

JUS SUFFRAGII

MONTHLY ORGAN OF THE
INTERNATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE ALLIANCE.

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THE ASSEMBLY OF THE PROVINCE OF KWANTUNG IN WHICH NINE CHINESE WOMEN SERVED.

The Canton Assembly.

When the Chinese Revolutionists had won their point and had overthrown the Manchus, they turned their attention to the reform of their Government. The Manchus, in tardy recognition of the growing democratic sentiment in the country, had established Parliaments called Assemblies in each Province. The Revolutionists retained their Assemblies but declared for new elections. As no national law-making body yet existed, and no constitution had been adopted, each Province was granted authority by the Provisional Government to conduct the first election as it liked. The Revolutionary Society of the Province of Kwantung, whose capital is Canton, decided to set aside ten seats for women and to allow the women of the Province to elect these women members. This was done, and ten women were duly elected. One resigned because she went abroad for study; the others served. They were all well educated, highly respected women. Several were the wives of pro-

minent merchants, and two were head mistresses of girls' schools. The above view presents a portion of the Canton Assembly and six of the women members. Men and women in South China dress similarly, both wearing loose trousers and long coats. The dress is exceedingly hygienic and comfortable and as worn by the Chinese women is artistic and becoming. These Chinese women not infrequently spoke in the discussions of the Assembly and manifested a remarkable aptitude for deliberative procedure. Many Chinese women revealed a truly great talent for public speaking and were among the most successful propagandists in the first revolution.

Now a second revolution is in progress, being directed against the Republican Government. Apparently it has been initiated by the same people and is supported by the same Provinces as the first one. Canton, Nanking, and Shanghai were leaders in the first as they are leaders in the second. The North and the South have never been in close sympathy and understanding, and it has long been predicted by foreigners that two Governments would eventually develop out of the old Empire. The

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South is more progressive and better educated than the North. If the present Revolutionists win and either gain control of the National Government, or set up an independent republic in the South, it is probable that woman suffrage will secure a fresh impetus, and it is quite possible that the temporary experiment of Kwantung may become a permanent constitutional custom.

It was in Canton that young women made their protests against the marriage customs of their country by the organisation of "Suicide Clubs." Here, too, women began the organisation of "Dare to Die" Clubs in the service of the Revolution. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the organiser and leader of the Revolution, is a Cantonese, and in the days of preparation was a pronounced advocate of equality of rights for men and women. He was accused by some of the women of having deserted his faith when the real test came and there was a distribution of the chestnuts which the hands of women had helped to draw from the fire of revolution. He may have a further opportunity to reveal his true position. Out of the events just now transpiring in China great influences upon the world's woman question may issue forth. These women are plucky, quick, clear headed, and will allow no opportunity to pass unheeded.

Editorial Notes.

Jus Suffragii will hereafter be issued on the first instead of the middle of the month as heretofore. Communications to insure insertion must be in the hands of the Editor, Miss Sheepshanks, 7, Adam Street, Adelphi, London, by the 25th of the previous month.

The suffrage situation in Denmark has been altered by the late elections and apparently for the better. It will be a disappointment to the world's suffrage movement if this sturdily democratic country does not write woman suffrage in its constitution within the next two years.

The elections in Finland took place on August 2nd, but as proportional representation exists, two full weeks are required to count the complicated vote. Miss Furuhejm, 2nd Vice-president of the Alliance, is a candidate for Parliament, but the result of the election cannot be announced before the September number.

For years the suffragists of the Netherlands have been making ready for the opportunity which has at last arrived. It is one of the best organised countries for suffrage. The Auxiliary of the Alliance numbers 115 branches and 15,000 dues

paying members, a tremendous per cent. of a total population of 5,858,175. There is also a second society which has a considerable membership. The coming Liberal Ministry makes a constitutional revision certain, and the great popular endorsement of woman suffrage offers hope that the Dutch will live up to their reputation of staunch believers in human liberty.

Woman suffrage in Illinois went into effect July 1, and already women have voted in several towns upon local issues. In two towns the Press reports that the women outvoted the men. Schools for women voters have been established in Chicago and in several towns over the State to teach them the use of the voting machines which record the count of the vote as soon as deposited. In the First Ward of Chicago the population consists largely of Italians. A clever Italian woman has been a recognised leader there, and for years has taught her countrywomen how to vote. Now they have acknowledged their debt to her by nominating her for a seat in the City Council of Chicago.

The most amusing instance of the inconsistency often created by the uneven development of the rights of women comes from South Austria. There, in common with the greater part of feudal Europe, women owners of estates have long been permitted to vote by proxy. In most countries this right merely meant that the woman's property gave her husband or nearest male relative more votes. It is doubtful if this custom was ever considered as a right of any consequence so far as women were concerned. In 1910 the Local Government of Wiener-Neustadt and Waidhofen gave women taxpayers the direct vote, and that vote was made compulsory. In one of these cities there is an old, rich, and highly conservative Catholic convent. Behind high walls and barred doors the nuns have lived their quiet uneventful lives, presumably with no other thoughts than those of religion. When necessity compels them to go out on errands they go in carriages and are never seen walking in the street. Suddenly, without warning, the pious ladies were converted into compulsory voters, and found themselves caught by a three-horned dilemma. Should they refuse to vote they were punishable by the law of their Commune, but should they obey that local law, they would disobey the law of their Church which bade them not to concern themselves with the affairs of this world. Further, should they undertake to vote, as by law they must, and with the wish to do so intelligently should they lay aside their reserve and attend a political meeting, they would disobey the Imperial Law of Austria, which in paragraph 30 forbids women to have aught to do with politics. They appealed to the Pope to extricate them from this embarrassing position, and it is most significant that he gave them a special dispensation to use their voting rights. They were next convinced that it was wiser to obey the law nearest home, and to pay no attention to the Imperial taboo. Election day arrived and in their carriages the nuns proceeded to the polling place, but a still further obstacle presented itself in the hostile attitude of a portion of the protestant public, which neither believed in woman suffrage in general, nor in that of nuns in particular. They were set upon en route by this element, but were gallantly rescued before any harm was done, and sedately deposited their compulsory votes. One may easily imagine the day to be the most eventful in their lives, and that their feelings were sadly bewildered when it was over. A testimonial from the Mother Superior containing her views on woman suffrage would be exceedingly interesting, but whatever they may be, one thing is certain, and that is that a woman suffrage agitation has been conducted in a most unexpected quarter.

