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KENSINGTON	{ North South	STRAND	
		SOUTHWARK	{ West Rotherhithe Bermondsey
		WANDSWORTH	

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WANDSWORTH.—Miss HILL and Miss GEORGINA HILL, 87, East Hill, Wandsworth.

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National Society for Women's Suffrage.

OCCASIONAL PAPER,

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Westminster.*

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NOTES OF THE SESSION.

The Central Committee consider that it may be useful and desirable to present to their friends and subscribers a brief narrative of the events of the past few weeks, especially the circumstances which led up to the loss of the day for the second reading of the Parliamentary Franchise Extension to Women Bill.

It was generally understood that Mr. Woodall had obtained a first place for the Parliamentary Franchise Extension to Women Bill on May 13th. Fears were, however, entertained that this date might be absorbed by the Whitsuntide holidays. Mr. Haldane subsequently obtained a place for a resolution on the question on April 24th. It thus appeared that a debate either on Bill or resolution was ensured during the Session.

A vote on a resolution is, however, no more than the expression of an abstract opinion; the Central Committee, therefore, had, early in the Session, resolved to leave no effort untried to secure a division on the Bill rather than a resolution, and to this end a memorial, with many influential signatures appended, had been prepared, and a request made to the First Lord of the Treasury to receive this at the hands of a small deputation of ladies. Mr. W. H. Smith named April 20th as the date on which to receive the deputation, which was introduced by Viscount Wolmer, M.P., and consisted of Louisa Lady Goldsmid, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Emily Davies, and Miss Helen Blackburn.

Mr. W. H. SMITH, in acknowledging the memorial presented by the deputation, gave the assurance that the House would not adjourn until after May 13th, and that, unforeseen contingencies apart, the Government

had no intention of taking the day for Government business.

The Parliamentary Committee met later in the same day, when the result of the deputation was communicated to them. The following members were present: Mr. Ainslie, Col. Cotton-Jodrell, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Sydney Gedge, Mr. Haldane, Capt. Edwards Heathcote, Mr. Johnstone, Sir Rainald Knightley, Mr. Lafone, Mr. McLaren, Mr. Round, Sir Richard Temple, Sir Edward Watkin, Mr. Alfred Webb, Viscount Wolmer, Mr. Woodall.

On hearing the tenour of Mr. Smith's reply, it was agreed to proceed with the Bill, and Mr. Haldane accordingly withdrew his resolution.

The various Women's Suffrage Committees at once commenced preparations for vigorous work in view of a division on May 13th. The opponents were equally on the alert; notice to move that the Bill be read that day six months appeared on the papers of the House from no less than four different members, viz., Mr. Radcliffe Cooke (Newington, West), Mr. de Lisle (Leicestershire, Mid.), Mr. Samuel Smith (Flint.), Mr. Asquith (Fife, East), and schemes were laid for its destruction.

On April 30th, Mr. Smith moved that certain specified days should be appropriated to Government business. Mr. Gladstone immediately rose to lead the Opposition, but instead of objecting, as is usually the case, to the time of private members being appropriated, he insisted that Mr. Smith should be 'perfectly uniform in the application of his rule,' and include all Wednesdays before Whitsuntide. Mr. Gladstone's proposal afforded a manifest opening for shelving the Bill for the Enfranchisement of Women, which the opponents of the measure were quick to perceive. A debate of nearly an hour followed, of which a full report is given in these pages. Mr. Smith declared himself unable to take the day for Government business after the expectations which had been aroused. Mr. Stuart and Mr. Bryce thereupon pressed the claim of Wednesday the

8th to be equally exempted for the Access to Mountains Bill. Mr. Labouchere scouted the idea of giving a day to "female franchise, or some folly of that sort." Mr. Courtney defended Mr. Smith's proposal. Finally Sir Henry James moved an amendment to take all days to Whitsuntide. This was opposed by Lord Wolmer, supported by Sir Wm. Harcourt, and finally carried by a division of 218 to 159; and thus the Government, for probably the first time in Parliamentary history, had a day forced upon them.

The division list, which is given on another page, is worthy of careful study. By that list we find that there voted

	Majority.	Minority.
Conservatives,	79	128
Liberal Unionists,	25	13
Gladstonian Liberals,	90	27
Nationalists,	25	2
	—	—
	218	159
	—	—

and more than this, we find that fourteen known opponents, including several members of the Government, voted in the minority to give a fair opportunity of discussion of the question, while eighty-six who were supposed to be friends voted in the majority, viz., twenty-six Conservatives, one Liberal Unionist, forty Gladstonian Liberals, thirteen Nationalists.

Further, the absence of many steady friends is also to be noted, due to the snatch nature of the vote, and showing that the division, however instructive, is not decisive of the genuine opinion of the House of Commons.

There is at least one member whose courageous consistency should be fully recognised. When Mr. Haldane placed his resolution on the paper, Mr. de Lisle gave notice to move as an amendment to leave out all after "that" and insert "the exclusion of women from voting in elections of Members of Parliament is beneficial to the peace and prosperity of the

State, being in accord with the fundamental principle of the good government of mankind; and that the laws now in force regulating the election of town and county councils and other local representative bodies require examination in order to determine whether the legal qualifications of women are in accord with the natural."

Mr. Samuel Smith and Mr. Radcliffe Cooke also gave notices of amendments.

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

House of Commons, Thursday, April 30th.

THE BUSINESS OF THE SESSION.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I wish to put a question to the leader of the House, the answer to which may in a certain sense, I think, possibly tend to shorten the conversation upon the motion which the right hon. gentleman is about to make. First of all, is it his intention to ask for the particular preference he desires to have on behalf of the Irish Land Bill exclusively; and, secondly, is it his intention to apply the power which he seeks to obtain without making any exception in favour of any particular measure, so that it shall be perfectly equal in its application?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I appreciate the spirit in which the right hon. gentleman has put the question. The preference which we ask for has reference to the Irish Land Bill at the present time. We conceive that that Bill should be pressed forward with all reasonable speed. It has unfortunately lagged greatly in Committee during the last few days. I suppose the question of the right hon. gentleman is directed specially to the Wednesdays. So far as other days of the week are concerned, we do not propose to make any exception whatever. The Government do not think it would be possible to make an exception in favour of one motion or proposal without making an exception in favour of others, so far as Wednesdays are concerned. One difficulty in which we are placed is that an hon. gentleman opposite had a motion on the paper for last Friday, and removed it under the impression that I had given a pledge that the 13th of May should be reserved for its consideration. I did not give that pledge. I did not give that pledge unreservedly; I merely stated that, so far as the Government were concerned, they would not propose that there should be an adjournment for Whitsuntide before that Wednesday; and if no unforeseen event occurred they would not propose to take that day. However, it has been translated into a pledge, and therefore I am afraid I should

