

# THE ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW

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Telegraphic Address: "Adversaria, London."  
Telephone Number: 8472 Gerrard.

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## "DOUBLING THE VOTE" ?

IMPERIAL politics are in the air, and while the Imperial Press Conference is with us, and we have opportunities of comparing views with our sisters from across the seas, it will be interesting to see what importance the few who possess it attach to the women's vote. Apparently not very much, and let Suffragists take this to heart, for either it means that colonial women are as supine about politics as the great mass of English women are about local government, or that they recognise the parliamentary vote as a comparatively unimportant matter in respect of those intimate family questions, which women have really at heart. "I have a vote, of course," said a bright young woman journalist from Australia to a representative of a daily newspaper, "but I have not voted yet. Most of our women take a very scanty interest in politics. They vote just as their husbands and brothers do, *so it's just doubling the male vote.*" The italics are ours, but we are grateful to our Australian sister for making so clear to us what we have always suspected, viz., that the women's vote will do very little except prove a burden to the women themselves, though it may give a handful of agitators a dangerous opportunity.

Take the married women first. Under existing electoral law it will, of course, be impossible to enfranchise them unless they are either householders or owners of landed property

in their own right. But if we are not prepared to make marriage a permanent disability (which certainly seems a proceeding contrary to public policy), we must look forward to some change in the law, whereby married women would get the vote. What then? Well, we either double the man's vote, or disfranchise the household, with the added disadvantage of creating domestic discord. There really was some method in the political madness of our ancestors, who persisted in regarding man and wife as one, a view which still holds for purposes of income tax!

Take, next, the unmarried woman. She does not count for so very much in the Colonies, where women are still at a premium, and marriage more the rule than the exception. Over here she counts for a good deal, and, having plenty of spare time on her hands, will not improbably find the proverbial employment for it, if she is given a vote to play with. We confess to some fear of the enfranchisement of that rather unstable revolutionary element, the counterpart in the feminine world to the "intellectual proletariat," which in Continental politics has been so great a source of unrest. The needs of the woman worker no doubt deserve the best consideration of the State, but she herself will be the first and greatest sufferer if in her haste and inexperience she makes the mistake of expecting political remedies to cure economic ills. Yet she is just the type of woman who will make use of the vote, and is probably the least likely to show a Colonial indifference to its possession.

We suggest, then, to our Suffragist friends that by their own showing they are on the horns of a dilemma. Either women need the vote, or they do not. If the possession of it merely doubles the male vote, women's interests were already represented by that vote, and their own vote is superfluous. If, on the other hand, women as a whole feel they must vote against men as a whole, at one stroke you disfranchise all married women as well as married men, and leave the balance of power in the hands of the unmarried, amongst whom women are in the majority. Are even their own sex prepared to accept with equanimity government by a small body of spinsters?

We submit also that in an Imperial Parliament this small section of the community would have to deal with questions very different to the purely local matters upon which women vote—apparently without much interest—in Australia and New Zealand. No doubt these are commonplaces, but they are commonplaces that bear repeating, the more so because the dilemma involved is seldom fairly faced by our opponents. They content themselves with denying the premises, which makes the incidental support to Anti-Suffragist views afforded by Antipodean experience all the more valuable. There the married women find the vote superfluous; is it less superfluous to them here? And the unmarried, who are unable to take the risks of men, and have not yet taken that corresponding risk of motherhood so constantly held up before us as woman's best title to citizenship, are to be entrusted with the ultimate decision of the weightiest problems of empire. Was ever a madder proposition made to a sober electorate?

#### NOTICE.

On June 16th the South Kensington Branch will hold a meeting "by invitation only" at the Kensington Town Hall at 8.30 p.m. Music and speeches.

#### NOTES AND NEWS.

THE first annual dinner of the Men's Anti-Suffrage League was held with great success on the 18th of last month. We have heard, not perhaps without some natural self-approbation, that in point of activity that body cannot be compared with our own. But in the great struggle which we are waging side by side it is highly desirable that the voice of the women should be most loudly heard, and that the refusal of the woman to take the vote should be even more emphatic than the refusal of the man to confer it. And the vigour and determination of the leaders of the Men's League is beyond all praise. The speeches delivered at the dinner were models of concise and weighty reasoning. Lord James of Hereford told the audience that he had made his Parliamentary debut just eight and thirty years earlier in a speech against a Bill intended to confer the franchise upon women; and through all the period that had rolled by he had never wavered in his opposition to what he still considered a most disastrous proposal. In 1871 the echo of John Stuart Mill's voice was still resounding in the House of Commons, together with the memorable reply to it: "You claim for women equality of privilege; will they accept equality of duty?" And Lord James reminded his hearers of the answer made by John Bright, that sturdy block of Anglo-Saxon shrewdness, to those who contended that at least every woman of property should have votes, "We do not give a vote to every house that has a man in it, but to every man that has a house."