The British Government continues to contribute its part to the picturesqueness of the woman suffrage campaign. During the past week much attention has been directed to the unique visit of a troupe of some thirty city councillors, chiefly from Edinburgh and Glasgow. It will be remembered that these cities, together with all of the chief cities of England, Scotland, and Ireland, passed resolutions some time ago favouring the Parliamentary vote for women, and now these representatives of Scotch Councils came unofficially to ask why their petitions had gone unheeded. Three times Mr. Asquith, in response to their written request for a hearing, had declined to grant it, but these persistent Scotchmen took the stand that they possessed a constitutional right to present a petition to the Prime Minister, and finally announced that they would accept no refusal from the Government to see them, and would appear on a certain day. Appear they did, and when they marched to Downing Street the streets were lined with people who wanted

The Great Pilgrimage.

The great event which has been happening in England during the last four weeks is the Pilgrimage organised by the National Union.

Women from the North of England, from the South, from the East and from the West, from Wales, from Scotland and Ireland, have marched up to London, holding meetings in the villages and towns they passed through, distributing leaflets, tramping through rain and dust and heat, wearing straw cockle-shells in their hats made in red, green, and white, the colours of the Union, carrying little flags, sometimes banners, too, in the same brilliant colours, knapsacks on their backs, and stirring England as she has not been stirred for many a long day.

Some of our very oldest members have walked the whole distance from their homes on foot, refusing the occasional "lifts" offered them in carriages, carts, or motors lent by sympathisers. No one travelled on the railway except those speakers who had to be in several places at once (the usual lot of many speakers), or those whose business called them back to their homes from time to time.

All ages, denominations, parties, and classes joined this ever-advancing pilgrimage. An old couple of 80 marched with one contingent. A still older couple came from North Wales, and the two oldest suffragists in Ireland, each of them well over 80, were in it. Two hundred and ninety-nine miles (English) is the distance some have walked. A Yorkshireman of 95 was there for part of the route. The infant, too, was there, brought by its mother to see this great procession, labelled "non-militant" and "Votes for Women." So was the member of Parliament who made speeches on the platforms, the cobbler who mended the Pilgrims' shoes for nothing, the bill-poster who plastered the wall with notices from sheer love of the Cause—everyone was there. The clergy opened the doors of their chapels, churches, and cathedrals, and preached the ethics of our movement; Aldermen and Councillors mounted our platforms and made eloquent speeches in the towns we swept through.

The newspapers which in their love of sensationalism are often inclined to report the deeds of the militant Societies only, at last, awakened by this pilgrimage, have seen that weariness, hardship, and danger (for the crowds were sometimes very hostile, very eager to injure, and not averse to killing our Pilgrims) can be, and are, borne willingly and gladly by the members of our great National Union.

To work unceasingly at the heavy, sometimes dull, business of educating the whole nation, to do it cheerfully, often giving up life's pleasantest things for it, never grumbling, never despairing, and most important of all, never giving way to bitterness and foolish anger, requires constant courage and constant strength, and this is what the pilgrimage has made people who have at times taunted the non-militants with being too timid to go to prison, too timid to burn houses, at last realise and understand.

As one lady said who watched the pilgrims pass, "I never before realised the greatness, the something I can't describe, of the movement, and it made me understand as I never did before. I somehow felt like weeping." Our brave women have been knocked down, kicked, trampled on, injured, but their courage through it all won the people's hearts in the end.

One of the reasons for the hostility shown in some places, mostly small country towns, was that the Anti-suffragists had been busy along some of the routes before our band arrived, holding meetings, and saying the usual things, such as, that when women get the vote the baby will be neglected, the home ruined, the husband reduced to misery because his shirts will be neither mended nor washed, and so on; that our colonies and dependencies will rebel and England will be in a state of horrible chaos, etc. As one man expressed it, "women will turn the world upside down." In places not yet touched by our educational work, such statements will pass for arguments.

Another reason for the harsh treatment inflicted upon the pilgrims was that the latest development of militant methods has turned whole bodies of sympathetic persons into active enemies. To such people women's suffrage now only means arson and general violence. Of course, the Anti-suffragists gladly use this as a new argument, a thing Mrs. Humphry Ward says they have been wishing for, against us. "If women do these things are they fit to vote?" "No," shouts the crowd, and more particularly the hooligans in it.