not be able to take that day for Government business. After Whitsuntide there are Bills of private members which would be in progress, and under Standing Order No. 12 those Bills would be entitled to precedence before any other orders. But it would be a strong measure on my part to deprive those Bills of the position they have obtained until absolute necessity compels me to do so. It would be held to be exercising the rights of the majority rather severely upon hon. gentlemen who had charge of other Bills, and therefore it is not the intention of the Government to take the first three or four Wednesdays after Whitsuntide so far as Bills in progress are concerned. Therefore it comes to this. The proposition of the Government is that the time of the House shall be given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, without reservation, for the Land Purchase Bill. Next Wednesday shall be given for that purpose, but the first three or four Wednesdays after Whitsuntide will not be given until fair progress has been made with the Bills which are in Committee.

Mr. J. STUART asked whether it was open to the right hon. gentleman to reconsider the decision to take next Wednesday, when a most important Bill was down.

Mr. BRYCE inquired whether, seeing the right hon. gentleman took a night in February last, on which he had a motion down with reference to the access to mountains in Scotland, he did not intend to make an exception now in favour of that motion, which was down for May 8.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: It would, I think, be more convenient that I should enter into these questions, in regard to which I have had more notices than one, when I make the motion for precedence. I express my regret if by any motion of mine I have deprived the right hon. gentleman of any opportunity of bringing forward his motion.

The SPEAKER then, upon formal notice from the First Lord of the Treasury, proceeded to read the motion on the paper, but, in response to Opposition cries of "Move,"

Mr. W. H. SMITH again rose and moved, "That, whenever the Purchase of Land and Congested Districts (Ireland) Bill is appointed for Tuesday or Friday the House do meet at 3 o'clock, and that the proceedings on that Bill have precedence over all orders of the day and notices of motion; and that the said Bill have precedence on Wednesday, if it be appointed for that day." He then proceeded to describe the obstruction to which the Irish Land Purchase Bill had been subject.

Mr. GLADSTONE, after commenting on the general business affected by the motion, added: There is only one other point on which I wish to say a word, and that is with regard to the reference which the right hon. gentleman made to me in connection with next Wednesday. He said that if I expressed a certain opinion with regard to next Wednesday he would not be disposed to take it. I am disposed to speak in the opposite sense. If the right hon. gentleman thinks it necessary to interfere with the course of business in the House and with the rights of private members, particularly in circumstances so remarkable as these, when he has taken

the night of the motion of my hon. friend the member for Aberdeen, in which so much interest is taken in Scotland, in my opinion his only safety is to insist on that on which he has often insisted on previous occasions, and to be perfectly uniform in the application of his rule. I do not look to the contents of the Bills, or to anything that may be called a matter of immediate urgency which I might conceive would be a possible subject for exception, but, taking these measures as measures, they are all well entitled to discussion, and I think the motion of my hon. friend the member for Aberdeen is better entitled than any other motion, on account of what has formerly happened. I may press on her Majesty's Government that they should not make two bites at a cherry, but should make a fair and uniform practice, and therefore avoid all occasion for giving ground for special complaint on the part of those who may be interested in any particular measure.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Am I to understand that the right hon. gentleman is inviting me to take all Wednesdays after Whitsuntide?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I thought that we were discussing absolutely the question of all days until Whitsuntide, and then after that of the days on which the Land Purchase Bill was down.

Mr. LABOUCHERE, who was received with ironical cheers, said that as the right hon. gentleman was in a somewhat prophetic mood as to what was going to take place in the present year, he was sorry that he had not said when there was going to be a dissolution. With regard to the motion of the right hon. gentleman, it seemed to him that he was always expected to play lamb to the right hon. gentleman's wolf. The right hon. gentleman turned on him as if he were the *fons et origo* of all obstruction in the House. In one sense he was—in the right sense of the word obstruction. The Conservative party and Ministers had extraordinary notions as to the duties of that House. He further objected to the proposal of the Government to take the time of private members, because it introduced a new element into the demands on the public time. By means of it Ministers were able to say in effect what Bills they approved or disapproved. They would take one Wednesday when Bills which they disapproved were to be brought on, but not the next, because then a Bill favoured by their supporters was to be brought on—a Bill about female franchise or some folly of that sort. In those matters let them at least be fair. What was sauce for the gander was sauce for the goose also. Let the Government take all the Wednesdays or none.

Mr. BRYCE moved an amendment to except Friday, the 8th of May, from the operation of the resolution. He said he could understand the action of the right hon. gentleman if it had been uniform, but to select days in a particular way and practically in favour of particular Bills was scarcely fair to the House. He should not have moved his amendment if the right hon. gentleman had taken all the time of private members, and if he had not intimated that the Government would not take Wednesday, the 13th; but under the circumstances he felt bound in duty to his constituents and to the people of Scotland to take the course he had done.

Mr. COURTNEY said the hon. member for Aberdeen had candidly confessed that his principal motive of action was to except Wednesday, the 13th of May, not that he loved the Access to Mountains Bill so much as he hated the Women's Franchise Bill.

Mr. BRYCE said that what he stated was that he desired absolute equality in the matter.

Mr. COURTNEY said the hon. member distinctly stated that he should not have moved his amendment if the right hon. gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had not intimated that he would not take Wednesday, the 13th. Therefore, he had not unfairly interpreted what the hon. member said. Now, as to the question that was to come on on the 13th of May. Last Friday week the first notice of amendment on going into Committee of Supply stood in the name of the hon. member for Haddington relative to the political disabilities of women. That could not have been brought on if the Bill of the 13th of May still stood on the paper, and it was a question with those members interested in the subject whether that motion should be proceeded with or whether the chance of the 13th of May should be retained. A deputation went to the right hon. gentleman to ascertain the intentions of the Government with respect to that day, and the right hon. gentleman had frankly repeated what he said to the deputation—that it was not intended to adjourn the House before the 13th of May, and that in the absence of unforeseen circumstances the Government had no intention to take that day. Well, had anything unforeseen happened?

Mr. LABOUCHERE.—Yes, surely. The First Lord of the Treasury bases his claim to the days of private members on the fact that the unforeseen has happened—that the Land Purchase Bill is obstructed.

