity of an enfranchising measure to impose a fresh legal disability upon women. It should be remembered that up to this time no legal decision had been given, and no statute had been passed restraining women from the exercise of judicial functions. It is on record that in the reign of Mary Tudor two women were appointed justices of the peace, and there would seem no reason to question the legal powers of the Lord Chancellor, or of the Chancellor of the Duchy at the present time (save for the presumption suggested by the restrictive provision of the Local Government Act), to appoint suitable women to act as justices of the peace. That women magistrates, as well as women jurors, are urgently needed to secure effective justice in many cases, especially in cases affecting the relations of the sexes, is becoming daily more and more manifest.

A similar disqualification was introduced into the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, and the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, and also into the\* Qualification of Women Act of 1907.

The London Government Act of 1899, which transformed the old London Vestries into Metropolitan Borough Councils, withdrew from women the power to continue on the new councils the admirable work which some of them had been doing on the vestries since 1894. Whilst the Bill was before the House of Commons repeated divisions were taken on the question of the eligibility of women as councillors, aldermen, and mayors, with the final result that they were disqualified as mayors, but made eligible as councillors and aldermen in

\*NOTE.—*Admission of a Woman as a Burgess.*—On Tuesday, May 18, 1869, at the Edinburgh Town Council, an application of a woman to have her husband admitted a burgess was reported upon by the Lord Provost's Committee, who expressed the opinion that the husband had no claim to be admitted a burgess, but that in respect the applicant complied with all the old conditions of burgess-ship, *i.e.*, 'held stob and staik' in the burgh, and 'walked, warded, paid extents and skatts therein conform to their substance,' she should be admitted a burgess in her own right. On this subject Mr. Marwick communicated some curious information as to the old custom of the Scotch burghs to admit women burgesses and women sisters of guild. On March 17, 1406, Allison de Driscull, was made sister of the Edinburgh guild as heir of the late Robert Driscuoll, her brother. The oldest Peebles burgh record contains some entries showing it to have been the practice in that burgh to have women burgesses thus:—'On November 15th, 1456, was mayed burgess Ely Scott, and sal pay for hir freedom, x s.' On October 29th, 1459, 'That ilk day was mayd burgess Meg Woodhal, and sal mak for hir fredom a ruid of caussa.' On April 23, 1464, 'item, that ilk day was given the freedom to Peronale, and sche sall pay

the Bill as it left the House of Commons. The House of Lords, however, on June 26th, 1899, struck out the provision securing the eligibility of women as councillors and aldermen by a vote of 182 to 68. The majority against women was mainly composed of Peers who had come to the House, to whose business they scarcely pay any attention, for the express purpose of striking a blow at justice to women. How absolutely this was the case may be seen from the fact that, an hour after this division, a further division was taken, on another point of the Bill in which only eighty Peers were present to take part. On July 6 the House of Commons, in obedience to the Government Whip, accepted the Lords' amendment, and rejected altogether the claims of women to any place on the proposed new councils. The vote on Mr. Courtney's amendment, which re-affirmed the eligibility of women as councillors was—for, 177; against, 246; majority, 69. The second vote, formerly accepting the Lords' amendment, was—for, 243; against, 174; a majority against women again of 69. The much-vaunted Government measure of last session, the Qualification of Women Act, 1907, still leaves *married* women incapable of sitting on any county\* or borough council in England and Wales outside the County of London, because outside London married women, being still not competent as electors for town and county council purposes, cannot be elected, since, under the Municipal Act of 1882, only electors are eligible. Under the Act of last session, twelve women were candidates at the recent Municipal elections; of whom six were returned and six defeated. It would seem that, under existing circumstances, it is only in small boroughs or under very special circumstances that women have any chance of being returned, since, under the ward system of voting, the woman being always a minority of the electors, cannot possibly alone return a woman, whilst in the larger boroughs, masculine pride of place resents and resists the return of a woman, although much borough and county council work would undoubtedly be better done by women than by men.

The proceedings in connection with the Education Acts *thairfor xxx s. but favour.* In Edinburgh again, an ordinance dated March 14, 1507, specifying the entry money to be charged on the admission of various descriptions of burgesses, contains the following sentence: 'And siclike the burges dochteris, lauchfullie gottin, to have the priurege of the second son 2 for the burgessy, xiiij s. iiij d., and for the gildry, xx s.' These extracts showed that in the old Scottish burghs women were admitted to the privileges of burgess-ship and guild sister-ship; and that what was now proposed was no innovation upon the old constitutional principle, under which women's rights were secured at a very early period of our history. The magistrates and council unanimously resolved that in special cases women might still be admitted to the rights of burgess-ship, when they comply with the ancient conditions." *Manchester Examiner and Times*, May 22, 1869.

This woman was admitted a burgess of the city of Edinburgh in the following month, June, 1869, her qualification being that she carried on a separate business from her husband, a qualification also recognised for many centuries past, and at this very day in the City of London.



for England and Wales and for London are too fresh in the memory of all to need recapitulation here. Only by the strenuous efforts of the new friends of justice to the mother-half of the race was any place reserved for women in the work which, as popularly elected members of the School Boards which those Acts extinguished, they had done so well; and that place only the inferior one of *co-opted* membership of the subordinate "Education Committee," no woman at present being eligible to either municipal or county councils, which are the "Education Authorities" and co-opting bodies. A woman, however, as a member of an urban district council whose area includes a population of over 20,000, may be even now a member of an "Education Authority." As there are over 60 such urban districts in England and Wales with populations of over 20,000, it would be wise for women practised in educational work to seek election to these councils.

Urban districts of that population, however, are apt for many reasons to seek transformation into municipal boroughs, to the councils of which women are not yet eligible.

The manner in which the "Education Authorities" have used their power of co-opting women as members of "Education Committees" is sufficient proof, if any were needed, that masculine sex-bias, free and uncontrolled, does not intend to permit to the mother-half of the race any real share of influence in the education of their own children. In the overwhelming proportion of instances, two women only have been co-opted to education committees, including from twenty to sixty or even seventy men.

The Women's Suffrage agitation in this country practically began with the return of Mr. John Stuart Mill to Parliament in 1865. It is, I believe, true that a petition from women of Yorkshire, asking for the enfranchisement of their sex, was presented to the House of Commons whilst the Reform Act of 1832 was under consideration. Mrs. Mill's most admirable article, "Enfranchisement of Women," appeared in the WESTMINSTER REVIEW of July, 1851, while Justitia's\* powerful pamphlet, *Women and the Electoral Franchise*, was published in 1855. But no sustained agitation was then begun. When the return of Mr. Mill as M.P. for Westminster assured women of an absolutely trustworthy advocate of their claims in the House of Commons, the active agitation began with the preparation of a Women's Suffrage petition, which, signed by 1,499 women, was presented by Mr. Mill in May, 1866. In 1867 the Representation of the People Bill was before Parliament, to which Mr. Mill put down an amendment that instead of the word "man" the word "person" should be used with regard to the suffrage under the Act. This amendment was defeated, 81 voting for and 202 against it. But a further amendment substituting the words "male persons" was also rejected.

\*Justitia is still living and hoping for justice to women.

The Suffrage Societies, which had come into being as a result of Mr. Mill's return to Parliament, resolved to claim the suffrage under the new Act. Women occupiers in Manchester to the number of 5,347, and in Salford about 1,500, sent in their claims as well as large numbers in other places, and many women freeholders in the counties. Most of the revising barristers threw the names out. The Manchester women consolidated their claims, and appealed against the decision, in the case *Chorlton v. Lings*, which was heard in the Court of Common Pleas, November 7 and 10, 1867, before Lord Chief Justice Bovill and Justices Willes, Keating and Byles. Lord Chief Justice Bovill conceded:—

"It is quite true that a few instances have been brought before us where in ancient times, in the reigns of Henry IV., Henry V., and Edward VI., women appear to have been parties to the return of members of Parliament, and possibly other instances may be found in early times, not only of women having voted, but also of their having assisted in the deliberations of legislature. Indeed, it is mentioned by Selden in his *England's Epinomis*, c. 2, sec. 19, that they did so."

He then proceeded to argue that the non-user of the right for so long a period raised a strong presumption against its having legally existed, that the legislature in '67 used the word "man" in order to designate expressly the male sex, as distinct from women,—and that therefore Lord Brougham's Act (13-14 Vic., c. 21, s. 4) did not apply. The other judges concurred. The second case, *Chorlton v. Kessler*, that of a woman householder at Rusholme with a county qualification, and two other cases, raising different points, the judges refused to hear, and treated them as decided by the first case.