THE speech of Lord Curzon of Kedleston must have recalled to the older Parliamentary hands an interesting memory. "My constituency," said his lordship, "was one in which the female influence was very strong, and in which I received invaluable support from the feminine element. But I never found that the enthusiasm and support of the women was in the least degree jeopardised by my frank and outspoken opposition to the cause of women suffrage." It was one summer afternoon in the early nineties when a big deputation of Lancashire "pit lasses," clad in their rough working dress, were being conducted over the galleries and lobbies and terrace of the House of Commons by the Hon. G. N.

Curzon, youngest and most *débonnaire* of Under-Secretaries. A piece of grandmotherly legislation was in progress which threatened their rights as wage-earners, and the women of the Southport division had turned to their member, a stern, unbending anti-suffragist, to see that their case was put fairly before the House of Commons. It is impossible to resist the comparison between those earnest, hard-working toilers, whose lives are one long struggle, but who maintain the instincts and the manners of "ladies," with the screaming neurotics who have brought shame upon their sex in Palace Yard and Westminster Hall, and the House of Commons itself. In his allusion to the "fifteen strong, valid, and incontrovertible arguments which could be advanced against woman suffrage," Lord Curzon must have been thinking of the excuse of the Governor of Magdeburg, who had omitted to fire a salute in honour of Napoleon. "I have fifteen good reasons, sire. In the first place, I have no gunpowder—" "That will do," said the Emperor. And the time-honoured and irrefutable arguments of the home, and of the natural division of the functions of men and women, should be equally conclusive.

BUT perhaps the most pertinent saying in the course of the whole evening fell from the lips of the chairman, Lord Cromer. He had no fear of what the views of the electors would be if the case were put fairly and squarely before them, but he confessed he had more fears of the views of the elected. "In the heat of a hotly contested election a number of weak-kneed candidates, in order to obtain votes, might give rash and half-hearted promises, from which they would find it difficult to escape; and, having been shorn by the modern Delilah of their strength, might surrender to the Philistines." That this is a very real danger the course of some recent by-elections has taught us, though happily the militant suffragettes have shown us, at Croydon and elsewhere, that they will forego a tactical advantage to gratify their vendetta with the present Government. But among candidates who are by no means weak-kneed there is a tendency to surrender to Delilah, disguised as Cornelia. We have an instance of this in a letter from Mr. Foster Fraser, the prospective Unionist candidate for Leicester, to the secretary of the local branch of our League. Mr. Fraser declares himself an avowed supporter of

woman's franchise on the ground that women exercise a good and restraining influence upon the fierceness of political fighting, that taxation implies representation, that an increased interest in social legislation would be a good thing for the women themselves, and that the Salic law has never prevailed in this country. To the long chain of argument against female suffrage he does not devote one word, nor does he give even a hint whether he is in favour of adult or of household suffrage, or on what grounds he would exclude married women while enfranchising widows and spinsters. Mr. Fraser's real conviction, like that of many other candidates, is that women under a restricted franchise will vote Conservative. He must be taught that this conviction will cost him more votes than it brings.

THREE or four weeks ago the Countess of Carlisle tried to convince the ladies of the Women's Liberal Federation that the Prime Minister was really their friend. In a letter written to her, "by his own hand, and signed by himself," he had conveyed a "documentary concordat of the greatest value to the women's cause." This took the shape of an assurance that the declaration he had made a year ago remained on record, and that when the Government introduced a Reform Bill before their dissolution, they would not collectively oppose the addition of a clause granting woman's suffrage. And her ladyship gave a certificate of character which ought to have protected its subject against the Mænads in her ranks; she pins her faith in Mr. Asquith, "not because he is Prime Minister, but because he is Mr. Asquith." Alas! within less than a fortnight Mr. Asquith was being hunted through the grounds of Clovelly Court and over the private golf links by three members of the Women's Social Progress Union, who had inaugurated the campaign by appearing in Clovelly Church "gowned" in the colours of their Union. In vain the Premier slipped out of the church by a side door—the ladies were too quick for him. "Give us an interview, or we'll force you," was their Sabbath greeting as the doors of Clovelly Court closed on the fugitive, and the next day was spent by the deputation in hiding behind bushes, in scrambling down cliffs, and in dodging policemen. Yet this outrage on all the decencies of private life is condoned by the more respectable

members of the movement, who, like Lady Carlisle herself, declare themselves to "have more sympathy with those who are impetuous" (heaven save the mark!) "than with those who belittle the cause."