Mr. COURTNEY said that had not happened since the time referred to, and was not unforeseen. On all grounds it was impossible for the right hon. gentleman to depart now from the engagement he had made. The engagement of the right hon. gentleman was known to every member of the House; it was known to the hon. member for Northampton. Before sitting down he would like to say that his right hon. friend was a little obscure with respect to the Wednesdays subsequent to Whitsuntide. With regard to Bills which had been considered before Whitsuntide, which had passed a second reading, and which were set down for progress after Whitsuntide, if the opportunity of further progress was taken away they would put a stop to all legislation by private members and would make such legislation before Whitsuntide a farce. He entirely agreed with the right hon. gentleman as to the necessity of reserving those Wednesdays for such Bills. He protested against the contention of the hon. member for Northampton and the hon. member for Aberdeen that Wednesday, the 13th, should be taken.

The SPEAKER reminded the House that the amendment before it was a limited one.

Sir H. JAMES appealed to the member for Aberdeen to withdraw his amendment, and he would then ask leave to amend the motion so that it should read after the word "Bill," in the last line but one, "shall also have precedence on Wednesdays until said Bill has passed through Committee of the House."

Mr. BRYCE said that on that understanding he was willing to withdraw his amendment.

Sir H. JAMES said that if there were any ambiguity in the views of the hon. member for Aberdeen, there was no ambiguity in those of the right hon. gentleman the Chairman of Committees. Whatever might be the inconvenience to members of that House, and however desirable it might be that their time should be occupied by useful legislation, all that, according to the right hon. gentleman, ought to give way to what would be an abstract discussion on the right of female suffrage. The effect of the amendment which he begged leave to move was that until the Irish Land Bill passed through Committee all the Wednesdays should be taken up by that Bill. In that case they might hope that the Bill would be through Committee before the Whitsuntide recess, and if it were fewer Wednesdays would be taken by the Government after Whitsuntide. Anything which should interfere with the progress of that Bill through Committee would be detrimental to the public interest. What did the right hon. gentleman the Chairman of Committees ask? He asked that the Bill should be suspended, and that precedence should be given to the second reading of the Bill for conferring the suffrage upon women. Did the right hon. gentleman hope that there was any possibility of that Bill passing through the House? The House had still to deal with the Bill for marriage of a diseased wife's sister, with the Rating of Machinery Bill, with the Bill which would give a close time for hares. All those Bills had vested interests, and ought to be dealt with practically by the House. If they now said that they would not take away the Wednesday in question, but would give it for the pleasure of hearing the eloquence of his right hon. friend they must take more days after Whitsuntide, and all for an abstract proposition which they had already discussed eight or ten times in that House. There was only one argument which had been used in favour of that course—namely, that the right hon. gentleman had given a pledge. But this was a question for the House itself. They had to consider how they should best do what was useful for carrying on the public business. They should not be able to leave that House in the month of July if these days were not taken, and the Session would have to be further prolonged. The right hon. gentleman the leader of the House did not anticipate when he gave what had been called a pledge that eleven days would have been taken up with three clauses of the Irish Land Bill. He begged to move the amendment.

Viscount WOLMER said that the First Lord of the Treasury stated that he did not intend to move the adjournment of the House before the 13th of May, and that he would not take that day for the business of the Government unless some "wholly unforeseen emergency" had arisen. He would like to ask if any wholly unforeseen emergency had since arisen.

Sir W. HARCOURT said he did not know what the leader of the House would do. The right hon. gentleman was asking the House to make a sacrifice of its time for the purpose of carrying the Irish Land Bill through Committee. With regard to the pledge which had been referred to, the right hon. gentleman said that he had not

given a pledge, and it was a curious thing that a man should be bound, not by what he acknowledged to be a pledge, but by what other people understood to be a pledge. He thought that the proposal of the right hon. member for Bury was one which they ought to accept. The arrangement that all Wednesdays should be taken need hardly be broken into for the grand field day of the right hon. member for Liskeard and the noble lord the member for the Petersfield Division, whom in other circumstances they would be even more pleased to hear on the subject of female suffrage than they would be to hear the right hon. gentleman.

Mr. COURTNEY.—Why?

Sir W. HARCOURT.—He is younger.

Mr. W. H. SMITH trusted that the House would not consider it necessary to prolong the debate. The question before them was a very narrow one. It was whether the understanding that had been come to with reference to May 13th should or should not be observed. For himself he felt bound not to depart from that understanding, but it was for the House to decide what course should be taken.

Mr. WOODALL thanked the First Lord of the Treasury for the loyalty with which he had adhered to the understanding with reference to May 13th. He suggested that, as there were now only two Wednesdays before Whitsuntide, it would be just and equitable to exclude them from the operation of the resolution.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said that, in answer to a question addressed to him by the right hon. member for Mid Lothian, he had expressed willingness to forego Wednesdays altogether, but since his doing so the Wednesdays had been pressed upon the Government, and those who were responsible for the conduct of public business could hardly refrain from accepting facilities of that kind when they were offered.

Mr. HALDANE complained that if May 13th were taken by the Government it would be unfair treatment, for he had abstained last Friday from moving his resolution on female suffrage on the understanding that the Bill dealing with the subject would come up for discussion on Wednesday, the 13th.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS protested against the proposal to take May 6th, for which day the Town Holdings Bill stood at present as the first order.

The House then divided on Sir H. James's amendment, when there voted—

For the amendment	218
Against	159
Majority	—59

There was much cheering when the Clerk placed the voting paper in Sir Henry James's hand and the figures were announced.

A consequential amendment to strike out the words at the end of the motion, "if it be appointed on that day," was accepted by Mr. W. H. Smith and agreed to.

THE DIVISION LIST.

Thursday, 30th April, 1891.

Numb. 162.—Business of the House (Proceedings on the Purchase of Land and Congested Districts (Ireland) Bill.—Motion made, and Question proposed, “That, whenever the Purchase of Land and Congested Districts (Ireland) Bill is appointed for Tuesday or Friday, the House do meet at Three o'clock, and that the proceedings on that Bill have precedence over all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion; and that the said Bill have precedence on Wednesday if it be appointed for that day;”—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*.)—

Amendment proposed, in line 5, after the word “Wednesday,” to insert the words “until it shall have passed through Committee :”—(*Sir Henry James*.)—

Question put, “That those words be there inserted :”—The House *divided*; Ayes 218, Noes 159.

