

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

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Mr. TREVELYAN's resolution in favour of the extension of household suffrage to counties was defeated on May 30th, by 264 votes to 165, a majority of 99, being an increase of 12 over the majority which rejected Mr. FORSYTH'S Bill. The number of members who voted was greater by 35 than the number who voted on the latter Bill.

The course of the debate on both Bills seemed to be pretty much the same, and with the two notable exceptions of Mr. BRIGHT and Mr. DISRAELI, who on this occasion changed sides, the speakers for and against the extension of the principle of household suffrage to counties were members whose speeches or votes had been for or against the principle of household suffrage in its integrity for boroughs. The arguments and objections on both sides were curiously similar, and the debate is extremely instructive in its bearing on the question of the enfranchisement of women.

Mr. TREVELYAN challenged honourable gentlemen opposite to bring forward a single valid argument which might convince those who asked for admission to the franchise that their claim had been thoughtfully and respectfully considered. Only one argument possessing some appearance of validity had yet reached his ears. It was said that if they insisted on conferring the franchise on those who had not already got it they would give the people something which had no tangible or material value, and which, therefore, they were just as well without. This argument had something about it so invidious, he had almost said so repulsive, that it was usually enveloped in a cloud of phrases which might render it a little more attractive to an English ear. It was said that the time of the House of Commons was too much taken up with useful matters-of-fact legislation to attend to grievances not so much of reality as of sentiment. It was for those who suffered from grievances to define their nature, and not for those who obstinately refused to redress such grievances. It was all very well for hon. members to suppose that they knew as much of the feelings and opinions of the outside public as was required to guide their deliberations. This was not the first Parliament in which such opinions had prevailed, but it had been clearly shown that the view

was an illusory one. If hon. members representing boroughs were bound to confess that household suffrage had had an unexpected influence on their political conduct and had added to their stock of political knowledge; and if they were obliged to couple with this confession the natural and inevitable deduction that the extension of household suffrage to counties would still further extend that knowledge, what must be the aspect of the situation to those who viewed it by the light of a great wrong inflicted upon themselves? These persons stood outside the fence of political privilege and heard their dearest interests discussed and decided in an assembly in which they had neither part nor parcel. It had been said that there was no demand for this measure, but the conference and meeting held in London last week fully answered that statement. The gatherings were large, and it was at great personal inconvenience that the persons who took part in the proceedings came together in London. When they remembered how slender were the finances of a cottager in a rural village, even when they were eked out by the sixpences and shillings of the neighbours of his class whom he had been chosen to represent, he thought they would allow that the assemblage of agricultural labourers who had travelled at their own charges from Dorsetshire, Cheshire, and Lincolnshire deserved, at least, as much consideration as those troops of well-to-do gentlemen in broad cloth who flocked up to London on public business on the eve of the Derby day. It was a very hard thing that those poor men should be forced to leave their work, which was not over-paid, to such a degree as to give them much margin for political leisure in order that, Session after Session and Parliament after Parliament, they might hang about the lobbies and haunt the galleries of the House, pressing hon. members to grant them a demand, the intrinsic justice of which not one of them could dispute. The peasantry of this country had not the time or the taste for being members of those annual deputations. Their object was to have a permanent deputation to watch their interests and speak their minds at Westminster in the old constitutional shape of members whom they had had their share in sending to

Parliament. That was what they wanted. That was what they had a right to get; and he was sure that whoever might think fit to refuse them that boon on the ground that there was no call for it, such a response would never be heard from the members of that great party whose historical policy it had been to anticipate the demands of justice.

Mr. FAWCETT, in seconding the motion, observed that it would not be well for its supporters to underrate the obstacles they had to surmount. If there was a strong, he did not say a predominant, feeling in the country in favour of these proposals, it would be wrong that such a feeling should not find expression in the House. When a deputation waited on EARL RUSSELL in 1866, many wishing that his Reform Bill should go further, that distinguished statesman asked how many members of the House of Commons were in favour of such an extreme opinion as household suffrage; and somebody answered, "Not forty." Yet, within a year and a half from that time the PRIME MINISTER had educated his forty, and 350 members of the House of Commons supported household suffrage, thus enabling the right hon. gentleman to perform the greatest achievement of his life. He should not venture to predict when the minority of to-night would grow into a majority, but that it would become so no one could doubt, and all the more rapidly the oftener the subject was discussed.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said he had voted for the Bill in 1874, and wished to explain the reasons why he could no longer take that course. He knew that the franchise was not a panacea for all evils, social and political. He repudiated the notion that the franchise was an educator. He could not agree with the member for the Border Boroughs when he said that because a man had not a vote therefore he was unrepresented. He did not take so lofty a view of the franchise nor so low a view of representation. He should think himself a poor representative indeed if he could only represent the class to which he belonged. He must also express his strong dissent upon the opinion expressed, in terms of high approval, at the meeting last week in another part of London. Many statements were there made of an exaggerated and irresponsible character, which rather brought discredit than honour on a great movement. It was not the comparatively moderate proposal of his hon. friend, but manhood suffrage that was approved. He knew that the meeting wisely and judiciously guarded itself, but many who were present pointed to manhood suffrage as the glorious goal they had in view,

and towards which the movement of his hon. friend was a mere finger-post and stepping-stone.