ANOTHER illustration of the absolute incapacity of the militants to "play the game" of public life, as understood in England, is afforded by the conduct of the lady who interrupted the dinner of the Royal Merchant Seamen's Orphanage. The dinner followed a not usual practice at charity festivals, the tickets were issued by invitation, without any charge, but on the understanding that a contribution to the funds of the society would be made in the course of the evening. Tickets were procured, how it is unnecessary to particularise, by a prominent suffragette, and her male chaperon, who, after they had done justice to the bill of fare, proceeded to create a disturbance directed against Mr. Masterman, M.P. They were, of course, ejected; and when the lady and her companion were taxed with having practically obtained a dinner under false pretences at the expense of the charity, the former replied in print with a pert letter to the effect that she had no opportunity of making a contribution. As the secretary pointed out, her cheque to the Orphanage would have found its destination within a few hours, but he had been waiting in vain for three days. That was a fortnight ago, and possibly Miss Brackenbury and her companion have "settled up" by this time; but the liability to be confronted by these disagreeable scenes is not calculated to increase the attendance at charitable festivals. The secretary, we feel convinced, is right in saying that there must be many sympathisers with the women's suffrage movement who do not care to see it promoted at the expense of orphan children.

A CURIOUS sidelight is thrown upon the suffragettes' processions and demonstrations and liberation breakfasts by a writer in the *Manchester Guardian*, who signs herself "An Earnest Member of the Mothers' Union." "Will you allow me," she says, "to offer a protest against militant suffragists who are young mothers and have children of tender years at home, offering themselves and being accepted as members of a deputation to London, it being considered as a probability that

the conduct of the deputation may lead to imprisonment, which will deprive their little ones of a mother's care for a month or six weeks?" As to whether the absence from home of this class of mothers would really be an irreparable loss for the time being to their unfortunate children we may have doubts. Mrs. Jellaby's household would have been none the worse we take it, if that lady had occasionally undergone a "rest cure" in Holloway. But that such an appeal, made earnestly and in good faith, should be necessary shows the depth of social disorganisation into which "Votes for Women" is plunging us.

THE June number of the *National Review* contains a couple of hitherto unpublished papers on "The Woman Problem," by Ouida. Written five and twenty years ago, when Mlle. Louise de la Ramée was at the height of her fame and in the fullest possession of her brilliant powers, they form a remarkable literary testament. Among all her contemporaries there was no one who surpassed or equalled Ouida in her fiery hatred of injustice or oppression. The wrongs of the dumb creation, of little children, of the sempstress in the garret, of the mute toilers in the Italian fields, roused her to something akin to frenzy; she was outspoken and fearless to a fault, and an advocate of causes which are still looked upon as too daring for adoption. This is how she wrote on female suffrage: "The cry for 'equality with men' is much the same thing as the roughs' cry for equality in government. In both instances the rights of citizenship are demanded; but the responsibilities of citizenship are shirked. The woman demands the exercise of political power, the rough does the same, but as the rough will not relinquish his enjoyment of lawlessness and license, so the woman will not relinquish her claim on social deference and social precedence. He is to remain a rough in his privileges of drinking, stone-throwing, and slang—she is to remain a woman in her privileges of etiquette, homage, chivalry, and beauty; but both, surrendering nothing, are to receive a full and free grant of all electoral and representative rights; both are to be able to reverse the decree and invade the domain of those who, exercising political power, do also bear the burden of political responsibility. Now, as the vast body of educated and respectable men

do resist this monopoly as proposed by the rough, so, it is scarcely wonderful, do they also resist the monopoly as proposed by women."

\* \* \*

If women are henceforth to rule, urges Ouida, they must be prepared to make sacrifice of the courtesies and suavities and securities of their position. "And it is precisely this sacrifice that women will not make. We have known many vehement upholders of 'women's rights' who claim for their sex the title to be politicians, physicians, anything that they choose, but we never knew one of them who would endure the suggestion of waiving in consequence the feminine demand for deference, homage, and all the graceful amenities that men have paid to women through the generous concession of the stronger to the feebler being. Herein, we conceive, lies the whole radical weakness of the present hue and cry raised by women, i.e., the demand for everything with the resolve to concede nothing. Women are prepared to rant loudly of their wrongs, and to agitate for an equal share in the government of their nations, but they are in no sense prepared to relinquish the pleasant privileges conferred on them by the present position of their sex, and to lay down the silver sceptre of their present social station. They desire to keep their feet still standing on the dais of their old womanly royalty, whilst they reach their hands upward to pluck down the iron crowns of public and political honours."