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Glamorgan).	Campbell, Sir Arch. (Renfrewsh.).
Abraham, William (Limerick).	Campbell, Sir Geo. (Kirkcaldy).
Asher, Alexander.	Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hn. H.
Austin, John.	Carew, James Laurence.
Bailey, Sir Joseph R.	Cavan, Earl of.
Baird, John George Alexander.	Colman, Jeremiah James.
Balfour, Rt. Hn. J. Blair (Clackm.).	Crawford, Donald.
Balfour, J. Spencer (Burnley).	Cremer, William Randal.
Ballantine, Wm. Henry Walter.	Crilly, Daniel.
Barclay, James William.	Davenport, W. Bromley.
Baring, Viscount.	Davey, Sir Horace.
Barnes, Alfred.	Dawnay, Col. Hon. L. P.
Barran, John.	Deasy, John.
Baumann, Arthur Antony.	De Lisle, Edwin.
Beckett, Ernest William.	Dickson, Thomas A. (Dublin).
Bickford-Smith, William.	Dillwyn, Lewis Llewelyn.
Bigwood, James.	Donkin, Richard Sim.
Blane, Alexander.	Duff, Robert William.
Blundell, Col. Hen. Blundell H.	Duncan, James Archibald.
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford.	Elcho, Lord.
Bolton, Jos. Cheney (Stirlingsh.).	Elliot, Hn. Art. R. D. (Roxburghs.).
Bowles, Capt. Henry Ferryman.	Elliot, Geo. Wm. (Yorks, N.R.).
Bright, John A. (Birmingham).	Esslemont, Peter.
Bristowe, Thomas Lynn.	Evans, Francis H. (Southampton).
Brown, Alex. H. (Salop).	Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan).
Bruce, Gainsford (Finsbury).	Evershed, Sydney.
Brunner, John Tomlinson.	Ewing, Sir Archibald Orr.
Bryce, James.	Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith).
Burdett-Coutts, W.	Finch, George H.
Burghley, Lord.	Fisher, William Hayes.
Buxton, Sydney Charles.	Fitzgerald, J. Gubbins (Longford).
Caldwell, J.	Fitzwilliam, Hon. W. H. W.

Fletcher, Sir Henry.	Lloyd-George, David.
Flynn, James Christopher.	Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine.
Foljambe, Cecil G. S.	Long, Walter Hume.
Fowler, Rt. Hn. H. H. (Wolverh'n).	Lyell, Leonard.
Fry, Theodore (Darlington).	Macartney, W. G. Ellison.
Fulton, James Forrest.	MacInnes, Miles.
Furness, Christopher.	Maclean, James Mackenzie.
Gardner, Herbert.	M'Calmont, Capt. James.
Gathorne-Hardy, Hn. J. S. (Kent).	M'Cartan, Michael.
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. W. E.	M'Carthy, Justin (Londonderry).
Gladstone, Herbert J. (Leeds).	M'Ewan, William.
Goldsmid, Sir Julian.	Magnire, James Rochfort.
Gower, Geo. Granville Leveson.	Mahony, Pierce.
Hall, Sir Charles (Cambridgesh.).	Malcolm, Col. John Wingfield.
Halsey, Thomas Frederick.	Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe.
Hanbury, Robert William.	Marjoribanks, Rt. Hon. Edward.
Hanbury-Tracy, Hon. F. S. A.	Maskelyne, M. H. Story.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William.	Mildmay, Francis Bingham.
Hardcastle, Edward (Salford).	Milvain, Thomas.
Hardcastle, Frank (Lanc. S.E.).	More, Robert Jasper.
Havelock-Allan, Sir Henry M.	Morgan, Rt. Hn. G. O. (Denbighs.).
Heath, Arthur Raymond.	Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen).
Heneage, Rt. Hon. Edward.	Morgan, W. Pritchard (Merthyr).
Hinckes, Harry Tichborne.	Morley, Arnold (Nottingham).
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead).	Morley, Rt. Hon. J. (Newcastle).
Howard, Joseph.	Morrison, Walter.
Howell, George.	Morton, Alpheus Cleophas.
Hunter, Wm. Alex. (Aberdeen).	Mowbray, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Oxford U.).
Illingworth, Alfred.	Mowbray, R. G. C. (Lanc. S.E.).
Isaacs, Lewis Henry.	Muncaster, Lord.
Jarvis, Alexander Weston.	Neville, Ralph.
Joicey, James.	Newark, Viscount.
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.	O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary).
Keay, John Seymour.	O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal).
Kennaway, Sir John Henry.	O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool).
Kimber, Henry.	Oldroyd, Mark.
King, Henry Seymour (Hull).	O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, E. (Roch.).	Paget, Sir Richard Horner.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. (Kent).	Palmer, Sir Charles Mark.
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey.	Parker, Hon. Francis (Oxfordsh.).
Labouchere, Henry.	Paulton, James Mellor.
Lafone, Alfred.	Pease, Alfred E. (York).
Lane, William John.	Pease, Henry Fell (Yorks. N.R.).
Laurie, Col. Robert Peter.	Picton, James Allanson.
Lawrence, Sir Trevor (Surrey).	Playfair, Rt. Hon. Sir Lyon.
Lawrence, W. F. (Liverpool).	Powell, Francis Sharp.
Lea, Thomas (Londonderry).	Priestley, Briggs.
Lees, Elliott.	Reed, Sir Edw. James (Cardiff).
Lefevre, Rt. Hon. George Shaw.	Reid, Robt. Threshie (Dumfries).
Leighton, Stanley.	Rendel, Stuart.
Leng, John.	Ridley, Sir Matthew White.
Lewis, Thomas P. (Anglesey).	Roberts, John (Flint Burghs).

Robertson, Edmund (Dundee).
 Robinson, Thomas (Gloucester).
 Roe, Thomas.
 Rothschild, Baron F. James de.
 Rowlands, James (Finsbury).
 Russell, Sir George (Berkshire).
 Samuelson, Sir B. (Oxford, N.).
 Sexton, Thomas.
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew).
 Sheehan, Jeremiah Daniel.
 Sidebottom, T. Harrop (Stalybr.).
 Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.).
 Sinclair, William Pirrie.
 Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.).
 Spencer, Hn. C. R. (Northampton).
 Stack, John.
 Stewart, Halley (Lincolnshire).
 Stokes, Sir George Gabriel.
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath).
 Sullivan, T. D. (Dublin).
 Sutherland, A. (Sutherlandsh.).
 Tanner, Charles Kearns.
 Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr).
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray.
 Trevelyan, Rt. Hn. Sir Geo. Otto.
 Tellers for the Ayes, Sir Henry James and Colonel Saunderson.