to see what would happen. The Prime Minister was not at home, and had left a secretary to receive them. They succeeded in holding a small indignation meeting on the Prime Minister's doorstep, and that spirit percolated throughout London on the days which followed. They were entertained at luncheons, teas, and dinners, and although they came as the special guests of the Men's and Actresses' Leagues, meetings were held for them by all sorts of suffrage societies, the programme closing with some great gatherings in Hyde Park. Upon all occasions they told their story and voiced their outraged feelings, two or three being endowed with decided gifts of oratory. It was stated that about two-thirds of them were Liberals in politics, the others being Unionists and Labour men. Some were constitutional and some militant in sympathy, but they were all agreed on the proposition that their constitutional right to a hearing had been ruthlessly violated, and upon all sides they made threats of the loss of Liberal seats in Scotland because of it. The paragraphs in the Press about their comings and goings, the great audiences indoors and out which gathered to hear and to greet them, kept their mission in the list of chief topics of interest for some days. The speeches they would have made to the Prime Minister, had the opportunity been offered, were sold to thousands of people on the streets in a penny pamphlet, which will find its way into the permanent records of the movement. The refusal of the Scotch Prime Minister to meet this deputation of his fellow-countrymen, who in the capacity of "councillors and bailies" were no ordinary men, resulted in a tremendous suffrage agitation over the entire country. Thus the blind, unwary opponents of our great and just cause all the world over, while meaning to defeat it, in reality contribute mightily to its coming victory. Suffragists under these circumstances should find it easy to "Love your enemies."

The chief world's suffrage event of July was the great non-militant Pilgrimage conducted under the direction of the National Union of Woman Suffrage Societies. Along eight main roads converging toward London, women suffragists have been marching on for weeks. Outdoors at street corners and in market places, indoors in town halls and every available meeting place, they have addressed vast audiences. It is estimated that over a thousand meetings were held by the various groups and that over a million people heard the suffrage message these brave women came to deliver. Over seven thousand eight hundred pounds was collected en route for the work. Thirty meetings of welcome were held in different parts of London on Friday evening when they arrived, and on Saturday, July 26, the eight groups united in a mighty demonstration in Hyde Park. Through four gates as many processions of pilgrims and their London sympathisers poured into the Park, and thousands upon thousands of men and women lined the route of the march. The crowds, estimated at between 60 and 80 thousands, gathered about nineteen platforms which were arranged in a circle around the "Reformer's Tree." Here, on the spot which has witnessed the protests of all England's Dissatisfied, the old suffrage story was told anew to quiet, orderly, sympathetic thousands. At six o'clock the bugles blew for the simple resolution, "This meeting demands a Government measure for the Enfranchisement of Women." So very few opposing votes were heard that for practical purposes it may be said that the endorsement was unanimous. Some 18,000 copies of the Common Cause, the Union's organ, were sold on the streets that afternoon. The report had been travelling rapidly over the country that militant incendiarism of a few had turned public sentiment against suffrage, and it was to demonstrate the falsity of that claim that the pilgrimage was undertaken. Although militant meetings in Hyde Park have been broken up, off and on, for some months, and were broken up on the Sunday following, there was not the least disturbance or show of hostility on the streets or in the Park. The Great Pilgrimage was a testimonial to the expert organising abilities, the fearless devotion, the splendid determination of women, and an equal demonstration of widespread British sympathy with the general movement. The British Government has demanded more self-sacrifice, more grinding, never-ending work, more nerve-racking anxiety than any other Government has yet done by way of proof that they want the vote. British women have met that demand with such an eagerness and courage that their movement deserves to rank with the greatest of the historical struggles for liberty. It was a soul-stirring, electrifying sight to see, and it left an exalting memory to carry away.

C. C. C.

Consequently the crowds were at times very cruel, and their language hard to bear patiently. But the Pilgrims were equal to it all. Mrs. Fawcett's example, her ever-enduring patience, steadfastness, and courage, her splendid faith, and best of all her wonderful "selflessness," that most beautiful of virtues which only the finest minds possess, inspires every member of the National Union to try to be worthy of such a leader. "Leader" is not quite the right word, for in the National Union we realise that though she is our President, she is something much more; she is our comrade and our fellow-soldier. In this way she gives us the deepest and best inspiration.

However, these dangers and difficulties only occurred in parts of the route. In many, very many, places people cheered the Pilgrims, welcomed them, fed and housed them, marched with them, even strewed flowers before them. The working women were splendid in their appreciation. One, a weaver from Yorkshire, gave up her short much-needed holiday and a whole week's wage, in order to march too, and carry a heavy banner. She said she held it a privilege to have done so. That is the spirit the pilgrimage has awakened in thousands of hearts throughout the long journey.

In some places members of the Labour Party came out and helped to hold meetings. In another some agricultural labourers joined our Pilgrims enthusiastically on their march. From everywhere comes the tale of how the spirit of chivalry was aroused, that spirit of true chivalry which is one of the first results of our movement, and men young and old rallied round our women's platforms, made themselves into body-guards, marched with them and shared their hardships, realising that we are working against the powers of evil, of misery, of ignorance, for the sake of the whole human race, and not for our own sakes as women.

We have shown, says one newspaper, "that there can be no true democracy while more than half of the population is unfranchised," and we have found "that the country as a whole" is with us in our demand for liberty. The Press is with us as it has never been before, and the feeling awakened in the country is now so deep, so strong, that we believe we shall not lose the ground we have won.

The great demonstration in Hyde Park which was the climax of the pilgrimage was declared by the papers, even by those which have always been opposed to our cause, to be the finest thing London has seen for fifty years.