Mr. BURT said he did not desire to argue the claim to enfranchisement on the ground of abstract right, although he believed, with the right hon. member for Greenwich, that every man not incapacitated or disqualified was morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution, and he had never yet met with the man who did not believe that he was one of those who had the moral right. In reply to what had been said by the hon. member for Bute, he would quote the advice of Lord PALMERSTON:—"Yield to-day that which is reasonably demanded, and resist to-morrow that which you would be borne out in resisting; do not let us put ourselves in the wrong to-day merely that we may find ourselves in the right to-morrow."

Sir W. BARTELOT said if every working man could boast of having done as much as the hon. member for Morpeth, he should have nothing to say against the motion. All working men, however, were not in the same position. His own opinion was that if that class of men returned members to Parliament education was the last thing they would think of. When a working man was supported by the labour of his children it was a great sacrifice to give that up for the sake of educating his children. Then the truth was that men in the country never had the same means of educating themselves for the exercise of the franchise that those in the towns had; and even in towns many of those who possessed the franchise voted "yellow" or "blue," as the fancy took them, without having the slightest idea of politics. He knew an instance in which a member now sitting in the House had asked a man for his vote, on which the latter replied, "I never had a vote afore, and now I means to keep it."

Mr. LOWE said the promoters of the measure appeared to assume that the burden of proof lies on those who would withhold from any Englishman of good character, and the proper age, a right to the franchise, but he was at a loss to understand whence that assumption arose. The hon. member for Morpeth had placed the matter on the ground of abstract right, and argued that every man ought to have a vote in the affairs of his country, whether his possessing it were for the advantage of his country or not. If that were the case the right could not be limited to men, but must be extended to women, and even to children. They had been told they might learn something from the representatives of agricultural labourers. They did not however come there to learn, but for other pur-

poses. They would not be justified in altering the constitution merely because a great many very worthy people would be very much pleased if they were relieved from the stigma that they had not the franchise. He was sure any man who studied the subject would see how impossible it would be to go on the old lines if this change were made. If they went one step beyond where they were, they would enter on a course that would inevitably lead to manhood franchise. If they disturbed the present state of things, they would not be satisfied until with their own hands they had pulled down the noblest fabric of liberty and justice that human hands ever raised.

Mr. BRIGHT said that he thought many members of the House who were there about ten years ago then heard arguments somewhat of the same kind, and he was further led to imagine that a speech of the same kind might have been delivered previous to the year 1832. Every argument used by his right hon. friend against the step the House was now asked to take, would have been perfectly good from this bench if it had been addressed in company with Sir CHARLES WETHERELL and other opponents of the Reform Bill brought in by the Government of Lord GREY. It was a curious thing that those terrors and alarms should seize his right hon. friend or affect the minds of other hon. members. He did not deny that a wide suffrage must, as a matter of course, introduce a great many persons who were of no advantage to the constituencies and to whom the franchise could be no advantage, but that was inevitable, and on the whole, the result of what was done in 1867 with regard to the borough franchise had been satisfactory and given no cause for alarm. Ignorance had undoubtedly prevailed, but that ignorance was now more rapidly than at any former period giving way to instruction in schools; while corruption and intimidation, as shown by the experience of elections that have been held within the last ten years, were giving way to a growing and strengthening moral sense in the constituencies. Could any person give him a good reason why a person living in a £15 house in a country town should not have a vote if a person who occupies a £5 house in a represented borough is to vote? It seemed to him quite impossible and unreasonable on a speculative argument like that which had been used by his right hon. friend to shut out a million of persons from the franchise who would have the power to vote if they lived in boroughs. It had been said that one result of passing the resolution would be to lead to agitation for manhood or universal suffrage. So far from holding that

view, his opinion was that the best means of putting an end to the possibility or the probability of such an agitation would be to give a free vote to every householder in the country. They would then have what he had described as the paralysis of half the political interests of the country removed and healed, and they would have the industry, the intelligence, and the freedom of both town and country brought to combine in the election of a really free Parliament that should be a credit and a permanent safeguard to a great and free people.

Mr. DISRAELI said the resolution, if carried, would add enormously to the county constituency, and this county constituency, with its enormous numbers, would command much fewer seats than the borough constituency. They could not practically advance in that way without breaking up the borough constituency. The question was, were they prepared for that?

Mr. NEWDEGATE said that those who convened meetings in support of these resolutions had ulterior objects, and for such objects members were invited to support the motion of the hon. member for the Border Burghs.

The House divided, when the numbers were for 165, against 264, majority against 99. Mr. TREVELYAN said that after the division that had just taken place upon the first of his resolutions, he would ask the permission of the House to withdraw the second. The motion was by leave withdrawn.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE, in moving the rejection of Mr. FORSYTH'S Bill, endeavoured to alarm the House as to the consequences that would arise should women be made the political equals of men. "If this Bill be passed (said the noble lord) what would become of that refining and harmonising influence which is begotten of the respect and deference which now the stronger sex *invariably* pays to a woman?" We might reply, that as a woman will not cease to be a woman when some women obtain the parliamentary in addition to their municipal vote, the vaunted "respect and deference" need not be in any way disturbed. But if Lord FOLKESTONE refuses the franchise to women on the assumption that "the stronger sex" *invariably* pay this respect and deference to a woman, he founds it on a figment of the imagination wilder than most of the inconsequent assumptions which men are fond of attributing to "the weaker sex." It may be true that in the select circle in which Lord FOLKESTONE lives and moves and has his being it is the custom, possibly the invariable custom, to treat ladies