NOES.

Ainslie, William George.
 Allison, Robert Andrew.
 Allsopp, Hon. Geo. (Worcester).
 Allsopp, Hon. Percy (Taunton).
 Anstruther, H. T. (St. Andrews).
 Anstruther, Col. Lloyd (Suffolk).
 Ashmead-Bartlett, Ellis.
 Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth.
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r).
 Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds).
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Bazley-White, J.
 Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants).
 Beaufoy, Mark Hanbury.
 Bentinck, Lord H. C. (Norfolk).
 Bethell, Commander.
 Biddulph, Michael.
 Birkbeck, Sir Edward.
 Birrell, Augustine.
 Board, Thomas William.
 Bridgeman, Col. Hon. Francis C.
 Brodrick, Hon. St. John.
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn.
 Tuite, James.
 Vivian, Sir Henry Hussey.
 Wallace, Robert.
 Waring, Col. Thomas.
 Watson, James.
 Watt, Hugh.
 Wayman, Thomas.
 Webb, Alfred.
 Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras).
 Wharton, John Lloyd.
 Whitley, Edward.
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon.
 Wiggins, Henry.
 Will, John Shiress.
 Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.).
 Williamson, J. (Lanc. N.).
 Williamson, Steph. (Kilm'nock).
 Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull).
 Wilson, John (Lanark).
 Wilson, Sir Samuel (Portsmouth).
 Winterbotham, Arthur Brend.
 Wodehouse, Edmond Robert.
 Wroughton, Philip.
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong.
 Young, Charles Edward Baring.

Ellis, Sir J. Whittaker (Surrey).
 Farquharson, Dr. R. (Aberd'sh.).
 Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. (Lanc. N.).
 Fellowes, Ailwyn Edward.
 Fenwick, Charles.
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r).
 Forwood, Arthur Bower.
 Fowler, Sir Robert N. (London).
 Fraser, Gen. Charles Craufurd.
 Gedge, Sydney.
 Giles, Alfred.
 Godson, Augustus Frederick.
 Goldsworthy, Major-General.
 Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon.
 Goschen, Rt. Hon. Geo. Joachim.
 Grimston, Viscount.
 Grove, Sir Thomas Fraser.
 Gunter, Colonel.
 Gurdon, Robert Thornhagh.
 Haldane, Richard Burdon.
 Hamilton, Col. Chas. E. (South'k).
 Harland, Sir Edward James.
 Heathcote, Captain Edwards.
 Herbert, Hon. Sidney.
 Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down).
 Hill, Col. Edwd. Stock (Bristol).
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich).
 Holloway, George.
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry.
 Howorth, Henry Hoyle.
 Hozier, James Henry Cecil.
 Hughes, Colonel Edwin.
 Hunt, Frederick Seager.
 Hunter, Sir Guyer (Hackney).
 Isaacson, Frederick Wootton.
 Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies.
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick.
 Johnston, William.
 Kenyon, Hon. George Thomas.
 Knightley, Sir Rainald.
 Leahy, James (Kildare).
 Lechmere, Sir Edmund A. H.
 Legh, Thos. Wodehouse (Lanc.).
 Lennox, Lord Walter C. Gordon.
 Lewisham, Viscount.
 Llewellyn, Evan Henry.
 Lockwood, Frank.
 Low, Malcolm.
 Lowther, Hn. Wm. (Westm'land).
 Lymington, Viscount.
 Mackintosh, Charles Frazer.
 Maclure, John William.
 M'Donald, Dr. Roderick.
 M'Lagan, Peter.
 M'Laren, Walter S. B.
 Madden, Dodgson Hamilton.
 Marriott, Rt. Hon. Sir W. T.
 Matthews, Rt. Hon. Henry.
 Maxwell, Sir Herbert E.
 Montagu, Samuel.
 Morgan (Octavius V. Battersea).
 Morrell, George Herbert.
 Mount, William George.
 Mulholland, Henry Lyle.
 Murdoch, Charles Townshend.
 Nolan, Colonel (Galway, N.).
 Norris, Edward Samuel.
 Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford.
 Norton, Robert.
 Pearson, Sir Charles John.
 Pelly, Sir Lewis.
 Philipps, John Wynford.
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare.
 Plowden, Sir William Chichele.
 Plunket, Rt. Hon. David R.
 Pomfret, William Pomfret.
 Price, Captain (Devonport).
 Rankin, James.
 Reed, Henry Byron (Bradford).
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson.
 Robertson, Rt. Hon. J. P. B. (Bute).
 Robinson, Brooke (Dudley).
 Round, James.
 Rountree, Joshua.
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone).
 Selwyn, Capt. Charles William.
 Smith, Abel (Herts).
 Smith, Rt. Hn. Wm. H. (Strand).
 Stanhope, Rt. Hn. E. (Lincolnsh.).
 Summers, William.
 Sykes, Christopher.
 Talbot, John Gilbert.
 Taylor, Francis.
 Temple, Sir Richard.
 Theobald, James.
 Thorburn, Walter.
 Tyler, Sir Henry Whatley.
 Vernon, Hon. Greville Richard.
 Vincent, Chas. Edw. Howard.
 Walsh, Hn. Arthur Henry John.
 Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight).
 West, W. Cornwallis.
 Weston, Sir Joseph Dodge.
 Weymouth, Viscount.

Williams Arthur (Glamorgan).	Woodall, William.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.).	Wortley, Charles Beilby Stuart.
Winn, Hon. Rowland.	Wright, Caleb (Lanc. S. W.)
Wolmer, Viscount.	Wright, H. Smith (Nottingham).
Wood, Nicholas.	

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Akers-Douglas and Sir William Walrond.

CONVERSAZIONE.