Long processions of the Pilgrims, and of men (even a few members of Parliament joined us!) and women, from every part of our Island who had come specially for the occasion, were marshalled along the streets headed by three women on horse-back. Our banners were flying, bands playing as we walked between crowds of attentive, sympathetic, and at times enthusiastic spectators. Women of all ages, of all classes, of all parties, marched together united as never before with one common enthusiasm. Our former processions and demonstrations have been great, magnificent, perhaps larger in numbers, but there was something in this one which cannot easily be described. It was something which shone on the faces of the marchers, which was reflected on the faces of the crowds who lined the streets, and who stood beneath the nineteen platforms, 70,000 strong and more, listening to the speeches. To many of us it was as the clear shining of the dawn on the mountain tops. The spirit of happiness which has seemed to inspire our Pilgrims all along their weary march, a spirit which made them rejoice as they walked along together, and which only comes to those who have been through suffering and hardship together for the sake of something too mighty to be expressed in language, inspired both the speakers and the listeners in Hyde Park. Everywhere the resolution was carried, that we demanded a Government measure. Mrs. Catt's and Mrs. Fawcett's platform was surrounded by thousands of people, but no platform had less than 1,000 or 2,000 listeners. There were even some of our kind friends from Budapest with us. Every Pilgrim wearing the cockleshell, haversack, and sash was observed with the greatest interest. The battered pilgrimage banners contrasted proudly with the gay silks and velvets carried by the various societies and placed around the platforms. Hundreds of people signed our "Friends of Woman's Suffrage" cards, including very many of the policemen! I doubt if they will ever haul us off to prison in the future. *Common Causes* were selling furiously outside the Park (inside is forbidden), some at sixpence and even a shilling each—one sold for 10s.! A spirit of gaiety was abroad everywhere, and it was difficult after the bugle sounded and the resolution passed to get the audience

to disperse. One delightful story told by Miss Ashton specially pleased her crowd. The question of whether married people would quarrel if each had a vote came up. Miss Ashton described how a girl had said to her at a meeting, "Tell them that dogs don't fight when they have two bones, but only when they've one between them." The working women who spoke were particularly admired and applauded. Working women belong in large numbers to our Society.

On Sunday, the day after this great demonstration, we met in Trafalgar Square and tramped down the Strand to St. Paul's Cathedral to join in the afternoon service. The Canon in residence, Canon Simpson, is one of our best supporters. Down the Strand we walked, our hearts full of happiness, and the Pilgrims joyous that their work was over, and so well done, and our colours shining in the soft afternoon light.

The sound of our feet walking up the stone steps and up the great nave was somehow like the sound of many waters. And it was, too, as if beside us were walking those women of the past, both known and unknown, whose labours have cleared the way for us, and without whose work we should still be far behind. Their footsteps seemed to be mingling with ours.

Those of us who can remember something of the early days, thirty years ago, or more, know we are nearing the end of our great fight very rapidly now. We can judge of this better than some of our younger Pilgrims, and we know this is so with a certainty no temporary set-backs can shake. This wonderful pilgrimage has made many see and know this as nothing else could have done. It is something England will never forget.

F. O. I.

The Women's Social and Political Union.

Mrs. Pankhurst, who was sentenced to three years' penal servitude on April 3rd, was released on license on the 12th of that month because the doctors did not care to take the responsibility of her death upon them. She was due to return on April 28th, but the state of her health was such that the Government did not, for the same fear of death, dare to rearrest her until May 26th. On the 30th of May she was again released, and rearrested while on her way to attend the funeral of Emily Davison on June 14th. Two days later she was again carried out of prison, and was taken again by force at the London Pavilion on July 21st, just as the Scottish delegates (a body of municipal men who came up to interview Mr. Asquith, and were refused that interview) came on the platform. The conduct of the police detectives in bringing sticks into the Pavilion and assaulting the entirely inactive women in a fashion which an eyewitness described as that of "slaughter," is matter which it is hoped even an English Court of Law will inquire into.

Great meetings have been and are being held to demand the repeal of the "Cat and Mouse" Act. The mass meeting held by the National Political League on July 8th, when the Government was censured, and a resolution protesting against the coercive policy, was followed by a Conference held in the Caxton Hall on July 24th, when Sir Victor Horsley and others, speaking from the medical point of view, insisted upon the cumulative and poisonous effects of repeated starvation, pointing out that these effects were beyond cure, because not only starvation but degeneration of the affected organs was caused, and that under the Act we have government by detectives.

The Conference sent a deputation of thirteen people, nominated by the meeting under the leadership of Sir Edward Busk, to go to the House of Commons and present a memorial embodying the conclusions arrived at by the legal, medical, and political bodies represented by delegates from all parts of the country. The deputation, led by Sir Edward Busk, was permitted to enter the lobby, but got no further. Later on it was learnt that Mr. Asquith was not in the House. The Home Secretary after parleying agreed to see Sir Edward Busk alone next day, but rejected the other part of the deputation. But Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, like the Scottish Baillies, seized her opportunity and addressed the gaping crowd of members, visitors, and policemen, with the result that she and Lady Sybil Smith and Miss Evelyn Sharp were arrested and lodged in Cannon Row.

(Signed) PRESS DEPARTMENT.

Denmark.

LANDSFORBUNDET FOR KVINDERS VALGRET.

At the elections in the end of May the Moderate Party lost their majority in the Lower House, while the Radicals and Socialists gained very much. To the former Radical Prime Minister, Zahle, was entrusted the authority to form a new Government, and on the 21st of June this new Radical Cabinet was formed. The programme of this Government is to change the constitution so that men and women will possess equal suffrage in the election of both Houses. For this programme they have a dominating majority in the Lower House, only seven Conservatives out of 114 members being against it. Yet, at this moment it is impossible to predict the fate of the Bill in the Upper House. The ordinary sessions usually open in early October, but this year the Government wishes to begin the session in September in order to give the Upper House a good chance to discuss the Bill during the winter, so that a result may be obtained by next spring.

If the Upper House does not accept the Government's Bill, the Government intends to dissolve the Upper House. A dissolution of the Upper House has never taken place in all the 47 years we have had the present Constitution.

In the event of dissolution, new elections will take place, and the result of these elections will be of the greatest consequence to our cause. So while it is impossible to say when we will get the suffrage, it is clear that no change in the Constitution will be made without including full suffrage for women.

ELNA MUNCH.