who are his social equals with respect and deference. But as we descend lower in the social scale we find the polish of this respect and deference gradually wearing out till we arrive at the masses of the people, in whose social creed the articles of "respect and deference" one to another find no place. The rough and coarse realities of life, the manners begotten of the licence of the tap-room and of the legal servitude of wives, leave no shred of the veneer of sentiment which softens the hard lines of their legal position for women in sheltered situations. We need only take up any daily paper to perceive the heartless mockery of the glib utterances respecting the deference *invariably* paid to women with which thoughtless lords and gentlemen salve their consciences as legislators for women's wrongs. A typical case comes as we write from Southport. At the Police Court, on May 29th, two rough-looking fellows named ORME and HOWARD were charged with a violent assault on two barmaids. The men went to the hotel and asked for drink, but as HOWARD was drunk already the girls refused to serve him. He then became extremely violent, and ORME came up, saying, "Come on mate, there's only women in the house, we will slaughter every one of them." HOWARD, thus encouraged, pulled off his coat and said "Come on, let them have it." HOWARD then dragged one of the girls out by the hair, hit her in a brutal manner about the face, so that she was very much cut and covered with blood. ORME meanwhile attacked the other girl, tried to break her fingers, and injured her severely about the head and face. For this offence ORME was fined five shillings, HOWARD getting 21 days of hard labour.

If a woman had encountered such treatment in the attempt to record her vote, we should be deafened by howls of indignation from men—not against the men who maltreated her, but against her for attempting or desiring to vote. Since these acts of violence were suffered in the occupation of ministering to the cravings of men for spirituous excitement, no indignation is wasted on the girls who suffered, and a very slight penalty imposed on the men who inflicted the assault. Men crave drink and desire that women should sell it to them, and the paternal legislation which, under pretence of protecting them, restricts the hours at which women may labour in useful trades, does not step in to limit the hours of the barmaid. Our legislators deem it not "unfeminine" for women to be at work sixteen hours a day in carrying on the liquor traffic, but they assume that a woman would be "unsexed" were she to take part in the election of a

man who would endeavour to mitigate its horrors, or who might even desire to stamp it out altogether. When men become consistent in their treatment of women it will be time for them to appeal to the justice and considerate character of the laws they make, as a ground for refusing to women a voice in legislation.

THE pressure on our space, caused by the report of the Parliamentary debate and the meeting in St. George's Hall, prevented the appearance of the list of petitions as they were presented. We continue the record of them now, in order that the friends who aided in this work may see that their labours have not been lost, and that their petitions helped to swell the grand total, described by Mr. FAWCETT as being ten times more than had been presented in favour of or against any other measure during the session. The total number presented at the date of the second reading was 356,000, and others which have come in since bring the numbers up to 1,103 petitions, with 369,649 signatures.

Many of these are noteworthy from their representative character as well as their number. Among them we mark one from 2,413 electors of Huddersfield, headed by the leading inhabitants of both political parties, and containing most of the influential names in Huddersfield. Probably no other subject of practical politics could command such a demonstration in its support. In addition to this, there was a general petition from the inhabitants of Huddersfield, signed by 7,639 men and women. One to the same effect from perhaps the largest public meeting ever held in the town, and also a petition from the Town Council. All these petitions were presented by Mr. LEATHAM in the course of the session, and yet he said, they failed to convince him that his constituency was in favour of the measure. We wonder what Mr. LEATHAM would have. Petitions and remonstrances appear to produce no effect on his consciousness. It is related of DIANA VERNON that when she desired to escape the society of her cousins, she took refuge in the library. Her cousins never ventured there; she supposed they feared that the folio volumes might come down and break their heads, for she was sure they never could affect their heads in any other way. It appears as if Mr. LEATHAM'S head was as impervious to the contents of the petitions and remonstrances that have been addressed to him as the heads of the young squires to those of the volumes in Osbaldiston Hall.

Another remarkable petition was presented by the Right Hon. SPENCER WALPOLE, signed by 15 Professors

of the University of Cambridge, nine Fellows of Trinity College, and 23 other Fellows, making 32 Fellows of the different colleges. Dr. LYON PLAYFAIR presented a petition from Professors of the Scottish Universities, signed by Professor MASSON, Professor CALDERWOOD, chairman of the School Board; Professors HODGSON (Political Economy), SIMPSON (Midwifery), WALLACE (Church History), CHARTERIS (Biblical Criticism) in the University of Edinburgh; Principal TULLOCH, of St. Andrew's; Professor STRUTHERS (Anatomy), and Professor BAIN (Logic, etc.), of Aberdeen; also Dr. BALFOUR and Mr. KENDRICK, medical teachers and examiners in the Universities of Aberdeen and St. Andrew's, and many others. These names ought to quiet the scruples of those who fear that it may be contrary to Revelation to allow a woman who votes for a town councillor to vote for a member of Parliament. If this were so, it may be presumed that learned Professors of Church History and Biblical Criticism would have discovered the prohibition, and would not have signed the petition.