In 1870, Mr. Jacob Bright brought in his "Women's Electoral Disabilities Removal Bill," in the following terms†:

"That in all Acts relating to the qualification and registration of voters or persons entitled to or claiming to be registered and to vote in the election of members of Parliament, wherever words occur which import the male gender, the same shall be held to include women for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to be registered as voters, and to vote in such election, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding."

The Second Reading was carried on May 4 by a majority of 33. Had this Bill been permitted to become law, a long and weary struggle would have been saved, each successive enfranchisement of men would have carried women along with

†It is well to note that the Bill introduced by Mr. Jacob Bright thirty-six years ago, is identical in terms with the measure introduced by Mr. Will Crooks on the last day of the Session of 1904. It was drafted by Dr. Pankhurst, in 1870, for the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage, and introduced by Mr. Jacob Bright at their request. Dr. Pankhurst was also counsel, along with Mr. (Lord) Coleridge, in the case *Chorlton v. Lings*, and was a member of the first Women's Suffrage Committee formed in Manchester, and an earnest supporter of the cause to the day of his death. It is fitting that his wife and children should be the leaders of the advanced section of Women Suffragists' who have made the enfranchisement of women a living question demanding immediate attention.



it, and that higher civilisation and human justice for which Mr. Mill hoped so much from the enfranchisement of women would have been appreciably nearer to-day. Unfortunately, Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, took a decided stand against the enfranchisement of women, which he opposed to the last, and in response to a Government "whip," the motion for going into Committee on May 12 was defeated by a majority of 126. During the 27 years between 1870 and 1897 twelve divisions were taken on the Women's Suffrage question with varying adverse fortunes, and on February 18, 1886, the Second Reading of a Women's Suffrage Bill was carried *without* a division. The dissolution of that year stopped its further progress. In 1892 the Second Reading of Sir Albert Rollit's Bill was *defeated* by a majority of 23, the last adverse majority.

On February 3, 1897, Mr. Faithful Begg's Bill was carried by a majority of 71, but seven years were suffered to pass without a debate and division, so that it came almost as a surprise when, on March 16th, 1904, Sir Charles M'Laren's Women's Suffrage Resolution was carried by a majority of 114.

Whilst women have been working and "patiently" waiting for their enfranchisement, some ameliorative measures as to other wrongs which they suffered have been passed into law, notably the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882, applying to England, Wales, and Ireland, the cognate Acts of 1877 and 1881 applying to Scotland, and the Infants' Act of 1886, giving to the married mothers of the three kingdoms some slight share of claim to the custody and control of their own children. But here the reforming zeal of Parliament seems to have stopped, and for a very simple reason. The exclusively male electorate has, during the period of our working for Women's Suffrage, increased from seven hundred thousand to over seven millions. A male Parliament, elected by male electors only, is far too preoccupied with its own affairs, and the affairs of those to whom it is forced to admit some responsibility, to trouble itself about the well-being of those who are mere "Outlanders" in their native country. I write with deep feeling and no inconsiderable bitterness when I think of the hopelessly futile efforts I have myself made to secure the amendment of the iniquitous English Law of Divorce, the shameless law of intestacy, the miserable inadequacy of the law to secure to married women a just share of their husband's earnings for the support of the family, the outrageous English law of marriage, as expounded by thirteen judges in 1889, and many an other legal iniquity, to explain which adequately would need an article far longer than the present one may be. I have come now to the conclusion that nothing more will be won for womanhood and justice in these islands until women are, equally with men, "makers of Parliament." The Parliamentary Franchise is our most

sorely needed charter of liberty, our key of opportunity, and our weapon of defence against further reckless and unjust legislation. Should the present holders of office remain at the Home Office and the Local Government Board, we may expect the practical exclusion by law of married women from paid industry, whilst from other quarters we may expect a strenuous effort to secure the legal enactment of a "minimum wage," carefully differentiated so as to secure to a man, whether married or single, a wage adequate to the maintenance of himself, a wife, and three children, whilst a woman is only to receive such a wage as is adequate to the maintenance of a single independent adult. *Fabian Tract No. 128. The Case for a Legal Minimum Wage* affirms:

"Whilst the present competitive system of employment by competing private enterprises prevails, the industrial minimum wage must conform to three conditions: (a) *It must be lower for women than for men;* (b) all men must have the same minimum wage, and all women the same minimum wage; (c) the man's wage must be enough to support a family, and the woman's to support a single independent adult.

"This leaves the problem of the bachelor and the widow with children unsolved, just as they are left unsolved by our present system.

"The case of the bachelor may be disregarded for two reasons: (a) If the minimum wage secures enough to the married man, it is no evil, but only a *negligible inequity*, to let the bachelor have a little more than enough; (b) the practice of working men at present shows that, as a matter of fact, they do not find that they can provide themselves with domestic service and companionship more cheaply as bachelors than by marriage."

The case of a widow with a family they propose to provide for by "sufficient assistance from public funds to enable her, with the aid of free public schools, and free meals in them, to make up her income to the standards for heads of families." They quite overlook, when they propose for every single man an enormous excess of wages over those of any woman, the universal effect of thus teaching him, in the most forcible way possible, that he is a far more valuable human being than a woman can possibly be—with the conceit and self-indulgence to which such preferential treatment is sure to lead—nor do they suggest any means whereby the privileged male shall, when married, be induced, or compelled to devote an adequate portion of his wages to the support of wife and family. They do not suggest that the woman's wage shall be such as to enable her to provide against sickness, old age, or lack of employment, nor do they take into account the fact that many unmarried women wage-earners have others to provide for, an aged father or mother, or younger sisters or brothers, &c. It is simply monstrous that it should be possible for male lawmakers and administrators to deal with questions such as these without the equal co-operation and control of women. The man alone all but invariably sees only the half-truth which suits his sedulously educated masculine belief in his own sex as the whole of humanity. It is this unhappy mental condition, the result of ages of masculine domination, which makes the full recognition of the equal citizenship of



women essential to the development and growth in men of the sense of social and political justice. Democracy, in the sense of equal justice to each and all, has not failed, because it has not yet been tried, the dominance of a *sex aristocracy* still prevailing, with the honourable exception of a few small communities, even in those states and nations which boast most loudly of their democratic institutions. The enfranchisement of women would substitute realities for shams, and educate humanity up to the perception of the higher human justice. The woman's movement is now in the fullest sense an international one, and whatever is won for women in these islands would therefore speedily be achieved for the women of all civilised nations, and would of necessity lead to the speedy development all the world over of a higher social and political morality. And such a higher social and political morality is vital to the well-being of the race, and essential to its upward and onward progress.

The urgency of the case being so clear, what stands in the way of the immediate enfranchisement of the women of Great Britain and Ireland? Simply the selfish hostility of some members of the present Cabinet, the temporary convenience of others, and the faithless feebleness of the 283 Liberal members of the present House of Commons who are pledged to Women's Suffrage. Had these 283 M.P.'s been loyal to their pledges, it is absolutely impossible that no place should have been found in 1906 for the consideration of a Women's Suffrage Bill, and only a second place at an evening sitting for the discussion of a Women's Suffrage Resolution. The Prime Minister's words to the Women's Suffrage deputation simply proved that, whilst admitting frankly the absolute justice of our demand, it would be very convenient to him not to have the question raised as one to be immediately dealt with by his Administration. And in this matter Liberal M.P.'s, and the Liberal rank and file outside, have shown themselves, as they had previously repeatedly done, ready to sacrifice the woman's cause to the temporary convenience or wish of their party leaders. The National Liberal Federation in 1905, at the meeting of its general Committee, and again at the meeting of its General Council, passed a Women's Suffrage Resolution by a very large majority. In 1906, the Liberals being in power, neither Committee nor Council dealt with the matter. Did the resolutions of 1905 mean anything at all, or were they merely intended to assure the help of women at the General Election? At any rate, no action for the woman's cause has resulted from them, whilst in this year, 1907, the General Council of the Liberal Federation, sitting at Plymouth, by formal resolution, excluded women from membership of its Executive Committee, and this although over one hundred women delegates were present representing men's Liberal Associations. If women Liberals have any sense of personal dignity, or of loyalty to woman-

hood, no woman will serve in any such capacity in the coming year.