In view of the expected debate on May 13th, a conversazione was arranged to take place in the galleries of the Royal Institution of Painters in Water Colours, Piccadilly, on the evening of Monday, 11th. Invitations were issued to supporters of Mr. Woodall's Bill, in the names of the following ladies, who kindly consented to form a Reception Committee:—The Lady Frances Balfour, Mrs. Leonard Courtney, Miss Courtenay, Mrs. Fawcett, Louisa Lady Goldsmid, Miss Davenport-Hill, Lady Lethbridge, Lady Matheson, Mrs. Penrose FitzGerald, the Countess of Portsmouth, Mrs. Temple, Mrs. Westlake, the Lady Maude Wolmer. Amongst the earliest arrivals were, the Lady Frances Balfour, Dr. Storey (of Roseneath), Louisa Lady Goldsmid, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Davies, Mrs. Garrett Anderson, Mr. Anderson, the Misses Anderson, Mrs. Leonard Courtney, Miss Courtney, Lord and Lady George Campbell, Lady Matheson, Major and Mrs. Houston, Mr. and Mrs. Hallett, Rev. Donald Fraser, Miss Garrett, Miss Gurney, Mr. McLaren, M.P., Mr. Woodall, M.P., Mr. and Mrs. Moberley Bell, Mrs. Sheldon Amos, Mr. and Miss Amos, Miss Dorothea Roberts, Mrs. Shaen, Mrs. Rowland Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Stopes, Colonel Wintle, Mrs. Miller Morrison, Mr. B. Blackburn, Mrs. Rowe Bennett, Miss Catherine Drew, Mr. Atkins, Mrs. H. W. Lawrence, and Mrs. Coffey, Mrs. Bateson, Mrs. Bathurst, Mrs. and Miss Henn Collins, Mrs. Culme Seymour, Captain James, Mr. Clutton, Miss Edith Phillott, Miss McKerlie, Miss A. E. Bell, Miss Gertrude Andrews, Mr. Tod, Misses Hill, Mrs. Earnshaw, Miss Ellaby, M.D., Miss Spring Rice, Misses Butcher, Mr. and Mrs. Shore Smith, Miss Hubbard, Mrs. Wynford Philipps, Miss Cicely Philipps, Miss L. M. Wilkinson, Miss F. R. Wilkinson, Miss Greenhill, Lady Weston, Miss Zimmerman, Mr. and the Lady Ida Lowe, Mrs. Gerald Wellesley, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Watt, Miss Vernon, Mrs. and Miss Sterling, Mr. Stone and Miss Stone, Mr. and Mrs. Stanger, Mrs. S. W. Rea, Miss Eccles, Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Pease, Major and Mrs. Jordan, Mrs. W. Debenham, Miss M. H. Hart, Mrs. Kyllmann, Misses Vernon Harcourt, Miss Robson, Mrs. Alexander Ross, Mrs. Mylne, Miss Walker, M.D., Mr. and Miss Dryhurst, Mr. F. E. Garrett, &c., &c.

Letters regretting unavoidable absence were received from the Countess of Portsmouth, Mrs. Temple, Mr. Rankin, M.P., Sir Albert Rollit, M.P., &c. Lady Maude Wolmer was prevented by

illness from being present, also Miss Tod, Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., Misses Davenport-Hill, and several others.

The Committee had, in the first instance, contemplated a gathering mainly social in character, but after the change wrought in the political position by the division on Sir Henry James' amendment on April 30th, it was determined to introduce a more political element, and speeches were accordingly arranged to be given between ten and eleven o'clock in the Eastern Gallery, by Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., the Lady Frances Balfour, Mrs. Ashworth Hallett, Rev. Donald Fraser, D.D., Mr. McLaren, M.P., and Mr. Woodall, M.P.

Mr. McLAREN was voted to the chair, and after reviewing the circumstances by which the Bill had been set aside, he went on to say it was of course open to the House of Commons to discuss, or decline to discuss, any measure that might come before it, but no measure had been treated with such injustice as this one—despite all the efforts their friends could put forth. Two years before, when a debate was expected, they had been cheated out of their day by a conspiracy between the Radicals, Mr. Labouchere being chief intriguer, and the Conservatives' Whips. This year it had not been possible for the intriguers to enter into negotiations with the Government, because Mr. W. H. Smith had given an assurance to the deputation of ladies who had waited on him, that the day for second reading should not be absorbed. They had been obliged, therefore, to adopt more open proceedings, and attention had thus been drawn to the manner in which the Women's Suffrage party had been cheated.

Many members though in favour of the measure, had not the courage to oppose its being set aside. They tried to get all they could from women and would give nothing in return. If women would take a bold stand, and make it clear to candidates and members that they would not receive their help unless they pledged themselves to support Women's Suffrage they would, in a year or two, have the fulfilment of their hopes. But so long as it was treated only in an academic way, they would be cheated in the future as they had been in the past. He trusted that all women interested in this subject would do their best so to organise in the constituencies as to press this matter forward at every election.

The LADY FRANCES BALFOUR being then called upon to speak, said she did not know why she should be asked to speak first, unless it were because she was the youngest of the recruits. In a lively manner she described the fears that were felt when it was known that the Government intended to take private members days, how Mr. W. H. Smith stated that he had given something in the nature of a pledge that the 13th should not be taken, and now after all the day for the Suffrage Bill was lost. When they considered the position the question occupied now and compared it with that it occupied fifteen years ago, they had no cause for anything but cheerfulness. They had only to go straight forward, for they had come to be regarded seriously: they had only to go on trying to strengthen members of Parliament, and in a short time they would gain all they wanted.

Mr. WOODALL, M.P., after some preliminary comments on the

fate of the Bill, went on to say that now they must dismiss all illusions. They had been accustomed to think of Women's Suffrage as having been voted for on its own merits. They had seen women taking their part so well in Municipal elections, School Board and Poor Law Guardian work, that if by a stroke of the pen their work and influence could be eliminated it would be to annul a great power from among the motive forces which are now being brought to bear on the administrative work of the day and on social problems. They had taken it for granted that the battle was over when they might count on a majority in the present Parliament. Thus a fallacious opinion had grown up that the academic feeling in favour of their claim was strong enough to assure them a vote of the majority of the House. It was only of recent years that all political parties had come to acknowledge the importance of the co-operation of women, yet all had misgivings, lest they should spoil their calculations by the introduction of this new element. They needed to impress members with the conviction that women are in earnest; that they desire the vote for the uses they can put it to. They must make earnest effort. He believed there was a general feeling even amongst opponents that their ultimate triumph was certain.

Mrs. GARRETT ANDERSON, who was very cordially received, said she wished to express how very important she thought the present crisis to be. They must throw their hearts into this work if they meant to bring it to a successful issue. People were not yet sufficiently convinced that women do care for this thing. A great deal of activity ought to be their's before the next general election, and she would be glad to see a large sum raised, for propagandism is expensive. When they heard a person like Mr. Labouchere say that the suffrage is no more likely to be given to women than to rabbits, that ought to be brought up against him on every occasion. It was a scandal for a man who called himself a man to say such a thing.