Petitions have also been presented from the Professors of the Memorial College, Brecon; from members of the Queen's Institute for the Technical Instruction of Women, from the Co-operative Shirt Makers of London, from the Executive Committee of the Hackney Advanced Liberal Association, from members of the congregation of Calvinistic Methodists, Holyhead; from ministers and representatives of the Calvinistic Churches of Wales, from professional women of Edinburgh, from Assistant Masters of Harrow school, from members of the Stanningley Reform Association, from the committee of the "Four Hundred" of the Liberal Association of Birmingham, from the Birmingham Women's Liberal Association, and from twenty-three Town Councils in England and Scotland. Against this weight of opinion expressed in petition we have to set one solitary petition against the Bill from the Town Council of Kilmarnock, which serves to make conspicuous the absence of any demonstration against the measure, as the light of a solitary taper is said to make darkness visible.

WHEN women ask for the removal of injurious personal and property disabilities, they are sometimes told that corresponding exemption from liabilities is afforded them. But practically we find that these exemptions are apt to be removed by the Legislature without any corresponding relief from the disabilities. A married woman is disabled from the right to contract, and is otherwise placed in a disadvantageous position as regards earning her own living,

even if she is deserted by her husband; on the other hand she did enjoy some exemption from liability for the maintenance of her children and other relatives. A case was recently decided in which the Bristol guardians sought to recover from a married woman, deserted by her husband, the cost of maintenance of her children in the workhouse. The superior courts held that the wife was not liable. But a Poor Law Amendment Bill is now passing through Parliament, and two or three days after the announcement of the decision in the Bristol case, Mr. SCLATER BOOTH is reported in the *Times* to have said, in answer to a question as to the effect of clause 15, that the object of the clause was to render a married woman, living separate from her husband, responsible for the maintenance of her relatives who might become paupers. The explanation was accepted without a word of comment, and no member of that Parliament which, according to Mr. BRIGHT, is so ready to do justice to women, raised a protest against such one-sided legislation as imposing upon wives the liabilities hitherto attaching to husbands, without giving them the freedom of contract and industrial rights possessed by husbands to enable them to discharge these liabilities. In a local paper we read that, on June 21, "Mrs. COLLINS, a lady of independent means, was summoned before the Lydney magistrates to show cause why she should not support her husband, who had been receiving relief from the parish. The defendant, who conducted her own case, argued the matter with the Bench in a manner that would have done credit to a qualified legal practitioner, but she was, nevertheless, ordered to pay the amount demanded, and advised to make a weekly provision for her husband."

The Married Women's Property Act of 1870 enables justices to enforce upon a wife, for the maintenance of her husband, such order as by former Poor Law Acts they could enforce on a husband for the maintenance of his wife. But as the Act of 1870 did not secure to a wife her own property, it follows that a man may acquire by marriage the whole of his wife's property, may spend it on himself or out of his home, and may force his wife to maintain him afterwards. This is another instance of class legislation for women, and of legislation which could only be imposed on an unrepresented class.

MR. MACIVER, M.P., ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At a luncheon which followed the consecration of a church at Tranmere, Birkenhead, on June 1st, Mr. MacIver, M.P. for Birkenhead, in the course of a speech, said he would have been inclined to support a Bill to give women the suffrage if he believed his constituents in Birkenhead desired it, but he was of opinion that the great majority of women in England did not desire to be involved in the turmoil of contested elections,

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

LONDON.—DRAWING ROOM MEETING.

LEGAL AND SOCIAL POSITION OF WOMEN.

A numerously attended and very interesting drawing-room meeting was held last Friday, at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. T. Taylor, Hyde Park Gardens. The object of the gathering, which assembled upon the invitation of Mrs. Taylor, was the giving of information upon the legal and social position of women at the present day, with a view of showing that their claim for the Parliamentary franchise is both just and expedient. The invitations were addressed to ladies and gentlemen supposed to be unfamiliar with the subject in its details, but having sympathy with social and political reform and progress; hence of the three hundred and sixty guests who thronged Mrs. Taylor's spacious drawing-room, only about thirty of the avowed friends of the movement were present. Dr. Rae, F.R.S., of Arctic discovery fame, presided, and among the company were Professor Fawcett, M.P., and Mrs. Fawcett; Mr. Maclaren, M.P., and Mrs. Maclaren; Mr. Hopwood, M.P., Dr. Smyth, M.P., Professor Hunter, Lord Garvagh, Sir W. Tyrone, Sir H. Colley Scotland, Rev. Brooke Lambert, Rev. C. Voysey, Mr. and Mrs. Du Maurier, the Hon. Mrs. Maurice Drummond, the Hon. Emmeline Canning, Mr. Peter Payne and Mrs. Bayne, Mr. James Clarke, Lady Power, Lady Belcher, Lady Wilson, Lady Jessel, Miss Frances P. Cobbe, Miss Anna Swanwick, Miss Mary Gurney, Miss Ashworth, Miss Liliash Ashworth, Miss Becker, &c.

The CHAIRMAN said it was not his duty to make a speech on that occasion, as he might be accidentally anticipating something which would be much more forcibly and eloquently put by others. Before calling on those speakers, he was desired to mention that Mrs. Taylor had received a letter from Lord Coleridge, expressing his great regret that his official engagement in connection with the case of the "Franconia" prevented his attendance on that occasion.