We were warned some months ago that the Reform Bill of the near future would be a "Manhood" Suffrage measure, and more recently hostile members of the Ministry, such as Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lewis Harcourt, have been more outspoken than heretofore, whilst, on the other hand, the Prime Minister urges us to go on "pestering" people, and assures us that, in his opinion, our victory is nearer than we suppose. We accept the double omen. The fight may be fierce, but it shall be short. We demand our enfranchisement as the crowning work of the coming Session. We demand from the 283 Liberal members of the House of Commons, who are publicly pledged to Women's Suffrage, the frank and honest fulfilment of their pledges. Should the enfranchisement of women fail to be promised in the King's Speech as one of the measures of the Session, it is the serious and bounden duty of each Liberal M.P. who professes to be a believer in Women's Suffrage to ballot in the first ballot of the Session for a place for the Women's Suffrage Bill, first introduced by Mr. Jacob Bright in 1870,—to carry the second reading by an overwhelming majority, and then to ask Ministers fully and promptly to adopt the measure and carry it promptly through its remaining stages. In this work they will have the cordial help of many members of each of the other parties. For our own part, our course is clear and defined. We *will* that our sisters shall be politically free to work out their own economic and social salvation and that of the race. We demand the immediate removal of this shameful sex disqualification, and our enfranchisement on the same terms as men, and whatever is to be done must be done now.

When the fathers and founders of the American Republic realised the greatness of the task before them, and of all its issues, they took a solemn pledge of constancy; and we who realise the still greater issues of the task we have undertaken to our countrywomen, to the women of all lands, and to humanity, present and future, follow their noble example, and pledge to the accomplishment of our work "our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred honour."

Even now we are not alone, and soon multitudes will follow and work with us, for

"Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever."

I would refer everyone who seeks information as to the earlier political rights of women in England to Mrs. C. C. Stopes's admirable booklet, "The Sphere of Man," price 6d., T. Fisher Unwin.



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# Votes for Men

By



Mary E. Gawthorpe.

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The Women's Social and Political Union are NOT asking for a vote for every woman, but simply that sex shall cease to be a disqualification for the franchise.

At present men who pay rates and taxes, who are owners, occupiers, lodgers, or have the service or university franchise, possess the Parliamentary vote. The Women's Social and Political Union claim that women who fulfil the same conditions shall also enjoy the franchise. It is estimated that when this claim has been conceded about a million-and-a-quarter women will possess the vote, in addition to the seven-and-a-half million men who are at present enfranchised.

The Women's Social and Political Union claim that a simple measure, giving the vote to women on these terms, shall be passed immediately.

**CONSTITUTION.**

**Objects.**—To secure for Women the Parliamentary Vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

**Methods.**—The objects of the Union shall be promoted by—

1. Action entirely independent of all political parties.
2. Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the franchise is granted.
3. Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government candidate and independently of all other candidates.
4. Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
5. The organising of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
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# VOTES FOR MEN

## HOW THEY WERE WON

It is historical forgetfulness rather than a feeling of masculine superiority which has made it difficult for men to interpret the woman's movement aright; to recognise in it a link in the series of suffrage struggles which have taken place during the last century. Being in indisputable possession of the vote to-day, men are not always imaginative enough to enter into the feelings of those standing at the foot of the political ladder. Nor do they remember, or perhaps they have never known, how recent the period of their own unenfranchisement really is. On the other hand an increasing number of men, remembering these things, know that the time when "Votes for Women" can undeniably be claimed as a question of practical politics is really here. They realise that a time comes in the growth of all movements, whether religious or political, or of whatever kind they may be—when one must either move along with the tide or be swept out by it; that at such times there can be no standing still. They know how to read the signs of the times, and in turning to historical accounts as to how men arrived at the possession of such political power as they to-day enjoy, they find many parallels with, and precedents to, the present campaign.

But so few have the time, and often after a laborious and engrossing day's work, scarcely the inclination for looking up historical precedents. It is for them that I propose to enumerate those turning points in the career of man towards political freedom. I want them to see how all the social structures, of which they are so proud—their achievements in education, trade unionism, and co-operation—centred round this demand for political recognition; I want them to observe how the feeling of suspicious antagonism or impatient toleration which has been so widely shown towards women because, in the twentieth century, they ask for liberty, was once shown to them when they made precisely the same demands.



In the parliamentary debate of 1807, for instance, when Mr. Whitbread brought in a pioneer Education Bill, a Mr. Giddy said:

"However specious in theory the project might be, of giving education to the labouring classes of the poor, it would in effect be found to be prejudicial to their morals and their happiness; it would teach them to despise their lot in life; instead of making them good servants in agriculture, and other laborious employments to which their rank in society has destined them; instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them factious and refractory, as was evident in the manufacturing counties; it would enable them to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books and publications against Christianity; it would render them insubordinate to their superiors; and in a few years the result would be that the legislature would find it necessary to direct the strong arm of power against them, and to furnish the executive magistrates with much more vigorous laws than were now in force."\*

With a little alteration of the text in the foregoing extract, one might almost recognise the kind of speech we have sometimes heard from the lips of the opponent of Woman's Suffrage. Instead of "education" think of the "vote." The latter, which is regarded as a very good thing for men, is, when women are concerned, "prejudicial to their morals and their happiness," as conducing to "teach them to despise their lot in life"; instead of making them good servants in the home "instead of teaching them subordination" they would "be rendered factious and refractory"—and so on.

Only a few years before this, Dr. Bell, the founder of the National School movement, whose activities may possibly have given rise to J. W. Giddy's alarmed apprehensions, had written: "It is not proposed that the children of the poor be educated in an expensive manner or even taught to write and cypher. . . . There is a risk of elevating by an indiscriminate education, the minds of those doomed to the drudgery of their daily labour, above their condition and thereby rendering them discontented and unhappy in their lot."

But although it was not intended to teach the children of the masses "to write and cypher," they had been taught to read; and reading was the key to thinking. And where so few could put their thoughts into written words it is easy to see how possible it was that other activities might ensue. The precious newspapers of that period of continental upheaval, telling particularly of the struggle of the French people for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, were passed eagerly from one to the other of the fortunate who could read the news, afterwards to be passed on by word of mouth to the others. Thus they learned of outside struggles for freedom. Then following on the excesses of the French extremists;

\* "English National Education," by H. Holman.

following on the ascendancy of Napoleon and his defeat at Waterloo; and following on the return of thousands of soldiers who roamed the streets workless and demoralised, the distress which had for years been growing, owing to the changed industrial conditions, was accentuated a thousandfold. Men were holding secret meetings and planning how they might succeed in making things better than they were. They thought the solution of the problem lay in having a reformed Parliament, and that the only way to get this reformed Parliament was by themselves demanding a share in the government of the country. This they set out to win. Within close touch of Waterloo, in 1819, they learned a first lesson: that the way of the reformer is indeed hard, and that it is possible his wages may be death.

Alarmed by the events of recent years in France, and on the Continent generally, the reactionary element in the Government had sought to safeguard any such eventuality in this country by resorting to repression. By prohibiting the holding of public meetings they thought to prevent all dissemination of political propaganda. But in the changed surface of the industrial counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire, with their teeming population, meetings, spite of all, constantly took place. In August of 1819 a requisition of the townspeople of Manchester called upon the authorities for permission to hold a mass meeting; the application was refused, though this was not unexpected. The reformers decided that now was the time for action; come what might they would hold the forbidden meeting. The magistrates of Manchester grew apprehensive at the sight of the enormous crowd which had gathered from all parts of Lancashire and from the West Riding of Yorkshire. They read the Riot Act; and a great concourse of peacefully intentioned people were charged by the military. Many were killed, hundreds more were injured. The speakers were arrested and thrown into prison on a charge of sedition.

The part played by women in this first great trial of strength between the powers of fearless enthusiasm for a just cause on the one hand, and of repression on the other, was an honourably important one. A souvenir picture of this memorable meeting shows women holding up banners bearing such legends as "Equal Representation or Death," "Death or Liberty," and in the deadly panic and confusion which followed on the breaking up of the meeting women suffered in proportion to numbers—and there were many hundreds present—equally with the men. They received no more quarter on account of their womanhood than they did in February of the year 1907, when they were charged by the mounted police outside the House of Commons.

Immediately Parliament passed the notorious "Six Acts." The outcome of the Government's nervous fears, they were directed against personal freedom of thought, as well as of right of meeting. They were, one might say, the apotheosis of that "strong arm of the law" which Mr. Giddy had invoked when passing sentence on the evils of education for the people.



## The First Reform Bill.

But sacred causes are not so easily dismissed, and, as is the tale all down the ages, persecution but warms the soul to the fight, and nerves the hands for still stronger blows. True, with these early reformers, the Six Acts were at first a great hindrance to concerted action; yet although the demand for political rights seemed to have been destroyed, the leaven was steadily at work in another and allied direction. This was in consequence of the growing feeling among certain reformers that successful propaganda was dependent on a feeling of unity amongst the workers; that in order to get this unity, there must be combination.