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POSSIBLY the feminist of to-day will turn from the prudish and old-fashioned notions of Ouida to the more up-to-date writings of Mlle. de Pratz. The editor of the *Review of Reviews* has given notoriety in his May number to her novel under the alluring title of "The Love Ideals of a Suffragette." Mr. Chesterton echoes the call in the *Illustrated London News*, but in terms which no amount of exaggeration could describe as even faint praise. "Silly and heartless pedantry," is the concise description which Mr. Chesterton applies to some of the most precious passages in the new evangel, and he selects in particular the dismissal with which, ineffectually as it proves, the heroine tries to choke off the marriage proposal of an absolutely honourable and intelligent man who loves her, with whom she is in love. "It will interfere

with my work, dear, because it will interfere with my soul and brain. Believe me, I am not yet developed as a thinking entity. I am unable to separate my mental from my emotional self." Mr. Chesterton hardly does justice to the consummate art with which the prig feminine is portrayed. But in the same causerie he makes a very shrewd remark, which we commend to that not inconsiderable number of women who are slaves to phrases which they do not understand. "The very fact that the emancipated women use the word 'comradeship' about love and marriage shows that they do not know what comradeship means. Comradeship means the club; it means a certain cool and casual association which is mostly masculine, and which is always pluralist. If marriage were comradeship it would have to be polygamy. Even then the comradeship would not be easy to work."

## OUR BRANCH NEWS-LETTER.

### THE MAY WORK.

THE month of May has been a splendidly active one in our camp, and the enthusiasm for the cause amongst our 100 branches has been unbounded. There is not the slightest doubt that the Anti-Suffrage movement is now a power in the kingdom that nothing can shake. Wherever a new branch is formed, an army of supporters springs up; every meeting is a crowded one, and the *vox populi* goes with us wherever we are.

We have this month much interesting news from our branches, and a very small space at our disposal, so our reports are condensed and the news-letter necessarily short. The "debate" has become a recognised success now, and we find this form of meeting a splendid way of advancing our cause. Our arguments in public with "the other side" always result in recruits to our League. These debates give to many an opportunity of studying impartially the question of "vote" or "no vote."

One of the best debates during May was held in the Chiswick Town Hall, on May 18th, and was organised by the Bedford Park and Chiswick Branch of the Middle-Class Defence organisation. The hall was packed, and the greatest interest was displayed in the arguments of Mrs. Somervell and Mrs. Rackham (of the London Society for Women's Suffrage). Mr. T. Edwards Forster was in the chair. Both speakers displayed the greatest animation and ability, and occasionally considerable excitement prevailed amongst the audience. Mrs. Rackham moved a resolution that suffrage should be granted to women on the same terms as to men, and Mrs. Somervell, amidst much enthusiasm, brought the case against. Mrs. Rackham's resolution demanding the vote was overwhelmingly defeated by a majority of sixty-four.

The greatest interest was manifested in

all the Branches in the debate which was arranged by the Kensington Committee in the Town Hall on May 19th. Mrs. Somervell proposed, and Mrs. Colquhoun seconded, a resolution against votes for women, and the speakers on the suffrage side were Miss Packer and Miss Margery Corbet. The hall was packed to the utmost of its capacity, and many people had to be turned away. No larger room was available, or the Kensington Branch would have been able to record a still more satisfactory attendance. Mrs. Somervell and Mrs. Colquhoun dealt with principles, and tried to put the subject on a high level, both from the philosophic and patriotic point of view, but the Suffragist speakers did not accept the challenge to show in what way the granting of votes for women would act for the benefit of the Empire, or even of the whole community, but confined themselves to the exploded "historic" argument, and to the assertion that working women must have the power to protect themselves against legislation, even if that legislation may be in the interests of future generations. A great number of questions were handed up in writing, and were dealt with by the speakers, and at the conclusion Mr. Morgan Veitch, who had taken the chair with great tact and impartiality, put the resolution, which was carried by a large majority. The Kensington Committee desire to express their regret to their friends and supporters who came, in some cases, long distances, and were unable to get in, but in order to make the conditions of the debate fair, only a very few seats were reserved, which were divided between the committee and the Suffragists. The proceeds of the debate, in the shape of a handsome cheque, has been sent as a donation to the Central Fund.