The Netherlands.

The general elections in June resulted in a great victory for the Social Democrats and the Liberals. Our Clerical, very conservative Ministry, therefore, must resign as soon as the new one is nominated. The reason that it takes such a long time before it is decided which political party shall compose the new Ministry is that the leaders of the Social Democrats, to whom one, two, or three seats may be tendered, are not unanimous as to whether they should accept them. They want first to consult the members of their party, and, therefore, a special Social Democratic congress is called for July 25 and 26, which will decide this question.* If the Social Democrats take part in the new Ministry, then it is certain that the first act of the new Government will be to bring in a Bill for Revision of our Constitution, in order to secure Universal Male Suffrage. This will make it possible to give women a vote at the same time. In case the Social Democrats refuse to take seats in the Government, our chances depend on the kind of Ministry which is formed.

Woman suffrage is now a question warmly discussed in most daily papers, and many an opponent has already declared himself in favour of it, because he believes that it will weaken the results of universal male suffrage.

We, the members of the "Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht," live in good hope and gather new courage to continue our work. In the happy feeling of people who see the end of a long and difficult journey before them, we came together in Apeldoorn for our annual summer meeting, which was held on July 12 and 13. The first day of our summer meeting is always set apart for out-door propaganda. In most beautiful weather we drove in open carriages, all decorated with woman suffrage flags and flowers, through the picturesque village of Apeldoorn and its surroundings. Everywhere we were kindly greeted by people who manifested their interest in our cause. The inhabitants of Apeldoorn showed their sympathy by decorating the whole village with the national flags. In the little village of Apeldoorn the branch of our Society contains about 400 members. As Apeldoorn is the summer residence of our Queen, we flattered ourselves that we might meet her, but we did not see her the whole day.

Plans were made to begin a great campaign all over the country early in September, and for this purpose a large part of the funds needed was subscribed by the members.

ALETTA H. JACOBS.

All subscriptions and communications for *Jus Suffragii* should be sent to Miss Sheepshanks, 7, Adam Street, Adelphi, London. If you wish accurate regular international news, you can get it in *Jus Suffragii*.

* They decided not to accept the seats.

Abridged Reports.

Austria.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE COMMITTEE.

By the Secretary.

A new election law has been established for two cities in Nieder-Oesterreich; Wiener-Neustadt and Waidhofen. Here, as in many other places in Europe, women taxpayers have been entitled to vote since feudal times, but the vote had always been cast by proxy. By the new law they are authorized to vote in person and their voting is made compulsory. The famous paragraph 30 of the imperial law still exists, and by it women are forbidden to participate in or found political associations. The curious anomaly has thus been created of compelling women by a local law to vote, but forbidding them by a national law to share in campaign work in behalf of the object for which they may vote.

Bohemia.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE COMMITTEE.

By the Secretary.

In the year 1861 forty-nine women of Nymburk voted for a representative of the first Bohemian Diet. They did so by the authority of an hereditary right which had been theirs since the days of feudalism. The National leader, Dr. L. Rieger, believing that the unwritten law on which the women's claim to a vote was based, might not be respected, introduced a Bill to place the right beyond question. The Bill passed, and women taxpayers have had an undisputed right to vote for the Diet since that date, and to become candidates for seats in the Diet.

When universal suffrage was extended to men for the imperial Parliament, these old rights were largely swept away. The women believed that they would lose eligibility to the Diet, if the right were not more securely established. They nominated a woman candidate in 1908, and again in 1909. They did so again in 1912, and happily the district in which the campaign took place was that of Nymburk and Mlada Boleslav. The campaign was actively waged and actively opposed, but through the generosity of the political parties which set aside their own candidates to give the women a chance, a woman won—Mrs. Bozena Vikova-Kuneticka, a popular authoress. The Governor of the province, who alone is authorized to issue the certificate which admits victorious candidates to the Diet, refused to do so, and questioned her right to stand. The Diet itself has the right to pass upon the legality of the election, and this will be final. As the German members will not vote for her admission to the Diet, she is not likely to be seated. In that event it is proposed to nominate her again and force her acceptance if possible.

Belgium.

FEDERATION BELGE POUR LE SUFFRAGE DES FEMMES.

Mme. Brigode, President.

Suffrage for men in Belgium is universal but plural—i.e., every male citizen 25 years of age has one vote. He may have two, or even three, additional votes if certain conditions concerning fortune and education can be fulfilled. A great campaign has been conducted for some years past to secure the removal of the supplementary votes. The Liberals and Socialists have conducted this campaign for electoral reform; the Catholic Party, which has been in power for thirty years, opposes it. Woman Suffrage occupies a curious position in the present struggle. The Socialists are in principle in favour of Votes for Women, and have such a declaration on their programme, but they consider it as inopportune now, as the Liberals, whom they wish to unite with them to secure "one man, one vote," are bitterly hostile to Woman Suffrage. The Catholic Party declare that they will not consider the suppression of plural voting without inscribing in the constitution the last formula of the right to absolute and true universal suffrage: "To every citizen, male or female, one vote." Their generosity is accounted for by their belief that Woman Suffrage would restore to the Conservative or Catholic Party more support than it would lose by universal man suffrage. A general strike has taken place, and as a result the Government has appointed a Commission, to which the whole question has been referred, and there it rests at present.

The various groups of organised Suffragists have been united into a Federation which greatly increases the effectiveness of the work done.

In 1912, women workers were given the same suffrage for the "Conseils de Prudhomme" as men. The vote is compulsory, and about a quarter of the voters are women. In recent elections women cast 1,900 out of a total of 12,000 votes.

Canada.

DOMINION WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.
Mrs. Flora MacD. Denison, President.