This same right of combination on the part of the worker had been expressly forbidden by Acts going back as far as the reign of Edward III., when the "Labourers' Acts" were passed. The reformers decided that the next thing to do was to get those Acts repealed. Unsuccessful attempts had once or twice before been made in this direction; now, by 1825, largely owing to the skilful guidance of Francis Place, the Acts against combination were repealed. The first step towards the great Trade Union movement of to-day was made possible. Not at this time did actual Trade Unions come into existence, however, for caution was naturally the order of the day; but associations of men sprang up all over the country with wonderful rapidity. The spirit of the time was gradually getting hold of men, preparing them for the coming struggle.

Seven strenuous years went by. The demand for "the Bill, and nothing but the Bill!" grew louder and louder. Determined opposition was offered to it in both Houses in turn, but riots had taken place in different parts and worse things seemed probable. In the end the King threatened to create the necessary number of new Peers that should ensure the carrying of the Bill. The Lords gave in; the "Great Reform Bill" received the King's assent and was made law amid universal rejoicing.

In a well-known letter written in defence of the militant woman suffrage movement, Mr. T. D. Benson speaks of this period as follows:—

"Of course when men wanted the franchise they did not behave in the manner of our unruly friends. They were perfectly constitutional in their agitation. In Bristol, I find they only burnt the Mansion House, the Custom House, the Bishop's Palace, the Excise Office, three prisons, four toll-houses, and forty-two private dwellings and warehouses; and all in a perfectly constitutional and respectable manner. Numerous constitutional fires took place in the neighbourhood of Bedford, Cambridge, Canterbury, and Devizes. Four men were respectably hanged in Bedford, and three in Nottingham. The Bishop of Lichfield was nearly killed, and the Archbishop of Canterbury was insulted, spat upon, and with great difficulty rescued from amidst the yells and execrations of a violent and angry mob. In this and other

ways the males set a splendid example of constitutional methods in agitating for the franchise. I think we are well qualified to advise the suffragettes to follow our example, to be respectable and peaceful in their methods, like we were, and then they will have our sympathy and support."

The whole letter from which this passage is taken has been distributed in leaflet form throughout the length and breadth of the country. It is certainly one of the most effective historical reminders we could have.

## The Chartists.

After the excitement surrounding the Reform Bill agitation had died down, people began to ask themselves what they had got; if they still had occasion for such great rejoicing. Strange to say many found that rather they had cause for deep sorrow, not to mention chagrin, at what they considered as the betrayal of their interests. They found that only the representatives of the middle classes were reached by the provisions of the Bill, and then only the "male" representatives. Let the man voter of to-day note that from this year 1832 dates that base injustice, without precedent up till then, of shutting out women from political rights on account of sex; the word "male" was interpolated before the word "person" for the first time in our history. This is not the place for more detailed reference to this point, and the reader is referred to the particular pamphlets\* which deal at length with it.

Although then the intelligent working-man of the period, the man who had learned to read and think, considered that he had a burning grievance, his position was not so parlous as that of the woman debarred from voting on account of sex. From this time onwards he was always a potential voter, and was at any time eligible for a vote if he could fulfil the conditions laid down by law.

With the stupendous and sudden growth of the Chartist movement, factions formed within the ranks and personal jealousies were allowed to get the better of united action for principle's sake. The year of revolution, 1848, when Europe was swept by the spirit of revolt, found the Chartists unable to show that united front which was so absolutely necessary. Under the circumstances blank failure was the only possible thing that could have happened.

## The Second Reform Bill.

The 1848 fiasco, though it chilled off timorous and lukewarm spirits, only seemed another opportunity to the really earnest to make a fresh start, but the majority of these chose a new line of action. They gave up for the time the demand for enfranchisement and devoted their energies to the propagating of Trade Union ideas, to the furtherance of co-operative schemes, and in other

\* See Mrs. Elmy's "Woman's Franchise"; Mrs. Stopes' "Sphere of Man."



directions they strove for the emancipation they so long had sought. Vain hope! Although men in thousands were flocking to the Trade Union banner—although co-operative societies grew up and seemed likely to flourish—because working men lacked Parliamentary protection, they were never sure of their position, and they had proved by experience that their Trade Union and Co-operative funds were never safe. They sought the reason for this, and, as if pointing the way, they noted the changed attitude shown by the Government to the lately enfranchised class. From being voteless members of the community, the middle classes had become of political importance. Their interests were defended and their wishes were consulted by those who sought their suffrages and the strength of their backing, as the agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws had plainly shown.

By the early 'sixties of the last century the feeling that political enfranchisement was not only a desirable thing, but an absolute essential, to the security and well-being of the citizen, was simmering in the brains of thousands of fully awakened Trade Unionists. They thought the time had come when they might expect of the Liberal Government in power some action in accordance with the basic principle of Liberalism, which it claimed then, as now, had ever been its greatest tradition: that taxation and representation should go together.

But Mr. Gladstone was afraid to take a step involving such trust in democracy. Again a House sat which could not realise, until it was too late to save itself, that something would have to be done. When Liberalism had let slip a golden opportunity of showing faith in its own principles, an astute Conservative politician came along as the champion of the democratic vote. It was Mr. Disraeli's Government which was responsible for the passing of the "Representation of the People Act," more familiarly known as the Household Suffrage Bill of 1867.

Liberalism had failed in its democratic sympathies when put to the test, and, as recent events have proved, it may not be the only opportunity it has given to another great party to "steal its clothes" (as Disraeli once put it) "while it was out bathing." If Liberalism allows history to be repeated, it will only have itself to blame.

Of course, the measure of 1866 did not go through without the usual reactionary arguments—without the usual fears being expressed for the safety of the nation, and it would startle the average working man of to-day to know in just what light he was regarded at that time by the opponents of the Bill. The scathing parting shot of Mr. Robert Lowe who, after having steadfastly opposed the Bill, and seeing that all was over, said that "we must now at least educate our masters," showed what he thought of the business!

Indeed, the increased facilities for education which have on each occasion followed in the wake of extensions of the franchise were provided for soon after in 1870 by that Compulsory Education Act

which inaugurated the Board School era. Men had now another instalment of tardy political justice. Generally speaking, the man in the town had a vote; generally speaking, the man in the country had not. The country labourer was still beyond the pale. So also were the women—only more so.

### First Steps in Woman Suffrage.

But a brave fight had been made for their recognition. John Stuart Mill had presented a petition to Parliament, signed by 1,499 women (Mr. Mill had never anticipated anything like this number of signatures) and had also moved an amendment to the Bill. The amendment proposed "to leave out the word 'men' and instead to insert 'person.'" It will be noted that the "male person" of the first Reform Bill had become "men" in the second. As the Act of 1851, known as Lord Brougham's, provided "that in all Acts words importing the masculine gender shall be deemed and taken to include female unless the contrary be expressly provided," even when the amendment was lost it was thought that women were qualified to vote in the forthcoming elections, by virtue of this Act. In Manchester and other places some thousands of women got on the register of electors, with the result that as prospective voters they soon found challengers. Litigation was decided on. In accordance with the law laid down by men judges, the claims were disallowed. Women now realised more than ever that if they wanted the vote they would have to get it themselves. They set to work again with redoubled energy to convert the electorate. Right up to the next Suffrage landmark in 1884, the year of the third Reform Bill, the work of the woman suffragist pioneers went on quietly and regularly. But the very quietness of their work combined with the difficulty of coping with the "conspiracy of silence" on the part of the press, made progress necessarily slow. In 1870 a Woman Suffrage Bill got as far as the Committee Stage. It had been carried at the second reading by a majority of 33; but as a result of Mr. Gladstone's opposition to the Bill, during which he gave a plain command to those of his supporters who were championing the woman's cause to abjure their pledges, the Bill was lost.

In the years 1871, 1872, 1873, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, similar Bills were brought forward; were "talked out," blocked, or usually defeated in consequence of the same unworthy tactics as those already instanced. In 1873 when the claims of the agricultural labourer were first embodied in Mr. Trevelyan's "Household Franchise Counties Bill" Mr. Jacob Bright pointed out "that if justice demanded that a million of men be added to the register, which already contained two millions, justice demanded yet more urgently the admission of three hundred thousand women, seeing that women had not a particle of representation, and every argument men used with regard to the County Franchise Bill told with even greater force with regard



to the Women's Disabilities Bill." Mr. Bright gave notice of an amendment to include women householders but the Bill did not get to Committee stage. From this time the claim of the agricultural labourer to the right of the franchise was given a prominent place in current politics. Hope rose high in the breasts of the workers for Women's Suffrage that their claims would be heard too.