Mrs. FAWCETT: I may give a few words of explanation as to the attitude and aims of what is vaguely known as the Woman's Rights Movement. We think that womanly virtues and graces would only be strengthened and ennobled by opening a wider sphere for the intellectual activity of women; and by enabling some of those women who possess the requisite qualifications to enter upon the privilege of Parliamentary representation. It has been said that if a woman is educated, or if she is public-spirited, she ceases to be a woman. This dictum would exclude from the ranks of our sex nearly all the noblest women who have ever adorned it. It is said that this movement is based on an assumed constant irreconcilability between the two sexes. This charge has lately been repeated by a very high authority, and I wish to take this opportunity of giving the most flat and positive denial to it that I can give. I confess it is difficult sometimes when one is listening in the ladies' gallery to the speeches made during the debates on the Women's Suffrage Bill, to hear the shouts of laughter and applause which greet the coarse jests of the members for Huddersfield and Cambridge, without being tempted to paraphrase a certain exclamation which David tells us he made in his haste. (Laughter.) But no amount of provocation can make us forget the generous support which this movement has received from the best men of the present day. No day passes when we have not to record our gratitude for the help which this movement receives from gentlemen. I know dozens of men in Cambridge and elsewhere who work hard and make large pecuniary sacrifices, for their means, in order to afford to women the means of obtaining a higher education. I know members of Parliament who

have given days and nights of hard work to some measure which they believe involves the welfare of women. We cannot see these great efforts and these noble sacrifices made on our behalf without gratitude, and, I think whatever may be the feelings which are provoked on the question, we can never forget how much this movement owes to the help which it has received from such men, amongst others, as Lord Coleridge, who was to have been here to-day. (Applause.) But in regard to this charge, that our movement is based on an assumed and irreconcilable hostility between the sexes, we are placed in a dilemma, for we are asked sometimes why women want the suffrage; and we reply, amongst other reasons, in order to insure the passing of just laws for women. It is admitted by many strong opponents of woman's suffrage, amongst others by Mr. Fitzjames Stephen, that there are many laws which have been passed in the supposed interests of men, which are really injurious both to men and women. Mr. Bright himself has indirectly admitted the existence of some of these laws, by placing his name on the Bill for enabling the medical licensing bodies of Great Britain to admit women to their examinations and their degrees. But if we enumerate the respects in which we think the law is unjust to women, our opponents turn round upon us, and say that we charge men as a body with wilful injustice to women. Now, surely this style of argument is grossly unfair. Every kind of reform might be opposed in a similar spirit. Catholic emancipation and the abolition of University tests might have been opposed in the same way, on the ground that these reforms tended to stir up controversial rancour, and every extension of the suffrage might be argued against on the ground that it would set class against class. As a matter of fact we know, as everyone knows, and I think everyone who has inquired into the subject admits, that there are many laws which are unjust to women. And if these laws occasion some bitter heartburning, some unwise and incautious expressions of hostility on the part of those who suffer from them, surely it is the state of the law that is at fault, and not the incautious anger which is sometimes expressed against it. (Applause.) The state of the law on many subjects, such as marriage, property, divorce, the guardianship of children, has been stamped by all the highest legal authorities, Lord Coleridge amongst them, as a disgrace to a civilised country. But, perhaps, you will say that if this injustice, if this grievance is so generally admitted, there is no fear but that it will be remedied without giving women votes, without making any change in the electorate. Now I think this is a mistake, and I will tell you why. The time of Parliament is now fully, and more than fully, taken up in remedying injustices, or dealing with cases which involve the interests of the present electorate. Every session there is some great measure, or some series of measures, that must not be neglected; that press for attention because they are supported by some large and influential section in every constituency. For instance, one session there is the Agricultural Holdings Bill, that must not be neglected because something must be done to soothe the feelings of the farmers who supported the Government so heartily at the last general election. (Laughter.) Then there is the Army Exchanges Bill, and there is the Public Worship Regulation Bill; each of these gets attention because it is supported by a large and influential section of the community. Then there is the Merchant Shipping Bill; this is attended to because the shipowners are powerfully represented, and because Mr. Plimsoll has aroused a strong feeling on the subject among the present electors. Thus the time of Parliament is fully taken up in dealing with questions which involve the interests and fortunes of the present electorate. But suppose that in the general pressure of public business, it is necessary to resort to

what is called the "Massacre of the Innocents," what measures will be selected for immolation? Those which are not supported by a large and influential section of the electorate. For instance, the Protection of the Person Bill, which was mainly designed for the protection of women and children against brutal assaults, gets squeezed out of existence. To give you another example, rather more than a year ago the Government addressed a series of questions to the Medical Council respecting the medical education of women, and the Medical Council replied favourably to the admission of women to medical degrees and diplomas. Although this practically admitted the existence of a grievance on the part of women who desired medical education and are not able to obtain it, nothing further has been done by the Government in the matter. I do not blame them. Each member of the Government and every member of Parliament is primarily the servant of his constituents; he must attend to their interests and fulfil their claims, before he can give his time and attention to the claims of other persons. Everywhere, and on all occasions, we see the same thing—that an unrepresented class cannot command the time and attention of Parliament. I use the word "class," I must confess, with some little trepidation, for Mr. Bright has lately said that it is an odious and scandalous libel to speak of women as a class; and in a passage of real eloquence he said, "They are our wives, our mothers, our sisters, and our daughters." I think there is much in this protest against speaking of women as a class that will find an echo in every heart. We feel that it is true in nature that women are not a class, and that they are only artificially created, if I may use the expression, into a class by Act of Parliament. (Applause.) When we are asked by Parliament to remove some of the invidious class distinctions to which women are at present subject, what words are we to use, if we are not to use this word which is so much disliked? Mr. Bright himself is asking Parliament to remove one of the invidious class distinctions from which women at present suffer in the matter of medical education. Mr. Forsyth is asking Parliament to remove another of the class distinctions, and is asking that those women who fulfil the requisite qualifications should be admitted to the Parliamentary franchise. If these and other reforms are carried, much will have been done to make Mr. Bright's words really true. In a book which everyone is now reading, and every page of which is full of the mature wisdom of a great mind, I found the other day a passage which bears on the so-called logical argument against change. Daniel Deronda says:—"I think that way of arguing against a course because it may be ridden down to absurdity would soon bring life to a standstill. It is not the logic of human life, but a roasting-jack, that must go on to the last turn when once it has been wound up." (Laughter.) Apply this for a moment to the subject before us. Do not, let me beg of you, be led away by the roasting-jack logic, that if you are asking a claim that is reasonable and just, you must necessarily go on to grant something else which no one asks for, and which nearly everyone supposes will be injurious. (Applause.)