Nearly all the Provincial Legislatures have been petitioned to extend the franchise to women, and petitions in large numbers have been sent to the Dominion Parliament. The work of the Association has been chiefly educational. Results in the form of increased sentiment and organised strength are evident in every part of the Dominion.

Denmark.

Miss Eline Hansen and Mrs. Elna Munch.

In October, 1912, the Premier introduced a Government Bill to change the Constitution, and included in it was a provision to extend Parliamentary Suffrage to women. He said in this connection:

"Women have obtained the municipal vote in this country without any great preliminary struggle, and all persons interested in municipal matters are aware that it has been of significance to the municipal council that women have been seated in it. When we now approach a change of Constitution it is but the fulfilment of a simple and just claim to take the opportunity which presents itself to give women the same political privileges as men. I take it for granted that when a new Constitution is accepted, women's right to vote becomes an established fact in this country."

The Bill passed the Lower House after a brief discussion by Committee on December 12, 1912, with a majority of 95 to 12, the Liberal, and the Radical, and the Social Democratic parties voting for, and the Conservative party against. The Bill was sent to the Upper House, and was read on January 9, 1913, and was referred to a Committee of 15.

But, to the general surprise of all liberal-minded members, the Conservative parties proposed to have the Bill further discussed in a new Committee. As the Cabinet did not want to establish such a Committee, the whole matter has been dropped.

New elections have now taken place, and a new Government has been formed. The prospects for Woman Suffrage have improved thereby. All parties are favourable.

A Danish Men's League for Women's Suffrage has been established, with the renowned Professor Hoffding as President.

The Kvindeforeningers Valgretsforbund has held 500 meetings since the last meeting. The Landsforbund has established a paper. The women have had municipal suffrage since 1908.

Finland.

NATIONAL FEDERATION.

Mrs. Salzman.

The three auxiliaries of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance have formed a Federation for the purpose of auxiliaryship, with Miss Furuholm as Chairman.

Our present political status, reactionary and oppressive as it is, excludes almost every possibility of reform work. Legislation stands still, because our legislative body has to spend all its time and energy against the encroachments on our self-government and our constitution. Every initiative coming from the Diet is either rebuked or delayed by the Russian Council of Ministers. Under such circumstances we have to keep up the struggle for national existence, and to apply whatever energy is left to cultural and economic work. Thus our franchise has given us duties to fulfil, while circumstances severely limit the possibility of enjoying and profiting by rights accorded. In judging our activity, this must be considered.

The Union has its special significance as an organisation uniting women of both nationalities and languages—the Finnish and the Swedish—into a common struggle for women's interests.

The "Suomalainen Naisliitto," founded in 1907, and counting now 1,107 members and 35 branches, has pursued

its work among Finnish-speaking women. In 1912 this Society addressed to women members of Parliament the demand to present in the Diet a Bill upon the eligibility of women for State offices.

The Svenska Kvinnoförbundet, also founded in 1907, pursues among Swedish-speaking women in Finland almost the same purposes as the above-mentioned organisation does among the Finnish speaking. The greatest event of the year was the participation of this Society in the municipal elections in Helsingfors, which took place in December last year, because, strange as it may seem, the women in Finland, although eligible to Parliament, are not eligible to the Municipal Council. Collaborating with some other corporations, our Society succeeded, for the first time, in placing two women, Miss Furuholm and Miss Neovius, upon the Committee of the Swedish Party, which nominates candidates for those elections.

France.

C. V. Brunschvigg, Secretary.

Since the Congress in Stockholm the Suffrage question has made real progress in France. It is not by brilliant victories that we can see it, but more by a change of public opinion. From the point of view of laws made in the interest of women and children, we can report some success due to an active and untiring propaganda of the women's rights societies.

(1) The adoption of the law regarding the Research of Paternity (1912).

(2) A law for the Assistance of Mothers that had been pending for thirteen years in the Senate, has also been carried owing to the efforts of the Senator Paul Strauss (1913).

(3) A law of Tribunals for Children and Adolescents was passed in 1912. "In case of supplementary inquiry," says the law, "lawyers of both sexes may be entrusted by the Judge of Instruction with a supplementary inquiry." This is the first time that a function with authority, small though it may be, has been allowed to women, and the fact has not been unnoticed by the Minister of Justice, then M. Antoine Perrier, when he protested in the Senate that this authorisation created for women eligibility to the position of magistrate.

This very noteworthy progress has already been followed by other successes for women. For instance, Mme. Maria Vêrone, Barrister at Law, has been appointed a member of the Extra Parliamentary Commission to draft a Bill for Child Protection (Commission extra parlementaire pour établir un projet de code de protection de l'Enfance).

At the time of the Congress in Stockholm we only began organising, and the Union was then for the greater part only a Parisian one. Now, owing to an active propaganda all over the country, we are represented either by Groups or by Delegations in 65 Départments (out of 86), and we have adherents in all the others. In a short time we are sure to have groups in all the Départments. Some of those local groups are already very important. The Lyons group has more than 1,200 members, the group of the Hérault has already organised six departmental sections, the group of the Basses Pyrénées four.

At the time of the Congress in Stockholm our Union had 3,000 members. We have now a membership of 10,000. The Union has been changed into a Federation, and every year a National Congress is held of the Delegates of our Groups.

Galicia.

POLISH WOMEN'S ORGANISATION.

Johannah Rygiel, Secretary.

In Galicia there are two Polish Associations for women's rights—namely, at Lemberg and Cracow. The Lemberg Association has created auxiliaries in four towns. In November, 1911, at the proposal of the Lemberg Association, all these societies were united into the "Polish Committee," under the name of the "Polish Women's Organisation," having in view a struggle for better political and economic laws for women, and to become auxiliary to the International Woman Suffrage Alliance.