### **The Third Reform Bill.**

Liberals, having learned a lesson from their diffidence in '66, knew that it would be a very popular thing if, just as the Conservatives had been the means of enfranchising the artisan, they were to render the same obliging service to the agricultural labourer; and Mr. Gladstone signified his intention of bringing in a Bill providing for this when he got the opportunity. In 1880, with the return of a Liberal Ministry to power this opportunity came. The usual period of campaigning led up to the introduction of the Bill. Joseph Arch and others, through the Agricultural Labourers' Union, did for the second "Representation of the Peoples' Bill" what the political unions had done for the Reform Bill in 1832, and the Trade Union Associations for the Household Franchise Bill, 1867.

At the same time crowded and enthusiastic meetings, often of women only, were being addressed by the suffragists of the day in all the large towns. The total number of signatures attached to the petitions, memorials, etc., in the interest of women's suffrage during the same period was far greater than the number attached to the County Franchise petitions, running into several millions, yet the Government's opposition to the legitimate claims of women was plainly apparent. Still the champions of women's suffrage were sensibly increasing both inside and outside the House.

Outside, for instance, the Trade Union Congress of 1884 carried a resolution on woman suffrage with only three dissentients. The resolution read as follows: "That this Congress is strongly of opinion that the Franchise should be extended to women ratepayers."

Inside the House the number of sympathisers was never so large, and Mr. Woodall, with a substantial backing of 104 pledged Members, had moved an amendment to the new Bill, then in the Committee stage, so as to include women. Yet when Mr. Gladstone threatened to drop the whole Bill if the movers of the amendment persisted in their demand, that amendment was defeated and the pledges broken at the behest of the leader. Mr. Gladstone said: "The cargo which the vessel carries is, in our opinion, a cargo as large as she can safely carry." When political wrecks are threatened, the usual order of things is reversed: the women are thrown overboard first. This will always be the case

so long as women do not count politically. This betrayal of the women's cause was, in 1884, a very heavy blow for the women suffragists; they felt that not for another generation were they likely to have so golden a chance. As after the Chartist agitation in 1848, many men directed their energies into trade unionist and social reform channels, seeking to show fitness by service, so many of the women suffragists sought to "qualify themselves" as it were for the Parliamentary rights denied them, by taking part in the politics of the day. The increased activities of women in party politics dates from this period. Many stayed on the ship, of course, determined to work patiently until the tide should serve.

### **After the Betrayal.**

Since that great disappointment, Bills, or resolutions, have frequently been put forward. In 1892 it seemed as though success were at hand, the result of the debate on the second reading being a narrow adverse majority of twenty-three; and this only after Mr. Gladstone had once more entered the lists as an opponent of justice for women. A letter written by him was circulated amongst Members two days prior to the debate. On this occasion Mr. A. J. Balfour, who supported the Bill, said that when any further alteration of the franchise was proposed, "they would have to face and deal with the problem of Women's Suffrage, and deal with it in a complete fashion."

In 1897 another Bill successfully passed the second reading by a majority of seventy-one, but opposition tactics prevented its consideration in Committee. The debates of recent years are still fresh in the public memory, particularly those of 1906, and of 1907, when the Bill was talked out, and of 1908, when it was carried by the overwhelming majority of 271 to 92, but blocked by the refusal of the Liberal Government to give it further facilities.

It would seem to the fair-minded, if critical observer, that the case for the plaintiff is now completed. Women have shown by their achievements in party politics, by the unselfish and valuable work they have done through their Liberal Associations, through their Unionist Associations, and through their Primrose Leagues, as well as in the varied directions of social reform, that they know how to serve loyally and well that party they elect to support. Their work in the direction of local government has, too, it might be said, given eminent satisfaction.

It is true that these Local Government rights, and such measures as the Married Women's Property Act, came woman's way; but no one can dispute that they were only made possible by the very activities of the women who were fighting all along the line for equal political rights with men, and women may be forgiven for regarding them more as "sops" than anything else. The last measure of this class, the Women's Local Qualification Bill, 1907, is a case in point. Useful though it is in itself, had



women been possessed of the rights wrongfully taken from them in 1832, there would have been no need for such a measure. No, far-seeing women are not very grateful for such Bills.

Yet in spite of great disheartenings, in spite of frequent betrayals of their cause, the Suffrage loyalists stuck to their guns in the orthodox and constitutional way—arranging endless deputations, sending in petitions, and signing memorials—until the inception of the militant tactics in 1905, when the first arrests were made in connection with the new movement.

We have seen, then, that during each successive suffrage agitation fought by men, women have fought for their rights too.

Side by side with man's claims they put women's; side by side with his petitions they placed theirs—but they did not get the vote.

Yet the *longest* petition that was presented in the interest of any question in a particular session was presented in the interest of woman suffrage, and the *largest number* of petitions in the interest of woman suffrage. The County Franchise Bill of 1874 received 168 petitions, with 48,797 signatures in its favour, while the Women's Suffrage Bill of the same session had 1,273 petitions, with 415,622 signatures—yet women did not get the vote! Numbers don't always count. As a matter of fact, each time the male voter got a further extension of the principle of enfranchisement it became harder and harder for the woman's claim to be considered.

### What the Vote has Signified to Men.

Meanwhile, how did the man voter fare in town and country in consequence of his political importance? The man in the town has had his vote just forty years, whilst the man in the country has been in enjoyment of his for over twenty years. It cannot be gainsaid that the vote has been of great value to both these men. To-day the man-voter thinks it may be of still greater use; he is putting a value on his vote which possibly bears some relation to the high value placed upon it by women, in their effort to win it for themselves. Conditions of work and of wages may not yet be all that the modern workman would wish, but there is not the shadow of a doubt as to the vast improvements which have been made.

We are told\* that men's wages "have risen from 50 to 100 per cent. (and this in spite of all questions of undercutting) in nearly all trades. In the year 1831, in a certain colliery in the Lothians, men were receiving 11s. a week, in 1872 they had 23s. 4d. per week, while in 1892 they were paid 33s. 3d. per week. To-day their wage is 40s. per week."

Many other examples might be given, but space forbids. How have women's wages been affected during the same period? Mr. Sidney Webb says: "Women's wages for unskilled labour still gravitate, as a rule, pretty closely to the subsistence level, below

\*"Labour in the Longest Reign," Sidney Webb.

which they can never have sunk for any length of time." This means that, contrary to the experience of men during the last century, women's wages have, on the whole, made no advance. They are in reality slowly but surely coming down. The average wage for women for the whole of the country is under 7s. 6d. per week, and in the case of thousands it must be very much less, because the figures employed in the calculation included the highest paid women's work as well as the lowest. Comment is superfluous. He must indeed belie his reputation as an intelligent citizen who misses the significance of such figures, and what they mean for him. Sooner or later he is bound to have to reckon with them, for just so long as woman is kept in her defenceless unfranchised condition, as part of the industrial community himself he cannot escape injury. It is useless to cry, "Organise! organise!" to women, and refuse to help them win that political power which alone will make their industrial claims of effect.

I have already pointed out that, with all the fervid organising of men's Trade Unions in the early days of the vote, men were unable even to secure the safety of their funds, and certainly they had no power whereby to drive home an industrial claim until they got the vote. To expect women to achieve what, without a vote, men have only been able to achieve with it, is a little strange. It is of significance, too, with regard to the anti-Government policy of the suffragettes, that the line they have taken was exactly that taken by working men on the occasion of their first attempt to run working-men candidates. This was in 1874, when the Trade Unionists, conscious of the newly-won political strength of 1867, and indignant "at the treatment they had received at the hands of the Liberals, put forth independent candidates—no less than thirteen." It is certain that the action of the pioneers of working-men's representation was directly in antagonism to the Liberal Government which had betrayed them, whereas the guns of the women are to be turned on any Government which, in power, refuses to give the political enfranchisement which alone will result in the cessation of hostilities.

Ever since the possession of the Parliamentary vote enabled men to legitimise their trade unions, friendly societies, and co-operative societies, they were able not only to bring direct influence to bear on the conditions of value of their labour, but at the same time their political value became greatly enhanced by the overtures made to them by the two great opposing parties. Both have made and do make strenuous efforts to win their allegiance. Men voters are flattered in the well-known political jargon as "intelligent working men," and so forth; the possession of the vote has sent the value of their good-will up enormously. So far as men have known how, they have taken advantage of the compliments heaped upon them, and of the power they were told they possessed. They have asked for special legislation, and in some cases have succeeded in getting it passed. Many of Mr. Giddy's forebodings



of a hundred years ago have undoubtedly come true; but he would be a very bold man who would propose the disfranchisement of the "British working man"; he who dared would certainly get short shift were he a candidate for Parliamentary honours. Neither dare anyone suggest that the "strong arm of the law" should be directed against his freedom—that is reserved for the occasions when his sisters and daughters ask for it.