Professor W. A. HUNTER: There is one observation made by Mrs. Fawcett upon which I wish to make a single remark, and that is with regard to the guardianship of children. It is a very strange thing in our law that a father has the power, when he dies, of bequeathing the guardianship of the children away from the mother. There is no reason why she should be deprived of that guardianship. Now, there is a still more remarkable fact about that, and it is this: our law with regard to many points has been derived from a very ancient body of law, the Roman law. In one point, however, we have not followed the Roman law, and that is in the law relating to parent and child. Our law relating to parent and child is just

as opposite to the Roman law as you could possibly imagine, but, strange to say, the only one point on which our law follows the Roman law is in this question of guardianship. The question of guardianship, which was logical in the Roman law, is entirely illogical with us. In this instance it seems that our law has, so to speak, gone out of its way in order to inflict an injury upon the female sex. The point, however, that I wish particularly to bring before you, is one of a rather dry nature—it is a question of statistics. We are told that the great difficulty in the way of the so-called women's movement is, what I may call, the domestic argument. It is said that the movement to give women votes for Parliament, to admit them to a higher education, and to the professions, is a movement in the wrong direction; that it takes women away from that domestic life in which they find their best happiness, and in which they are of most use to society in general. Well, I certainly am prepared to go this length, that if this movement involved these consequences, if it were opposed to that ideal of domestic life that is pursued by the great mass of people in England, I should not hesitate to predict for the movement a speedy and inglorious end. But it does not yet appear that anything that has been asked is inconsistent with the existing duties even of wives. There is, however, another large aspect of the question. Members of Parliament are for the most part married men; successful men everywhere are for the most part married men, and it is a natural fallacy on their part to think that they constitute the whole world. But there remains outside all this domestic life a very large proportion of the population; how large it is, I am afraid, a great many of us do not always remember. There is a short table in the census that gives us the material information that we want upon that subject. If we take women from the age of 20, we find that in England and Wales there are rather more than six and a-half millions. Of these, less than four millions are married, leaving a balance of two and a-half millions unmarried. Millions are large figures to take; but in the rough, we may say that out of every seven women above the age of 20, four are married and three unmarried. With regard to the three not married, we may divide them into two parts—first, spinsters, and secondly, widows. At that age widows bear a proportion of one to two. Going a little further on—because it may be said that figures taken at a particular age are not a fair indication of the whole—taking the age of 25 and upwards, the result comes to this—that out of every eleven women seven are married and four are not married; but out of these four, two are spinsters, and two widows. That is a very fair indication at that age. Now, to complete the comparison, let us take the age of 40 and upwards. Then we find that the proportion is altered; that is to say, that out of every 13 women above the age of 40, seven are married and six are unmarried. Then we come to this fact, which we should naturally expect, that out of the six unmarried, two are spinsters and four are widows. Taking the age of 25, and comparing women above that age in England and Wales who are not married with the six who are married, we may put it broadly in this way—and it is rather favourable to the matrimonial scale—that out of every six women, two are not married; and that fact remains at every age of life, for after that age, for every woman who drops, so to speak, into matrimony, one drops out—that is, the number of widows continually increases, and the number of spinsters decreases. Any theory of life, however, must be based upon facts; sentimental fancies will not deal with solid facts, and unless a theory, whatever it may be, is capable of dealing not only with the facts of domestic life, but with the facts beyond domestic life, we may say that it is a theory which does not meet the case. Now, we must remember that this extraordinary proportion of

Parliamentary vote is the keynote to all these things, not by the exercise of it directly, but by the change that it would produce in the opinion of men with regard to women. The evil that men do by legislation and by social custom is not from will, but want of thought. And as soon as it can be brought home to the consciences of men that they have been and are doing a wrong, then I have enough faith in their conscience to believe that they will do their very best to mend that wrong.

The CHAIRMAN said he had known, in his little experience, women suffer very much from hardships inflicted on them from the fact of their not having a vote in Parliament. He had known women who had been left as widows, capable of managing a farm quite as well as their husbands, who had been turned out simply because they had no vote.

The woman was best able to sketch out the line of route. That showed that where woman had equal advantages with man, she was at least his equal in intelligence. In the case of the Red Indians, where the woman had all the drudgery to perform, her mental qualities were not equal to the man's, though her physical powers were greater.

Mr. DUNCAN MACLAREN, M.P., at the request of Mrs. Taylor, thanked the chairman for his attendance, and the speakers for the addresses.

Mrs. MACLAREN also tendered her thanks to Mrs. Taylor for the use of her beautiful rooms, and expressed the hope that other ladies having sufficient accommodation would follow her excellent example.