The drawing-room meeting is growing in favour in connection with our League, and we owe gratitude to the number of our members who, during the past month, have been "hostesses" for the cause. The drawing-room debate" and the "at home" have both accomplished splendid work lately.

The first of a series of drawing-room meetings in connection with the Richmond Branch was held on May 13th at 1, Pagoda Avenue, the residence of Mrs. Edmund Hudson. Miss Fothergill presided, and Miss Agnes Hill and Mr. Arthur Brenton delivered excellent speeches to the large gathering. There were some Suffragists present, whose questions were promptly and convincingly answered. Several new members and associates joined at the conclusion of the meeting.

The Paddington Branch held a successful evening meeting on May 6th, at 3, Craven Hill, by permission of Mrs. Fraser. Three thoroughly convincing speeches were given by Ellen Countess of Desart, the Honble. Michael Hicks-Beach, M.P., and Mr. Carson, K.C., and many signed the petition as they left the room. Owing to illness Lady Dimsdale was unable to be present, and the chair was taken by Mrs. Clarendon Hyde.

The Oxford Branch has given us practical proof of their activity, for, at a meeting held at The Lodging, Exeter College, by permission of the Rector and Mrs. Jackson, on May 19th, Mrs. Massie brought forward a suggestion that members of the branch should be invited to make a special donation to the central fund of the League. The proposal was at once acted upon by those

present. Mrs. Max Müller presided at this meeting, and Mrs. Henry Nettleship gave an address.

A very successful debate took place at a drawing-room meeting at Hampton Court between Mrs. Arthur Somervell and Miss Palliser, on May 17th. An audience of over 120 were present, and the arguments between the opponents were very keen; Mrs. Somervell's victory was, however, undeniable.

Excellent speeches were given by Mr. Carson, K.C., Sir Charles Bruce, Mrs. Archibald Colquhoun, at a large drawing-room meeting held by permission of Lady Longden at 126, Lexham Gardens, on May 25th, in connection with the Kensington Branch, and another successful drawing-room gathering took place the next day at Burlington House, Hampton Hill, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Elsee, where Miss Dickens and Mr. Morgan Veitch gave very interesting addresses, and Mr. Elsee presided.

The Petersfield meeting, on May 13th, in the Corn Exchange, was notable for a fine speech by Mr. J. Massie, M.P., which we regret we cannot find space to report fully. Miss Dickens also spoke, and Mrs. Henry Nettleship was in the chair. Mr. Massie examined at length all the arguments of the Suffragists, and disposed of them all very ably. The fundamental logic of the situation, he said, was founded on nature, and nature was not to be got over. If they opposed nature, nature would take good care to re-assert itself, and they would feel the consequences. He also spoke of the anomaly of women helping to make a law and having to be excused from enforcing it.

We have encouraging news from Manchester. The first meeting of the general committee of the Branch was held on May 20th, in the office, Mrs. Simon presiding. It was announced that the Lord Bishop of Manchester and the Viscountess Brackley have consented to become vice-presidents. An executive committee was also elected. This committee, with a sub-committee, are making arrangements for the great meeting of Oct. 26th, in the Free Trade Hall, when Mrs. Humphry Ward and Mrs. A. Somervell have promised to speak.

During May drawing-room meetings have been held at Marple and Lymm. At Marple, on May 12th, the meeting was held at the house of Mrs. Chipman, and there was a good attendance. The address was given by Miss Lindsay. On Wednesday, May 19th, Miss Lindsay addressed a small meeting at Lymm, at the Leylands, by permission of Mrs. Anderson.

The work of the office has been energetically carried on. A meeting of elementary school teachers was held on May 11th, and a sub-committee has been formed for this important branch.

The meeting in connection with the Bristol Branch, and held in the Queen's Hall, Clifton, was a highly successful one. Mrs. George Pope was in the chair, and Miss Long Fox, hon. sec. of the branch, and Mrs. Arthur Somervell were the speakers. Miss Long Fox expressed thanks on behalf of the committee to the members for the ready response to the request for funds, and for all the hard and laborious work which they had undertaken and successfully carried out since their last meeting. The result of their first six months of work in Bristol was a roll of 1,500 members, representing a very large

number of the professions, arts, and industries in which women were engaged, while many thousands who were not subscribing members had signed petitions and were working for the League.