Even with all this power men are not satisfied. The General Election of 1906 saw the establishment in the British House of Commons of a new political party, calling itself the Labour Party. Now there are over 5,000,000 women workers in Great Britain. They are just as much in need of representation as men. In the great Lancashire Cotton Unions where the membership of the sexes is in the ratio of 96,000 women to 69,000 men, we have an instance of a trade union affiliated to the Labour Representation Committee which controls the activities of the Labour Party in Parliament. Men and voteless women contribute alike to the Parliamentary levy required of the affiliated unions. Yet after all, Parliamentary representatives are only responsible to actual voters—men—and not to women, who in the final award, so far as representation is concerned, have only a sentimental claim upon them. Here in the Trade Union stronghold itself is "Taxation without Representation."

#### What we want.

We want, then, a Government measure extending to women.

We want equality of voting rights; that what qualifies a man shall qualify a woman.

We want men voters who sympathise with this object to bring pressure to bear on the Government through their members.

We want men to see that this fight is not being waged in the interests of women as against men—neither sex can stand alone—but that it is for *their* welfare, through the welfare of their wives, daughters, mothers, and sisters that we stand.

We want men to see that hereditary class rule is no worse than the hereditary sex rule we suffer under to-day.

We want to be free, that men themselves may be free.

324.30941  
15169✓

## MEN'S LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

*The Right Honourable* 40, MUSEUM STREET,  
*H. H. ASQUITH, K.C., M.P.* LONDON, W.C.  
June 7th, 1910.

SIR,

The Executive Committee of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage, while regretting your decision not to receive a deputation\* from them in support of the removal of the political disabilities of women, nevertheless very gladly comply with your suggestion that they should put before you in writing a summary of the facts upon which they rely in maintaining that the time is now ripe for the admission of women to the Parliamentary Franchise.

Of the abstract justice of that reform we do not propose to speak. That is not often contested, even by its opponents. The principal object of this letter is to demonstrate to you the rapidly increasing interest which it arouses, not only among women themselves, but also among men of all shades of political opinion, and the very large measure of support which it receives to-day from Members of Parliament, from the electorate at large, and from those whose acquaintance with political and social conditions entitles them to be heard with respect.

The argument against Women's Suffrage has still no other ground than that contained in the dictum of Mr. Serjeant Heywood in 1790 that non-voters were "those who lie under natural incapacities and therefore cannot exercise a sound discretion, or are so much under the influence of others that they cannot have a will of their own in the choice of candidates." We contend that the facts of the movement for the enfranchisement of women are sufficient to prove that the appropriateness of that description to them is no longer

\* We may remind you that the deputation was to have been introduced by Mr. H. Y. Stanger, K.C., M.P., and to have consisted of Sir Edward Busk, Sir John Cockburn, Canon Hicks<sup>1</sup> (Manchester), Sir Victor Horsley, Herbert Jacobs, Canon Kempthorne<sup>2</sup> (Liverpool), Professor J. H. Muirhead (Birmingham University), J. Forbes Robertson, H. Y. Stanger, Canon Talbot (Bristol), I. Zangwill.

<sup>1</sup>Bishop Elect of Lincoln. <sup>2</sup>Bishop of Hull.



conceivable, and that when once it is admitted that women are capable of a political judgment their political necessities and the necessities of the commonwealth render their exclusion from the franchise both unjustifiable and perilous.

The growth of the movement may be briefly illustrated by the following preliminary facts:

The first petition in favour of Women's Suffrage was presented to the House of Lords by Lord Carlisle in 1847. Between that date and the year 1905, 1,748 petitions were presented to the House of Commons, containing 743,747 signatures; an account will be found below of the Voters' petitions organized by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies at the recent General Election.

The first bill for admitting women to the Parliamentary franchise was introduced in 1870 by Mr. Jacob Bright, and passed its second reading by a majority of 33. Since that date eleven bills have been introduced into the House of Commons with the same object; three of them passed their second reading by majorities varying from 71 in 1897 to 179 in 1908.

The work of the various Women's Suffrage Societies will be dealt with in its proper place; but we desire here to call your attention to the overwhelming evidence of the political energy of women which is afforded by the growth of women's political associations. The first Women's Liberal Association was founded in 1881, the Primrose League in 1885, the Women's Liberal Federation in 1887. The value of the work done by these and many local organizations is unquestioned; but in all of them the desire for the franchise is rapidly assuming an importance which politicians who count upon their help cannot any longer ignore.

One other fact of general interest remains to be mentioned. Since the Trades Union Congress in 1884 passed an almost unanimous resolution in favour of the enfranchisement of women the approval of organized bodies of working men and women has been repeatedly expressed, and to-day there is not a Labour organization in the country that would think of taking up any other attitude. Individual workmen may hesitate before the fear of women's competition; organized and informed societies know that, while competition is inevitable, it is neither just nor wise to refuse even to their competitors the unique protection of the vote.

## Societies in favour of Women's Suffrage.

The Societies which demand the vote for women are numerous. They may be divided, broadly, into two classes:— (A) Those which have no party bias, and (B) those which are within the party system. We shall deal with class A first.

### (A.) NON-PARTY SOCIETIES.

It is a common, but entirely erroneous, idea that there is considerable divergence of opinion among these societies as to the scope of the reform which they demand. Without a single exception these societies ask for the Parliamentary vote for women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men. While adhering strictly to this demand, they are all prepared to accept as an instalment any measure which will once and for all establish the principle that no person shall be debarred from the possession of the vote merely on the ground of sex. This, the only perfectly logical, demand has attracted into their ranks women and men of all political parties, and has received the approval of all except the purely partisan politician. The societies are aware that the final drafting of the Act when it is passed will be necessarily in accordance with the views of the majority at that time in Parliament. They themselves, therefore, can do no more than adhere to the plainest and most simple demand for equality of men and women in relation to whatsoever franchise may now or in the future be established.

The Non-party societies are as follows:—\*

- (1) The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.
- (2) The National Women's Social and Political Union.
- (3) The Men's League for Women's Suffrage.
- (4) The Women's Freedom League.
- (5) The New Union.
- (6) A large number of subsidiary societies, *e.g.*, The Women Writers' League, the Actresses' Franchise League, the Women Graduates, the Artists' League, Suffrage Atelier.

\* In order of seniority, approximately.



- (7) The Men's Committee for Justice to Women.
- (8) The New Constitutional Suffrage Society.
- (9) The Men's Political Union for the Enfranchisement of Women.
- (10) The Church League.

In order that some idea may be gained of the enormous progress which the movement has made, it is necessary to give some particulars concerning these societies.

(1) **The National Union.** This Society was formed mainly by the initiative of John Stuart Mill in 1866. Throughout its long career a vast number of distinguished men and women have been members of it. It has pursued consistently a policy of constitutional agitation, presenting petitions, promoting Bills in Parliament, and supporting all candidates, without distinction of party, who have made public profession of their belief in women's suffrage. When Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman took office in 1906, no fewer than 420 Members of Parliament had made that profession—constituting a larger majority than existed for any other controversial measure then before the public. In the present Parliament there are approximately 400 members, of whom it may be said with even greater force that they constitute the largest body in the House pledged to any important reform. (See further the section "Parliamentary").

The Union consists of a large number of affiliated societies, of which the largest is the London Society for Women's Suffrage. In January, 1909, these societies numbered 70; they now number nearly 120. Each one of them has greatly increased its membership.

Much of the work is done by combination of local societies, *e.g.*, The Yorkshire Organization Committee, Cumberland and Westmoreland, Surrey, Sussex and Hants.

This Society entertained in April, 1909, the delegates of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, at which no less than 23 nations were represented.

Bye-election work has been vigorously pursued, the Society supporting, as always, any candidate who satisfied them as to his views, or if neither or both satisfied them doing propaganda work.

This policy should be carefully distinguished from that which is known as the Anti-government Policy. Between Feb. 23rd and Oct. 28th, 1909, 14 elections were attended, in only three of which was any candidate supported:— P. Smith (Labour), Taunton; G. Falconer (Liberal), Forfar; G. W. Gulland (Liberal), Dumfries.