Tea and coffee were provided in the dining-room, and thither many of the company repaired, while others lingered for gossip, and to look more closely at the splendid modern pictures and other works of art in the rooms and on the staircases, and departed evidently well pleased with the occupation of the afternoon—or, as most of the ladies present would, perhaps, say, morning, though the meeting did not break up till six o'clock.

[We are indebted for the foregoing admirable report of this meeting to the Christian World. The report is slightly abridged.]

Drawing-room meetings have been given by Mrs. Mylne, 33, Ladbroke Square, addressed by Miss Cobbe, Prof. Amos, and Miss C. Biggs; and by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lawrence, 34, Victoria Road, Kensington, addressed by Mrs. Webster, Miss A. Shore, and Miss L. Ashworth. Petitions were adopted at each of these meetings.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.

WEST MIDDLESEX BRANCH OF THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—A public meeting was held on February 8th, in the

Lecture Hall of Avenue Road Church, Shepherd's Bush, the Rev. R. Macbeth presiding. Miss Fenwick Miller lectured, and resolutions were moved and seconded by Mr. George Sims, Miss Babb, Mr. Graham, and Mr. Simon, all of whom expressed themselves strongly in favour of the claim, and a petition to Parliament was unanimously adopted by the meeting.

IPSWICH.

A meeting was held in the Lecture Hall, Ipswich, on the 4th April. The chair was taken by Dr. Chevallier, and other gentlemen on the platform were Rev. J. R. Turnock, Rev. A. H. Smith, Rev. V. W. Maybery, Mr. Vulliamy, Mr. B. Birkett, Mr. S. Alexander, Mr. W. B. Jeffries, Rev. J. Calvert, Mr. E. Grimwade, and Mr. R. C. J. Rees. Miss Becker and Miss L. Ashworth formed the deputation. The meeting was largely attended, and the resolutions carried unanimously.

SCOTLAND.

MISS CRAIGEN'S MEETINGS.

Miss Craigen held a meeting in the Parish School, Limerigg, Stirling, on February 9th. Limerigg is a little cluster of cottages, not more than twenty, standing on a little hill overlooking a country colliery district. Though the snow was thick on the ground the workmen came from nearly all the collieries round. The attendance was good, and the petition passed.

Another meeting was held on the 12th February, in the Old Schoolroom, at Row, Dumbarton, Mr. James Armont in the chair. Row is a very small village, but there was a good meeting, and the petition passed. On the 15th, a meeting was held at GLENELG; that is not a village, it is a glen on the Breadalbane property, in the Argyll Highlands, with the houses scattered about a mile or two apart. There was a splendid meeting, the schoolroom was perfectly crammed; there seemed to be a general turn out of the whole population for ten miles round.

Miss Craigen has addressed meetings in England,—On March 11, in the Institute, CHELMSFORD; April 21, in the Primitive Chapel, DEARHAM, Cumberland; April 24, in the Templar's Hall, WORKINGTON, Mr. Valentine in the chair; on April 28, in the Primitive Methodist Chapel, FLIMBY, Cumberland, chairman Francis Moore, miner; on May 12, in the Reading Room, GLENRIDING, Patterdale, Geo. Armstrong, chairman; at CLEATOR, Cumberland; at an open air meeting, in a field, near BACKBARROW, Lancashire; on May 29, at the Temperance Hall, Millom, Cumberland, Mr. David Lang, chairman; on May 30, in the Mechanics' Institute, Coniston, Mr. Geo. Howells in the chair; and on June 14, in Crooklands Meadow, Dalton-in-Furness, Mr. Richard Dunn in the chair. Petitions were adopted at all these meetings.

PETITIONS.

THIRD REPORT. 21—22 February, 1876.

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.—In Favour.

Table with columns: NO., DATE, PLACE, PRESENTED BY, NO. OF SIGNATURES. Includes entries for Hackney, Salford, Burnley, Limerigg, etc.

Total number of Petitions 114—Signatures 74,657

FOURTH REPORT. 23—29 February, 1876.

Table with columns: NO., DATE, PLACE, PRESENTED BY, NO. OF SIGNATURES. Includes entries for Manchester, Oldham, Burton, Teignmouth, Lambeth, Wallsend, London, Westminister, etc.

Table with columns: NO., DATE, PLACE, PRESENTED BY, NO. OF SIGNATURES. Includes entries for Manchester, Southwark, Burntisland, Brighton, etc.

Total number of Petitions 171—Signatures 98,662

FIFTH REPORT. 1—3 March, 1876.

Table with columns: NO., DATE, PLACE, PRESENTED BY, NO. OF SIGNATURES. Includes entries for Leandudno, Wallingford, Leeds, Bedford, Batley, etc.

NO.	DATE.	PLACE.	PRESENTED BY	NO. OF SIGNATURES.
1942	Mar. 3	BRECON, Public Meeting, Hugh P. Powell, chairman	Mr. F. Maitland	1
1943	3	CRIEFF.	Sir W. Maxwell	257
1944	3	CANNES, English Visitors and Residents at.....	Mr. Mulholland	28
1945	3	WESTMINSTER.....	Sir Chas. Russell	530
1916	3	SIR R. K. WILSON and Others.....	Mr. Torrens.....	1,078
1947	3	JOSEPH RAYNER and Others.....	"	974
1948	3	MARGARET SIBTHORPE and Others	Mr. Villiers	119
1949	3	LEEDS	Mr. Wheelhouse	961

Total number of Petitions 206—Signatures 111,186

SIXTH REPORT. 6—7 March, 1876.