Mrs. Arthur Somervell congratulated those present upon having such a flourishing branch in Bristol. They were one of the best branches out of London, and were leading the way in the West Country.

Mrs. Somervell's resolution against the suffrage, seconded by Mrs. Atchley, was carried with but one dissentient; and it was decided to send copies to the Prime Minister and Mr. Balfour.

A capital meeting was the one at Weston-super-Mare (in the Victoria Hall), on May 26th. Dr. Wallace was in the chair, and amongst a very representative gathering on the platform was the President of this Branch, Lady Mary de Salis. A very able address was delivered by Mrs. Arthur Somervell, who made her points one after another in the most clear, calm, and convincing manner amid much applause. A Suffragist friend of one of the members was so impressed by Mrs. Somervell's reasoning that she left the meeting a strong Anti-Suffragist. Professor Ferrier followed, and in an excellent speech dealt with the questions of labour and wages. The resolution put to the meeting was carried enthusiastically, and when the chairman gave the audience an opportunity of asking questions, none of the Suffragists present had any spirit left to make any remarks!

A campaign in Leeds by the organising secretary, Mr. Durrant, has resulted in a strong branch of our League being formed in that district. A meeting of members was held on May 20th in the Queen's Hotel, presided over by Mrs. Steintal, of Ilkley. The Countess of Harewood has accepted the presidency of the branch, and the support of many influential women of Leeds has been gained. Amongst the initial fifty-one members are many well-known names. It is proposed to hold a series of meetings immediately after the summer, and meanwhile efforts are being concentrated on increasing the membership of the branch.

The committee of the Birmingham Branch are glad to be able to report that the Lady Algernon Percy has accepted the position of president left vacant by the lamented death of Lady Leigh. Owing principally to the absence of Mrs. Saundby on the Continent, not much active work has been done recently, and the committee have suffered loss by Miss Baker's removal from Birmingham. Finances are in a satisfactory condition, but there is a suggestion for an outdoor *fête* in the near future, if the necessary arrangements can be made before the summer holidays are upon us.

The Edinburgh Branch had a successful meeting on May 24th, Empire Day, when Miss Dickens spoke as ably as usual. Sir Alexander Christison, well known in Edinburgh for his loyal support of women for many years past, in everything pertaining to their medical training at the University, was in the chair. Mr. F. T. Cooper, K.C., made a humorous little speech in moving a vote of thanks to Miss Dickens. Dr. Dawson Turner thanked the chairman.

With the object of forming a branch of the League at Reading, a meeting was held in the Town Hall, on May 6th, under the presidency of Lady Haversham. Lady Haver-

sham said these days, when we heard so much about the necessity of *Dreadnoughts*, were a most unfortunate time for women to advance the cause of Suffrage. It was the men who designed, built, and manned the *Dreadnoughts*, the men who defended our homes, the men who had built up the Empire. To give the vote to women would be to endanger England by causing warfare between men and women, and to degrade the status of women.

Lord Weardale, in a long and eloquent speech, dealt with all the vexed problems surrounding the woman suffrage proposition. True chivalry in man, he said, was respect for the qualities of woman, and the great qualities of woman were those that had to do with the home. Any man who suggested that women should abandon part of their home duties in order to enter into the turmoil, and the somewhat sordid struggles, of political life, was not doing justice to the sex that he pretended to befriend. He believed that the day of property qualification was over. He took issue on the broad question, and he said that women must be restricted to that part of life which was especially theirs, and that it was the office of men to conduct the affairs of the Empire, to fight for it, and to preserve, if necessary, by brute force, the sanction and the authority of law.

A resolution was then submitted by his lordship that a branch of the League for Reading should be formed. Mrs. Somervell seconded, and the proposal was carried.

Under the auspices of the Epsom Division Branch a meeting was held at the Walton public hall, on May 2nd. Sir Godfrey Lagden, K.C.M.G., presided over a large attendance, and he was supported by Mrs. Arthur Somervell, Mr. F. P. M. Schiller, of Esher, Miss L. Martin Wood, Mrs. Tricker, Miss Norah Peachey (Esher), the hon. secretary, and Mr. R. T. Monier-Williams (Esher), hon. treasurer. Mr. Schiller made an excellent speech objecting to woman suffrage as a constitutional change which struck at the root of the whole of our social and political life, and which, if granted, would bring disaster.

After questions had been asked, Mr. Monier-Williams, in the course of a short address, claimed that the Anti-Suffrage League had given a very decided check to "Suffragitis." The Epsom Division Branch had been formed on January 6th of this year, but it had already held ten meetings.