Mrs. ASHWORTH HALLETT said that it was in 1870 that the Women's Suffrage Bill was first introduced into Parliament, and there were some present that evening who had never ceased to work for the question during that long period of years. In the early days of the movement they had endured the scoff and sneers of opponents with becoming meekness. They were supported by the belief that they had got hold of a truth which, in the progress of events, would have to be acknowledged. They had seen political power gradually extended to thousands of "capable" illiterate men. Statesmen had now to reckon with a vast unwieldy electorate swayed by emotion and sentiment, and in their difficulties they were entreating women to lend their aid to lead and guide this incalculable host. Women having no voice in forming the laws were asked to help to form the ideas of the new law makers. No longer were politics outside women's sphere. If women, to quote Mr. Gladstone, have "a real part to play in Party politics," then it was clear that the bottom had been knocked out of all the arguments, ancient and modern, against giving them responsible political power. The women who are asking for the franchise are the only voters representing property who are left outside the

Constitution. They are already included in the local electoral roll, and when added to the Parliamentary register they would bring some balance of intelligence to set against the ignorance that abounded. She believed that the votes of women would be on the side of strong Government, on the side of law and order, of religion and morality. They asked for the franchise for women because they believed it would add a new power and virtue to the State, and that in the future, as in the past, every act which helped to raise the status of women would add to the well-being of the world.

The Rev. DONALD FRASER was next asked to address the audience, and began by saying that this was his maiden speech on the subject, though he had been a convinced adherent for over twenty years. His profession had taken him from political discussions, yet in his quiet room he had often felt indignant that a question of such importance should be balked year by year by provoking delays, nor did he think it creditable to men that it had to be pressed so much. He had no fear that its supporters would lose heart or hope, for as it has been said, "our desires are increased by our difficulties."

It is the voice of the dunce that says "women do not understand public affairs," the dunce is afraid of the woman who has enlarged her mind by these questions. The real objection is that men think women very dangerous persons. They are so easily humbugged, men say, and so fond of hobbies. But that is about the most incorrect fallacy they can utter. Women are not so sentimental as men, for they are much more practical, and in so far as they have been intrusted with the public affairs of the country it is not they who have set up fads and hobbies. This question was not one that should be only pushed by women; men should push it also. Women, when they have the power of the vote, would see through a good many men who are cajoling the masses. They would put their bodkins into a good many windbags. It would not be possible to subtract from the number of voters, but it would be possible to make a wise and reasonable addition, one that would bring intelligence and a new point of view into the whole sphere of politics, and would help the moral amelioration of the people.

Mrs. FAWCETT then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, and the company, which had collected during the speeches in the Eastern Gallery, dispersed through the various rooms, taking leave towards midnight.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

Times.

"The Woman's Franchise Bill belongs to a class of measures which are a scandal to representative institutions—measures which, by the insistence of a noisy and importunate minority acting upon the cowardice and flabbiness of candidates for seats in the House of Commons, gradually secure the perfunctory support of numbers who

are thoroughly opposed to them, and sometimes become law in defiance of the true opinion of the House and the country. Men in quest of seats are addicted to the immoral practice of promising their support to measures which they know to be bad, and of soothing their conscience with the argument that the measures are too bad ever to pass. There is no measure too bad or too ridiculous to be passed by an Assembly in which this form of dishonesty is prevalent. A moment arrives when the number of those who are bound by these dissolute pledges becomes so great that the obstacle in which they put their trust, even while doing all that lay in their own power to overthrow it, is finally swept away. This is bad enough even in matters of minor importance. But in this country we have no written Constitution and no organic statutes of any kind. Nothing is safe from a chance vote of the House of Commons, and, unless that House is inspired by a high sense of public duty, the tactics we have described may be as easily used to effect the most profound as the most superficial changes. The admission of women to equal political power with men is a wild experiment from which the most advanced democracies in all ages have shrunk. Yet to that experiment we are so nearly committed, in the teeth of reason, experience, and the sober conviction of an overwhelming majority, that the House of Commons is glad to snatch at the somewhat ignominious expedient of preventing the question from being put to the vote."

Globe.

"Women's Franchise is not a burning question, but it is of very much more importance, in respect both of justice and of expediency, than many which emulate temporary volcanoes; and to treat it as an intrusion upon the serious business of the country is to virtually admit ignorance of its whole character and bearing. Moreover, a considerable number of pledges have been given that it shall be fairly considered; and we do not take for granted that election pledges are made only to be broken, or else given under the tacit condition that the measure in respect of which they are given shall have no chance of becoming law. Mr. W. H. Smith only gave evidence of his care for the reputation of the House, as well as of his right estimate of a great question when he insisted upon giving advocates of women's suffrage their single opportunity during the present session. For once, the temper of the House of Commons appears to be sufficiently cool and unpreoccupied to consider it on its merits; and—though such appearances are deceptive—it is regrettable that the opportunity should have been refused."

Pall Mall Gazette.

"The great movement which is teaching women to think, and enabling them to act, for themselves, which is encouraging them to possess character and individuality, and to put those qualities into careers, will but receive a slender tributary when a Woman's Suffrage Bill is read for the third time and has sustained but little check from yesterday's jockeying.

"Meanwhile, there is one practical good which should arise from

yesterday's double shuffle. It ought to teach the Liberal lady politicians that they are being humbugged; that from the Liberal Party, as a party, they, as women, have nothing to look for."

Western Morning News.

"Women already vote for Municipal Councils, for Boards of Guardians, and for School Boards. Nobody has suggested that they have unsexed themselves. But when it is proposed that the Parliamentary privilege shall be extended to them, then the bulk of the Liberal Party will not so much as discuss the matter. So much the worse for the Liberal Party. If the Conservatives are to have on their side all that is most intelligent and aspiring amongst educated English women, we may depend upon it that the Conservative Party will soon be moved by yet stronger and stronger desires for social improvement, and that in the end it will become popular by good deeds which can never be extinguished. Services like those performed by the main body of the Conservatives last night towards women will be paid, not so much by women's support, as by women's influence. We wish we could claim more Liberal Unionists, but we have some of the best of them."

Punch.