It may be mentioned that similar Polish Associations for Women's Equality before the law also exist at Warsaw under the Russian Government, and at Posen under the Prussian Government. Alas! they could not join the Polish Committee, for (on account of the political persecution) the Poles there are forbidden to join the Polish Societies existing in the Austrian Empire.

The Lemberg Association indefatigably strives for just laws for women. As electoral reforms are in full swing in Galicia, we collected, in January, 1912, petitions from twenty women's societies, and delegated women from these twenty societies to form a deputation that went to the Diet and presented our cause.

Germany.

NATIONAL UNION FOR WOMEN SUFFRAGE.

Adelheid von Welzeck, Secretary.

The parliamentary election in the beginning of 1912 provided a favourable occasion for the women to press forward their claim for enfranchisement at many public meetings. In December, 1911, a huge demonstration meeting was held in Berlin, in which delegates from all the societies in the National Union took part. Similar meetings in all the larger towns followed, and speakers invariably linked up the demand for enfranchisement with their utterances about special legislative measures then before the country. The candidates of the various parties were invited to these meetings. Another feature of this election was introduced by the Bavarian Women Suffrage Association. It consisted in papers containing protests against the women's exclusion from the suffrage being handed in at many polling stations in the bigger towns, and a certain amount of publicity was thus far provided for the movement.

Many petitions were presented to Parliament.

As a real step forward in our movement we may quote that since the beginning of 1912 the Union publishes its own organ in the shape of a monthly paper.

It is pleasant to note that not only suffrage societies, but also other women's organisations, have been carrying on a lively propaganda for the municipal vote. Forty petitions concerning the municipal vote were presented this session alone in the Prussian Diet.

Great Britain.

NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

Mrs. H. M. Swanwick.

Since no Government has ever been proposed to introduce a Women's Suffrage Bill, British women have always worked for private members' measures, and the most hopeful of these—the Conciliation Bill, to give the women who at present vote for municipal elections the right to vote at Parliamentary elections—had passed its second reading in 1910 by a majority of 110. It got no further, because the Government refused time; but in 1911 it came up again, and on May 5 passed second reading by 255 to 88, a majority of 167. Yet, again the Government refused to allow any more time, but promised that in 1912 time and facilities would be given to carry the measure through all its stages. Thousands of meetings were held in a few months, and 180 Local Councils elected by women as well as by men (including all the great City Councils of Great Britain and Ireland) passed resolutions in favour of the Conciliation Bill.

Then came an unexpected blow. Mr. Asquith suddenly announced, on November 7th, 1911, that he intended to introduce, in 1912, a Franchise Bill, giving a vote to every man over twenty-one who had lived six months in one place. This Bill would not confer the vote on a single woman, yet Mr. Asquith declared that the basis of this new franchise was to be "citizenship," and that full age and competent understanding "were titles to the vote."

Mr. Asquith had often been pressed to receive a deputation of women, and at last he did so, this being the first time he had received Suffragists since he became Prime Minister. They all demanded a Government measure, and the Women's Social and Political Union declined altogether to consider anything else. The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, however, asked four questions, to all of which Mr. Asquith replied with an unqualified affirmative. These questions were:—

(1) Is it the intention of the Government that the Reform Bill shall go through all its stages in 1912?

(2) Will the Bill be drafted in such a way as to admit of any amendments introducing women on other terms than men?

(3) Will the Government undertake not to oppose such amendments?

(4) Will the Government regard any amendment enfranchising women which is carried as an integral part of the Bill, and defend it in all its stages?

Having replied "Certainly" to all these questions, Mr. Asquith further amplified his replies by saying that, though he could not initiate or propose the change, he was prepared to bow and to acquiesce in the considered judgment of the House of Commons. It should be realised that, had these promises been kept, they gave Suffragists practical certainty of victory.

Unexpected help for the Anti-Suffragists came from the Speaker of the House of Commons, himself an Anti-suffragist. The Government Franchise Bill had been introduced, and had passed its first and second readings; it entered upon the Committee stage on January 24th, 1913, and the first amendment was to delete the word "male." This amendment was actually debated for one night. But the Speaker, in reply to a question, indicated that, if the women's amendment passed, he would have to declare the Bill a "new Bill," and this would mean that it must be withdrawn and reintroduced as amended. After the Speaker's ruling had been formally given, the Prime Minister announced that the Government would withdraw the Bill.

Hungary.

FEMINISTAK EGYE SU LETE.

Rosika Schimmer.

At the time of the foundation of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance there was nothing even approaching a feminist movement in Hungary, yet the recent Reform Bill which has just passed the two Houses included a long and thorough explanation of the usefulness and need of woman suffrage, and apologies on the part of the Government for not being able (owing to the present precarious political situation) to grant it.

The marked inclination of the Government in favour of woman suffrage, and the discussion which took place in the House afterwards, together with the fact that an amendment to include woman suffrage gained more votes than any other amendment moved, has given the whole question such an importance that it is no longer a matter of discussion as to whether our claims are justified or not. All that remains for discussion is: When shall it be granted?

The most valuable and effective part of our work was that we took advantage of the meetings arranged by the coalition opposition parties, which included the Social democratic party and the bourgeois-radicals.

But the Chairman was not always fair. By addressing the meetings of the opposition parties we had the chance to address hundreds of thousands of people (mostly at open-air meetings). The Social Democratic and Radical leaders were so angry because we spoke at their public meetings that they were not even ashamed to use physical force to hinder our speaker to reach their platforms. At one meeting they tried to entangle us in a little battle, but our workers were clever enough not to fall into the trap. The blow of a youngster on the shoulder of our speaker at this meeting did not do her harm, but will not be forgotten—an indication of the spirit of the Hungarian opposition to our cause.