A well-attended meeting was held on May 14th in the West Hampstead Town Hall. Mrs. Arthur Somervell presiding, supported by Mrs. Gladstone Solomon, Mr. R. Whitehead, M.P., and Mr. A. Richardson. Mr. Richardson said the League had been formed to oppose an extraordinary agitation which from its grotesque methods was doomed to failure. 250,000 women had petitioned against the franchise, and it was quite untrue that men had used their powers to make laws that oppressed women.

Mr. Whitehead said the question was one of deep importance, and affected the good government of the Empire. It also struck right at the home, and deserved the weightiest consideration. There was considerable vagueness about the demand for the vote, and it was said that women "did not know what they wanted, but they meant to have it." He was opposed to women's suffrage because of the nation's great Imperial responsibilities, and the lessening of the woman's capacity for inspiring man to

high ideals. Mrs. Gladstone Solomon claimed that the intellect of women was opposed to the suffrage. She did not like a governing woman, and opposed the suffrage because of national expediency.

A large and influential meeting was held on May 18th by the West Marylebone Branch, at 13, Gloucester Place, by permission of Mrs. Braithwaite. The chair was taken by Lady George Hamilton.

Mrs. Colquhoun delivered a closely argued speech, dwelling on the opportunities of public usefulness already enjoyed by women, and dealing *seriatim* with their alleged grievances. There was, she said, no reason to believe that the possession of the parliamentary vote would raise the industrial condition of women, and pointed out that anti-suffrage legislation, not promoted by any of the suffragist societies, had been undertaken in a Parliament elected by men. There was no escaping adult suffrage if once a limited measure of female enfranchisement were adopted.

She was followed by Mr. Leo Maxse, who dwelt on the present state of Europe as revealed in the gross breach of international law carried out by Austria and Germany simply in reliance on brute force. This was a question that had much to do with women's suffrage. In the same connection he instanced the naval challenge given to Great Britain by a Continental Power. In these great public crises, what word of guidance, what contribution to thought, had proceeded from any of the suffrage agitators? It was the same with regard to the fiscal controversy. Neither on behalf of Tariff Reform nor against it had any of these ladies taken the trouble to exert themselves. After an account of the action taken by the suffragist party in the House of Commons in March as to Mr. Geoffrey Howard's Bill, Mr. Maxse uttered a strong warning to the Conservative party against adopting the first step towards a general measure of female enfranchisement. In self-defence the Liberals must reply with adult suffrage. If the Unionist leaders did not separate themselves from the movement they would lose many seats at the General Election.

One of the most interesting and significant meetings held in London during the past month in connection with the question of Suffrage *versus* Anti-Suffrage, was a debate held in the Cathedral Hall, Westminster, on May 12th, under the auspices of the Westminster Catholic Federation. The Hon. Charles Russell presided over an influential gathering. Mr. Carson, K.C., Mr. Edwards, and Father Ring argued eloquently and most successfully against the granting of the vote to women, while Mr. Stanger, K.C., Mr. Noble, and Mr. Mathew opposed. Although "votes" won, the majority in favour was an almost inappreciable one, and there is no doubt that Mr. Carson's skilful reasoning impressed the audience deeply.

Two successful meetings were held in Wendover on May 24th. Mrs. Moberly Bell (the chairman of the East Marylebone Branch of the League) presided in the afternoon, when addresses were delivered by Mrs. Baynton and Miss L. B. Strong.

In the evening there was another good attendance, when Mrs. Moberly Bell again occupied the chair. Lady Louisa Smith, who is president of this branch, Mrs. Baynton, and Mr. H. A. Richardson spoke, Mr. Richardson putting our Anti-Suffrage reso-

lution to the meeting in a strong speech. The resolution was carried enthusiastically.

On May 5th the members of the Sevenoaks Branch made their voices heard in no uncertain manner at the Club Hall, which was packed from end to end. Mrs. Rycroft presided, and was supported by Edith, Lady Auckland, the Lady F. Pratt, the Lady E. Pratt, and many others.

The speakers of the evening were Mrs. Somervell and Mr. G. Herbert Head (barrister), and the addresses were to the point, fair, and forcible. A number of questions were asked and ably answered.

A large meeting was held in the Drill Hall, Yateley, near Aldershot, on May 12th. Mrs. Laurence Currie presided. Those who supported the chairman were Mrs. Allnutt, secretary to the Basingstoke Branch of the League, and the speakers, Miss Fothergill and Mr. Newman, a member of the Men's League for Opposing Woman Suffrage. This branch also embraces Hawley and Minley, and is a growing and successful one.