At the General Election of 1910, apart from calling upon every candidate to sign a strict pledge, the Society started a Voters' Petition. In some 250 constituencies in Great Britain voters were invited to inscribe their names (and numbers for the sake of identification) upon petition forms. As examples of the success which this campaign attained we may quote statistics:—

Blackburn	....	6,463		Radcliffe-cum-Farn-	
Dewsbury	...	4,002		worth	... 4,672
Mid-Derby	...	4,000		Newcastle-on-Tyne	4,500
Barnsley	....	7,550		Portsmouth	.... 4,103

Altogether from about 250 constituencies, 280,000 Electors signed the Petition.

Since the General Election, the Society has decided to run Suffrage candidates in opposition to anti-suffragists who at present hold their seats by small majorities. It should be clearly understood that no regard will be paid to the party to which the anti-suffragist belongs.

The object of the policy is to show local and central party organizations that they cannot risk selecting a candidate who is not sound on Women's Suffrage.

(2) **The National Women's Social and Political Union.** This Society was formed about five years ago (1906) with a view to prosecuting the demand for votes for women with greater vigour in new ways. Its origin was as follows:—

It was a natural conclusion in 1906 that with 420 pledged members in the House of Commons, legislation would rapidly follow. Questions were therefore put by several women to Cabinet Ministers at their meetings. These questions were invariably disregarded, and organizers of meetings then discovered the principle that while men might ask questions in public meetings, women might not.

As no answers were given and no legislation was promised, the Women's Social and Political Union was formed with the



definite object of adopting the line taken by the Irish Home Rule party, i.e., of opposing the Government in power until legislation was promised.

The particular methods by which the Society has proceeded are too well known to need recapitulation. It is sufficient here to say that with the ready assistance of a section of the press—which sedulously disregards any form of suffrage agitation that it cannot hold up to opprobrium in its editorial columns—the Society has made its name a household word from one end of the world to the other. It is not for another Society to enter into any discussion as to the merits of that policy; this memorial is concerned only with the facts

It is contended by many (including women suffragists) that the new policy has “put back the clock.” Perhaps everyone will agree that it ought to have done so, just as the much more serious defiance of the authorities ought to have been fatal to the Reform Bill of 1832.

What are the facts?

In 1905 the Society did not exist.

In the year 1909-1910 its income was £33,000, not including that of the publishing department known as the Woman's Press, amounting for the same period to £4,510 19s. 11d.

The Society's weekly paper, “Votes for Women,” has a circulation of between 30,000 and 40,000.

[This is the more remarkable as other weekly papers are published, such as the “Common Cause” which represents the views of the Constitutional Society, and “The Vote,” which is the organ of the Women's Freedom League].

It has held more than 20,000 meetings in the year, in all parts of the United Kingdom.

In the General Election it opposed the Government candidate in some 40 seats.

One hundred and sixty-three women during the year were found willing to go to prison in support of the Society's policy, and of these no less than 110 went to the extreme length of refusing food.

Passing over as immaterial to the present argument the propriety of this course, it is worth while asking whether there

is any cause in the programme of the great political parties which would call forth such devotion as this.

To describe it as hysteria, the thirst for notoriety, or sheer madness, is precisely the error into which Diocletian and the Stuart dynasty habitually fell.

In proof of this is the well-known fact that from the General Election the Society announced a truce until such time as the new Government should have fair opportunity of making its policy known. During that time no militant action of any kind whatever has taken place either organised or sporadic.

Complete discipline and self-control are not the normal characteristics of a hysterical diathesis or mental alienation.

(3) **The Men's League for Women's Suffrage.** Our own Society was founded in 1907 with the object of organizing the large body of men in favour of the movement which we knew to exist all over the country. It immediately attracted the support of men of all parties and in all walks of life, and its progress has been beyond the expectation of its founders, having regard to the notorious unwillingness of men to join political associations. The Society has been entirely independent of, and has declined to criticise, the other suffrage societies. Its membership has increased and is increasing steadily, and new branches are being formed in all the chief towns in the provinces. Of these the strongest are those in Manchester, Liverpool and Bristol. Perhaps the most striking feature of our work has been the steady influx of men of intellectual attainments, men of expert knowledge and high professional standing. Among our members and sympathisers are leading divines of all denominations, lawyers, doctors, scholars, scientists, economists, authors, journalists, artists.

In this connection we would especially commend to your notice the pamphlet (enclosed) containing a list of representative men who during the months of January and February, 1909, signed a declaration hastily drawn up in view of a projected anti-suffrage gathering. In face of such a document it is impossible to contend that the movement is either sectional, partisan, or faddist. It is indeed safe to assert that, with the exception of those who dislike democratic government (or its further extension) altogether, and of those who illogically persist in identifying a principle with certain



activities which they dislike, no thinking people are opposed to the cause.

(4) **The Women's Freedom League.** This Society, the policy of which differs in few important respects from that of the N.W.S.P.U. is composed of women who preferred, for various reasons, a different form of internal administration.

The Society was founded about twelve months after the N.W.S.P.U. and its progress also is remarkable.

The Society has likewise opposed Government candidates, with this difference, that at the General Election when the preceding Government went to the country they impartially opposed distinguished members of both the great parties who might be presumed to be probable members of any new ministry and were anti-suffragist.

During 1908 29 members of the Society were in prison ; in 1909 the number was about 30.

This Society, like all the other chief Suffrage Societies, has from time to time invited you to receive a deputation which would acquaint you formally with facts which in their opinion ought to be in your possession. When in the early part of last summer you, having received no deputation from a suffrage society since your assumption of the office of Prime Minister, once again declined this request, this Society had in waiting at the doors of the House, from July 5th until October 28th, a peaceful deputation prepared at any moment to lay before you the facts in question. Altogether over 300 women waited for 729 hours for this purpose.

It is worthy of special notice that this attempt to obtain audience (1) was entirely orderly and constitutional, and (2) as such made a very considerable impression on many members of Parliament and other sections of the community who failed to see why you and your colleagues should receive deputations of the most widely different kinds in connection with proposed legislation on matters of far less importance than a question of franchise, and yet should refuse to see them. It is well known that many of your political supporters found it quite impossible to justify your rebuff to those who approached you with such peaceful importunity.

(5) **The New Union** is an association of men and women who in general support the policy of the Women's Freedom League, but who as a society devote themselves almost

entirely to platform work. They have held regularly most successful meetings in the London Parks.

(6) **The Subsidiary Societies** are composed of women who are earning their living in various professions and desire as such to render service to the movement. Their existence emphasizes the important fact that women who are engaged in professional work are all but unanimous in recognizing the immense importance to themselves and the community at large of political equality among workers. In this connection special importance must be attached to the fact that a plébiscite of the women doctors showed that there was practical unanimity in that profession. This we cannot but regard as an astonishing evidence of the feeling which exists on this question among women holding responsible positions. The figures were 538 to 15.

(7) **Men's Committee for Justice to Women.** Founded February, 1909, to watch cases in which women were charged in connection with suffrage work. Its members have at various times placed special information at the disposal of the Home Office. Since the formation of the Conciliation Committee the Committee have acted in support of their efforts.

(8) **The New Constitutional Suffrage Society** is composed of men and women who place special reliance upon the policy of opposing every Government which does not place women's suffrage upon its programme. It acts by constitutional methods, and is remarkable as having been formed mainly by members of a constitutional Society which, in refusing to adopt this policy, seemed to them to be casting aside the most effective weapon against the indifference of politicians.

(9) **The Men's Political Union for the Enfranchisement of Women** is a body of men who believe in the policy advocated by the National Women's Social and Political Union. They are, therefore, opposed to the Government, and are specially concerned to protect and, if necessary, to take the place of women who desire to ask questions at meetings addressed by Cabinet ministers. Their numbers are increasing steadily.

(10) **The Church League** consists of members of the Church of England, who resent the suggestion that women's suffrage is in any way inconsistent with the principles of Christianity. The growth of this, the most recent of ancillary suffrage organizations, is quite remarkable.



(B.) **PARTY ASSOCIATIONS.**

- (1) Forward Suffrage League (within the Women's Liberal Federation).
- (2) Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association.
- (3) People's Suffrage Federation.

With these may be included party associations which, not primarily founded to advance women's suffrage, have none the less officially identified themselves with the movement.

- (a) London Liberal Federation.
- (b) Women's National Liberal Association.
- (c) Women's Liberal Federation.
- (d) Conservative and Unionist Association.
- (e) Labour Party.
- (f) Independent Labour Party.

(1) **Forward Suffrage League.**—This is an organization within the Women's Liberal Federation, composed of Liberal women who are in definite revolt against the ignoring of their claims by the Liberal Party, and while remaining Liberal in sympathy have ceased for practical purposes to assist the Liberal Government. In connexion with this it is worth mentioning that throughout the country there have been a large number of resignations of women prominent in local Liberal associations, some of whom have very reluctantly severed their connexion with the party.