"*Thursday.*—A pretty little game on to-night. OLD MORALITY moved his Resolution taking power to appropriate Tuesdays and Fridays evening sittings, and all Wednesdays for Irish Land Bill. In ordinary circumstances there would have been stormy protest led from Front Opposition Bench against this inroad on time of private Members. Other fish to fry to-night. Wednesday week assigned for Second Reading of Woman's Suffrage Bill; if Government take that day for Irish Land Bill, obviously can't be utilised for furtherance of Woman's Rights. This is an awkward question for some Members; don't like it, but daren't vote against it. Here's opportunity of getting rid of it by side-wind. Not necessary in arranging proceedings to mention Suffrage Bill, or even Wednesday, 13th of May. It was principle for which Members struggled; the 'principle of uniformity,' as Mr. G. beautifully put it. 'Let us,' he said, though perhaps not quite in this phrase, 'go the whole hog or none; take all the Wednesdays, or leave them.'

"Pretty to see OLD MORALITY protesting against this unprecedented access of generosity. The very picture, as MCEWAN said, of a good man struggling with the adversity of overwhelming good fortune. Was prepared to take a Wednesday here and there; but, really, too much to appropriate every one. 'Not at all—not at all,' said Mr. G.

"But it was only under compulsion of a Division that he consented to accept the endowment. In meanwhile, the Woman's Suffrage debate on Wednesday week snuffed out, and final opportunity of Session lost.

"'I'm inclined,' said WM. WOODALL, 'as a rule, to take kindly views of my fellow men, to put the best construction upon their actions; but, upon my word, I'm not satisfied in my own mind that

we advocates of Woman's Rights have not been made the victims of deep and dastardly design.'

"'Order! Order!' said COURTNEY; 'no more am I.'

"*Business done.*—Woman's Rights men dished."

Truth.

"Had the House of Commons had an opportunity to vote upon the proposal, the ladies would have discovered that the Legislature is as likely to give them votes as to give votes to rabbits, for it would have been defeated by a very large majority."

Methodist Times.

"The way in which the House of Commons sneaked out of the necessity of recording its opinion for or against the Female Franchise Bill was not creditable to the male sex. If Members of Parliament do not believe in extending the vote to women, let them at least have the courage to say so, and then we shall know where we are. It is to be feared that some advocates of the Female Suffrage have imperilled their cause by making extreme demands. Not satisfied with giving votes to such women as are ratepayers, they wish to confer the vote upon every woman at once, which would effect at a stroke such a complete revolution in the distribution of political power that even the friends of the gradual recognition of Female Suffrage might hesitate to concede it. The frequently expressed argument that the vote should be resisted on the ground that all women are Conservatives is too contemptible for discussion. If women are entitled to the suffrage the way they are likely to vote has nothing to do with it. As to the argument that they are likely to be influenced by the parsons, it comes with ill grace from men who have been often influenced by the publicans, and of the two we prefer the parsons. We quite admit that the question is a grave one, but it ought to be discussed on its merits and not meanly dismissed by a side wind."

Speaker.

"Certain forms of female suffrage are already in force in this country, and practical politicians have had an opportunity of seeing for themselves how they answer. It is true that the extension of the franchise to women which has already taken place is in itself unobjectionable. But the equity of the change which gave certain women a vote in municipal affairs is independent of the manner in which they have used that vote. Unfortunately experience has taught all who are concerned in municipal elections that the working of the female franchise has not been satisfactory. Whether rightly or wrongly, the fact remains that the great majority of female voters have the strangest dislike for independence. There are, of course, striking exceptions to the rule; but these exceptions only seem to make the rule more conspicuous. The majority of the ladies who now enjoy a vote in municipal affairs vote as they are told. That is to say, they place themselves in the hands of some trusted friend, and their ballot-paper is marked as that friend advises. By-and-by this may all be changed; the idea of the independence of

woman, which now possesses so strongly the minds of a few, may permeate the whole mass of the female sex. But clearly that is not the case at present, and will hardly be the case for a generation to come. What happens now is that certain favoured persons—clergymen being conspicuous among their number—though they are not allowed a plurality of wives, are permitted to enjoy a plurality of votes; and in more cases than we care to dwell upon, the votes of women in municipal contests have been cast against useful and necessary measures of reform, merely for the sake of pleasing their spiritual or medical advisers."

NOTE.—The following letters furnish an appropriate commentary on the above passage.

The first is from Miss Sanders, Cardiff.

"My father (Mr. Alderman Sanders, of Cardiff) wishes me to say that he thinks few men have a wider or more continued experience of municipal contests than he has had, which experience extends over more than thirty years. It may be perfectly true that some women vote as they are told, but not the majority. It is equally true that many men vote as they are told, but on the whole he is convinced that the majority of women voters use their suffrage with a higher and nobler purpose than do the majority of the other sex."

The next letter is from Mr. S. Hayward, Bath, who writes:—"An experience of thirty years in municipal elections in Bath (where the women voters comprise 1,700 out of 7,000) enables me confidently to contradict the assertion of the writer in the *Speaker*, 'that the great majority of female voters have the strongest dislike for independence.' The municipal elections here have generally been fought on political grounds (I think unfortunately), and hence both male and female voters have been influenced in various ways; but I have found that the women voters have generally attached more importance than the men to the personal moral character and social usefulness of a candidate; and certainly have shown more independence than the majority of the lower class of male voters."

FUTURE EFFORTS.

The Executive Committee have received many suggestions as to the best methods of concentrating the strength of the movement which has for quarter of a century being steadily increasing in force.

The effort to obtain a fair hearing for the question has now received the aid of the Government. This combined with the approach of a General Election makes the present a time peculiarly calling for energetic action.

In regard to the necessary sinews of war, the Com-

mittee have received the following letter from a lady, whose name if she would permit its publication, would carry weight. They commend it to the attention of their supporters:—

“I advise raising a good sum to spend in working up the country during the next three years. I will contribute £100 a year for three years on condition that £900 a year more is promised.

“I think £1,000 a year is not in the least too much to spend just now.

“Would it be worth while to have a Self-denial Suffrage Week, say in November or December, of each year, in which friends all over the country shall deny themselves all luxuries and put the proceeds into our fund? . . . We must find ways of making it recognised that we care VERY MUCH on the subject.”

The aid of women is constantly invoked in election contests, and it is surely reasonable to ask those who desire such help to take part in obtaining for women the right to exercise quietly by their votes the political power which they are urged by all parties in turn to exert in their favour by canvassing or other more conspicuous methods.

Women are called on now more imperatively than they have ever been called on before to make their views known to the men who are likely to have the power of carrying them out, and by this means lend the most effective form of co-operation to the efforts of their friends in the House of Commons as well as to the efforts of the Committee, who will do their utmost to secure the introduction of a Bill next session.

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NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

OCCASIONAL PAPER,

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