At Crowborough, on May 26th, Mrs. John Massie, Vice-chairman of the League, presided over a large meeting, and made a forcible speech. She said misrepresentation had been the chief power of the suffrage movement. It was a cruel thing to dangle the question of the vote before the poor underpaid women of the country, and tell them that increased wages would be the result of the granting of the vote.

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## HOW WE STAND IN AMERICA.

We have received the latest issue of *The Remonstrance*, that bright little organ of the "Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women." (We commend particularly to notice the qualifying word "further" as giving keen point to a "remonstrance" against the Suffrage from a country where the sweets of "women's franchise" have been tasted!) *The Remonstrance* voices the opinion of 14,000 women of Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Illinois, Iowa, Oregon, Washington and the States. The Association, a strong one, has now thirty-five branch committees and 14,163 members, and its views may be taken as a very fair indication of the state of the Anti-Suffrage Movement in America.

An interesting column or so of the magazine reproduces the remonstrance against the petition presented to the Massachusetts Legislature in February last, which, as an amendment to the Constitution, prayed that the word "male" be struck from the qualification for voters.

The introductory paragraph proves clearly how strong the feeling against Woman Suffrage is amongst women of the great Republic where, our opponents would fain believe, the vote is so ardently desired.

It runs:

"For more than fifty years attempts have been made each winter to obtain some form of woman suffrage, which Massachusetts legislatures have been too wise to grant. Our Association is composed of more than fourteen thousand women who have associated themselves together to resist such attempts. They are women of twenty-one years and upwards, and they belong to two hundred and forty-five cities, towns, and villages from Berkshire to Cape Cod. They belong to all classes and conditions of life. Many of them are tax-paying women. Others are wage-earners, dependent on their daily labour, either of hand or brain. Their reasons for protesting against woman suffrage may vary with the circumstances of their lives, but they unite in the belief that it would be injurious both to women themselves and to the state."

It further wisely argues:—

"Women now stand outside politics. We are neither Republicans nor Democrats, and, therefore, our suggestions and requests in matters of education, charity, and reform are welcomed and heeded. No suspicion arises that we have partisan ends to serve. . . . We believe that it is for the welfare of the state that women should stand on neutral ground, safe from all attempts to draw them into the opposing camps."

At the hearing of the remonstrance, Professor Sedgwick, of the Institute of Technology, speaking as a "remonstrant," said he regarded

"the woman suffrage movement as a retrograde movement, a backward step in the process of civilisation, because the development of sex, like that of civilisation, is in effect a differentiation of function, a physiological division of labour, and anything which seeks to efface natural differentiation of function or to produce identity instead of division of labour is a backward step."

The professor's opinion is worth recording, as is that of a woman speaker who discussed the position of women wage-earners in America. Part of her argument applies equally to our own country:—

"By the census of 1900 there were more than five million wage-earning women in this country. But one-third of these are less than twenty-one years of age, and cease to be wage-earners at about the time they reach the voting age. The position of women as industrial workers is essentially temporary because 'marriage terminates the occupational career,' to quote from the census. This shifting of the woman from wage-earning to home-making, her short duration in industry and consequent lack of skill, have much to do with her low wage."

It is satisfactory to note that the amendment demanded by the Suffragists was defeated in the House by the largest

majority against a suffrage amendment shown for more than a dozen years!

"Some Suffrage disappointments" of the year in America are recorded, and show very clearly that the Suffrage Movement throughout the States has received a constant succession of checks, and justify the statement (which is quoted in *The Remonstrance*) made by Mrs. Humphry Ward that the Suffrage Movement in the United States is in "process of defeat."

For some twelve years the Suffrage propaganda has not achieved a single success worth mentioning. No State since 1896 has given women the political ballot, no State has given them the municipal vote; moreover, the vote for the Suffrage has steadily declined. The Suffragists resent the suggestion that their women opponents have had anything to do with this defeat; the anti-suffrage work began about two years before the movement experienced a check, and it is difficult to suppose that the steady determined campaign of some of the best and most thoughtful of American women has not been a rallying point of opposition, and has not roused the attention of the country. We do well to remember that the negro vote has always been a difficulty in America; how would the negro question be affected by the extension of the vote to white women, and what of the extension of the vote to coloured women? There is the further difficulty of the "alien" vote. The alien has a vote in the States before he has grasped the facts of his new domicile and country. It seems likely that a very long time must elapse before women get an extension of the political vote in America.

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