(2) **Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association.**—This Society, formed in November, 1908, "although pledging itself not to oppose any official Unionist candidate, will not work as an association for any candidate who is opposed to women's franchise."

(3) **The People's Suffrage Federation**, founded in 1909, has for its object "to obtain the Parliamentary suffrage for every adult man and woman on a short residential qualification." Its members include a large number of influential politicians of advanced progressive views.

PARTY ASSOCIATIONS, NOT PRIMARILY  
SUFFRAGIST.

- (a) **The Council of the London Liberal Federation** in 1910 passed a resolution declaring that "the

denial of the Parliamentary franchise to adults of both sexes is inconsistent with Liberal principles."

(b) **The Women's National Liberal Association**, while maintaining a neutral attitude on the subject of Women's Suffrage, includes among its objects the promotion of "just legislation for women." While not departing from its attitude of neutrality, the Council of the Association, in 1908, passed by a narrow majority a resolution expressing gratification at the prospect of facilities being granted by the Government for the inclusion of women in a future Reform Bill.

(c) **The Women's Liberal Federation** was formed in 1887. The promoters had no intention of giving prominence to Women's Suffrage, or of including it in the programme of what was intended to be a purely Party Organization. The early accession of many women outside the inner Party circle speedily made it clear that the growing demands of women could not be ignored, and that the most effective co-operation of women with the Liberal Party must be on the basis of equality in regard to the Parliamentary franchise. This view gained an increased measure of support in the Federation year by year, and at the Annual Council of 1893 the second Object of the Federation was altered so as to include the promotion of the Parliamentary franchise for all women possessing "any of the legal qualifications which entitle men to vote." The history of the Federation since 1893 shows that the demand for the franchise has grown in persistence and determination in proportion as the Federation has grown in strength and become more representative of the Liberal women of the country. A significant indication of this is to be seen in the growth from year to year of a feeling that the Federation's support of Liberal candidates opposed to Women's Suffrage was inconsistent with the Federation's second Object, and was calculated to produce on politicians the impression that women were not in earnest in demanding their enfranchisement. This feeling gradually became so strong, that in 1902 the Annual Council passed a resolution, without a division, instructing the Executive to send the Federation's official organiser "to help those candidates only who support Women's Suffrage in the



House of Commons." This has been the policy of the Federation ever since. Each year the Federation has passed a resolution urgently calling upon the Government to remove without delay the sex disqualification of women in regard to the Parliamentary franchise. At the Annual Council of May, 1910, the Executive Committee's resolution on the subject, viz.:—"That this Council records its profound regret that the grant of the Parliamentary franchise to women has not yet been included in the programme of the Liberal Government and it calls upon the Liberal Party to press forward this essential reform without delay," was endorsed.

Among several important societies which subscribe to the Women's Liberal Federation is the Women's Liberal Metropolitan Union, whose object is to promote Liberal principles in the government of the country, and to help forward Women's Suffrage. Its membership is about 5,600 distributed among 46 affiliated associations.

(d) **The Conservative and Unionist Association** at two annual meetings has affirmed the principle of women's suffrage.

(e) The Conference of the Labour Party, February, 1910, while pronouncing in favour of male and female Adult Suffrage, also passed a resolution declaring that "the active participation of women in the work of government is in the best interests of the nation," demanding that the exclusion of women in the promised Reform Bill "shall not be left to the chances of an amendment, but that it shall become a vital part of the Government measure," and further committing the Conference to the view that any attempt to exclude women should be met by "the uncompromising opposition of organised labour."

(f) The Independent Labour Party, whose programme includes the immediate Parliamentary enfranchisement of women, has passed resolutions in favour of that object at its annual Conferences. At the last Conference, held in London in 1910, a resolution which, while reaffirming the Party's demand for Adult Suffrage, supported "the immediate extension of the franchise to women on the same terms as it is granted to men," was carried by acclamation.

## Parliamentary.

The history of the movement in the House of Commons has already been indicated (pp. 2 and 3), and figures have been given proving that there is a majority in the present Parliament for the reform we desire.

It has been argued in the past that the pledges given to women's societies were not to be taken seriously. This remarkable imputation upon the honour of Members of Parliament we leave to the anti-suffragists— who believe at the same time that men are more fit to govern than women. We decline, however, to believe that pledges given at the General Election in 1910 are of this character, as a large proportion of them were made to men, *i.e.*, to electors whose resentment against the breaking of pledges has practical significance.

You are further aware that there have been for some time in the House of Commons two committees of members who favour women's enfranchisement—one a general committee embracing members of all parties, the other composed of Liberal members. These committees have been responsible for the Bills which have recently been introduced by Mr. W. H. Dickinson, M.P., and Mr. H. Y. Stanger, late M.P.

The present session, however, has witnessed an entirely new, and in many respects a far more significant organisation within the House, *viz.*, the Conciliation Committee. This Committee, the Chairman of which is the Earl of Lytton, was formed on the initiative of Mr. H. N. Brailsford, a member of our executive committee, with the object of seeking to bring together the suffrage societies and the Government upon some common ground. Misunderstandings had undoubtedly arisen of a most unfortunate character, and it was felt that these might be removed more easily by an entirely new body acting in a mediating capacity.

This Committee, composed of prominent members of all four parties, have drawn up a Bill which is to be introduced by Mr. Shackleton, M.P., under the Ten Minutes Rule, as soon as the House reassembles. The text of the Bill has already been made public. As has been shewn already it is not the Bill for which the societies are unanimously asking, but all the societies recognise that it embodies an honest



attempt to compromise for the sake of the underlying principle.

The chief difficulty all along has been the fact that the parties have been afraid to risk their own interests. The Liberal and Labour parties have frankly sacrificed the democratic principles for which they exist, because they feared lest in the present complicated franchise the inclusion of women would strengthen the property vote—and this in face of the conclusive and obviously impartial figures prepared by Mr. Philip Snowden and Mr. Keir Hardie. Conservatives, on the other hand, in the conviction that the working classes would not long be satisfied with the limited franchise, have argued that women's suffrage would involve adult suffrage with consequent peril to Conservative interests.

The Conciliation Committee's Bill makes concessions to both parties on the basis of the municipal franchise of 1884. Liberals thus gain the exclusion of the ownership class, and also of lodger voters—a class which in their opinion would have been unduly reinforced in the Conservative interest by wives and daughters of wealthy men. Conservatives, on the other hand, secure that the area of enfranchised women shall be small.

We are informed that the Bill has powerful support on these grounds, and also on the further ground that in important reforms progress ought to be gradual. As electors, therefore, we urge upon you most emphatically the view that such a Bill demands the early and unfettered consideration of Parliament, and that, should it pass its early stages, the Government should afford facilities for its being passed into law this session.

In conclusion, you will have observed that we have refrained from arguing out our case. We have stated bare, incontrovertible facts demonstrating the depth of the feeling and the extent of the demand for the extension of the Suffrage to Women. It speaks much for the movement that in the main its agitation has been constitutional, and that, notwithstanding a continued policy of masterly inactivity by the Government of the day. Our organization is outside the routine party machinery; our appeal is beyond the stereotyped party cries. Our increasing numbers are being largely recruited from those who are prepared to promote the Reform,

independent of party formulæ or party loyalty. We recognise the difficulties in which the Premier in a ministry, not united on the subject, must be placed. But a similar cleavage divides the front bench of the Opposition; and these cross divisions may counterbalance each other. We do not ask that this question be made a party question or a Cabinet question. But we feel we are justified, and not the least by your own declaration in the Albert Hall, in demanding that full opportunity should be granted for the debate of this Bill, to ensure its embodiment in the law of the constitution, if the House of Commons in its wisdom shall so determine. You, Sir, to endorse the policy that the will of the Commons shall prevail. Our simple request is that this Bill in all its stages shall receive the full consideration of the House of Commons.

(Signed) HERBERT JACOBS, *Chairman.*

GOLDFINCH BATE,

H. G. CHANCELLOR, M.P. } *Hon. Treasurers.*

J. MALCOLM MITCHELL, *Hon. Secretary.*

(*On behalf of the Committee.*)

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#### NAMES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

T. M. BUDGETT.

SIR EDWARD BUSK.

CECIL CHAPMAN, J.P.

R. F. CHOLMELEY.

JOSEPH CLAYTON,

SIR JOHN COCKBURN, K.C.M.G.

C. V. DRYSDALE, D.Sc.

E. DUVAL.

CAPT. C. M. GONNE.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

A. M. LANGDON, K.C.

W. S. B. McLAREN, M.P.

JOHN MANSON.

H. W. NEVINSON.

W. R. SNOW.



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