Iceland.

Mrs. Briet Asmundsson, President.

I regret to say that I have no good news to report this time. The Amendment to the Constitution which was passed by the Althing in 1911 obtained then a large majority of the votes. Consequently we felt very confident that it would also pass the Special Session in 1912, but our hopes failed. The Bill was thrown out, and it is not likely to be taken up for discussion in the Althing of 1913.

The evil fate of the Amendment Bill is by no means to be ascribed to the sections therein containing the provisions for Women's Suffrage; the majority of the members would have voted in favour of these.

The chief reason why the Amendment to the Constitution did not pass is, however, to be sought elsewhere. In the beginning of the Session of 1912 a new political party was formed. The object of this party was to take up again the negotiations with Denmark about the political connection between the two countries, which were dropped in 1909. But a settlement of that question would necessitate an Amendment to the Constitution, and therefore the Althing of 1912 postponed the Amendment Bill.

However, we hope we shall not have to wait long for the granting of our claims. The newspapers are on the whole well disposed towards our cause, and three of them are even strong supporters of it.

Netherlands.

VEREENIGING VOOR VROUWENKIESRECHT.

Dr. Aletta H. Jacobs, President.

Within the last two years the membership of our Vereeniging has increased by one-third, and has run up to 15,000. Our local branches number 115, all of them having women as officers, thereby contributing towards the long-neglected political education of women.

On my trip round the world, Mrs. Catt and I established in Java and Sumatra (Dutch Colonies) nine branches of the Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht, which are all doing splendid work now.

To our paid organiser, who travels all over the country to organise new branches and to keep up the spirits of those who need such attention, we owe much for this growth of our Association. The centralisation of our organisation in our Headquarters at the Keizersgracht in Amsterdam proved a useful thing, too. We formed also District Committees in each province, which facilitated the suffrage agitation very much. On our National Woman Suffrage Day, June 15th each year, the local branches can each show their talent of propaganda. Some give entertainments, some publish special papers, some have a literature booth in the market, some give theatrical performances, some have open-air meetings, and all of them succeed in interesting the public in a satisfactory way.

Certainly the best propaganda for our cause is made by the opponents; in our case the Government. It appointed a Commission on Revision of the Constitution on March 24th, 1910, but took care that it was so composed that unity of purpose was impossible. On May 15th, 1912, the Commission published its report, which declared that on the point of electoral reform, the real motive for the whole revision, they had not come to an agreement. Then, on February 15th, 1913, the Cabinet announced its own proposal for revision of the Constitution, and proposed to give a vote to all men householders and men of independent position (nobody knows what this last means) and to exclude all women. Three clerical parties are represented in our Cabinet; two of these will not exclude women, and are pledged to give the vote to male and female householders.

Portugal.

NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

Jeanne d'Almeida Nogueira, President.

Portuguese women, called to political propaganda by the revolutionary elements, have not obtained from the Republic what they had a right to expect. However, their fate has been ameliorated a little.

From the legal point of view, women in Portugal certainly have received fairer treatment than under the Monarchy. Dr. Afonso Costa, the president of the Council, while Minister of Justice of the Provisional Government, instituted certain laws, called "Family Laws," which give to women a number of new facilities. Now a woman may write and publish her writings without her husband's consent, which in former times was forbidden by law. She may travel and stay abroad without her husband's consent. He can no more force her to follow him to the Colonies or foreign lands. She may be a witness in court, which was not allowed her by former laws. A law was passed that the wife should be the head of the domestic government of her home and receive moral support for the strengthening of the family unity based on equality and freedom. "La Recherche de la Paternité" (the search for the father) is now legalised, which was not the case under the Monarchy. In cases of disagreement between parents, it is the mother's consent a child must obtain to get married. The husband cannot legally force his wife to reinstate conjugal cohabitation, whilst the law obliges him to receive his wife if it is he who has forsaken her.

Together with these laws we have now got the best divorce law of any European State. Divorce may be granted by mutual consent, and the parties may marry again. Amongst other causes for divorce we must mention contagious disease and gambling.

But the Republic has now already yielded to the influence of tradition; so that in future it will become increasingly difficult for us to obtain further progressive measures.

Russia.

DEFENDERS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

Mme. Poliksena Schischkina Yavein, M.D., President.

Since the last International Congress the Russian women have gained no Suffrage, but the question of the necessity of

giving women voting rights has been several times brought before the Douma, and has occasioned hot debate.

The League of Defenders of Women's Rights caused an amendment to the Municipal Suffrage Bill to be presented which would give women in the rural districts the right to vote by proxy and to eligibility in such elections. The Douma passed this amended Bill after further amending it by striking out eligibility. If this Bill is signed by the Czar, women in rural elections will have a vote.

During the last session of the Douma in March, the party of National Liberty presented a Bill for adult suffrage, including women. This Bill was debated and lost. It was significant that the question of adult suffrage was again taken up, as it had not been before the body of Russian legislators since the celebrated speech of Professor Petragizky in the first Douma. Professor Miloukow made a brilliant speech, and drew the attention of the House to the beneficial results concerning social reform secured in the countries where women vote.

In the sphere of civic rights there is much progress to note, although the women of Russia in this respect have better conditions than the women of many other countries. The principal restrictions are that a married woman could not live apart from her husband without his consent, nor sign a promissory note, nor take service (with the exception of factories and mines). Daughters inherited from their parents only 1/4 of immovable property and 1/8 of the movable property. Men only were permitted to inherit from collateral relatives. All these restrictions have been abolished by the law of June 3rd, 1912. Now daughters inherit equally with sons, with the exception of landed property in the country.

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