NO.	DATE.	PLACE.	PRESENTED BY	NO. OF SIGNATURES.	
	Mar.	Brought forward, petitions 206—Signatures			111,186
3097	6	EMMA R. HALE and others	Mr. Disraeli.....	9	
3098	6	STONEV STRATFORD	"	47	
3099	6	CHESTER	Mr. Dodson	600	
3100	6	"	"	618	
3101	6	TWICKENHAM and RICHMOND	Mr. Dundas.....	46	
3102	6	PIMLICO	Mr. Forsyth.....	218	
3103	6	ROCHESTER	Mr. J. Goldsmid	212	
3104	6	BRISTOL	Mr. K. Hodgson	677	
3105	6	EDINBURGH, Drawing Room Meeting, Thos. W. Greig, chairman	Mr. M'Laren	1	
3106	7	LEVEN	Sir R. Anstruther	150	
3107	7	BRIGHTON	Mr. Ashbury	1,812	
3108	7	MANCHESTER, All Saints' Ward	Sir Thos. Bazley	245	
3109	7	" Medlock Ward.....	"	186	
3110	7	PENDLETON.....	Mr. Charley.....	501	
3111	7	SAINT PANCRAS, Vestry of	Mr. Forsyth.....	Seal 1	
3112	7	MARYLEBONE.....	"	808	
3113	7	WANBOROUGH.....	Mr. Goddard.....	48	
3114	7	SHEPHERDS BUSH, Public Meeting, Robert Macbeth, chairman	Lord G. Hamilton	1	
3115	7	HENDON, Public Meeting, James Campbell, J.P., chairman	"	1	
3116	7	BRISTOL	Mr. K. Hodgson	245	
3117	7	THORNHILL.....	Mr. H. Johnstone	50	
3118	7	ALDERLEY EDGE and WILMSLOW	Mr. Legh.....	55	
3119	7	GLENORCHY.....	Marquis of Lorne	47	
3120	7	" Public Meeting, Donald McAlister, chairman	"	1	
3121	7	BODEDEEN	Mr. Raikes.....	81	
3122	7	LEEDS	Mr. Wheelhouse	900	

Total number of Petitions 232—Signatures 118,746

SEVENTH REPORT. 8—10 March, 1876.

NO.	DATE.	PLACE.	PRESENTED BY	NO. OF SIGNATURES.	
	Mar.	Brought forward, petitions 232—Signatures			118,746
3330	8	EDINBURGH.....	Mr. M'Laren	696	
3331	8	MARY McINNES.....	"	1	
3332	8	EDINBURGH, Drawing Room Meeting, Emily Rosaline Masson, chairwoman	"	1	
3333	8	JANE G. McEWEN.....	"	1	
3334	8	ELIZABETH S. D. MITCHELL.....	"	1	
3335	8	EDINBURGH, Drawing Room Meeting, Elizabeth Anne Macqueen, chairwoman.....	"	1	
3336	8	ELIZABETH HUNTER and another...	"	2	
3337	8	M. L. BELL	"	1	
3338	8	MARGARET J. CAMPBELL	"	1	
3339	8	E. ANNE MACQUEEN	"	1	
3340	8	T. YOUNG	"	1	
3341	8	ISABELLA KIRK	"	1	
3342	8	M. STEVENSON	"	1	
3343	8	LILLIAS CRAIG	"	1	
3344	8	ABERDEEN, Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council of	Mr. Leith.....	Seal. 1	
3345	8	DEWSBURY, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of	Mr. Serjt. Simon	Seal. 2	
3346	8	HOLMFIRTH.....	Mr. Starkey.....	48	
3347	9	MANCHESTER	Mr. Birley	232	
3348	9	"	"	182	
3349	9	"	"	283	
3350	9	" Medlock Ward	"	359	

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS, JUNE, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
The Lady Anna Gore Langton	20	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Crook	10	0	0
Lady Goldsmid	5	0	0
Mrs. Todd (Chester)	5	0	0
Mr. Philip Goldschmidt	5	0	0
Mr. Henry Lightbown	3	3	0
Mr. E. W. Binney, F.R.S.	1	1	0
Mr. Thos. Chorlton	1	1	0
Miss R. P. Hutchinson	1	1	0
Mr. G. B. Longstaffe (two years)	1	1	0
Mrs. Josephine Butler	1	0	0
Mrs. Wilkins (Melbourne) <i>Journal</i>	1	0	0
Miss Barnes	1	0	0
Mr. A. Ward	0	10	6
Mrs. Grece	0	10	0
Dr. Grece	0	10	0
Miss L. Nicol	0	10	0
Mrs. Moore	0	10	0
Mr. C. Rowley, jun.	0	10	0
Miss E. R. Scott	0	10	0
Mr. James Grundy	0	5	0
Mr. A. Porter	0	5	0
Mr. M. Ridgway	0	5	0
Mr. George Peck	0	5	0
Mr. C. Whitmell	0	5	0
Miss H. Lupton	0	5	0
Mrs. Fox	0	5	0
Miss Porter	0	5	0
Miss Frances Hiekes	0	5	0
Mrs. Bevington	0	5	0
Mrs. Cheetham	0	5	0
Mrs. S. H. Dunn	0	3	0
Mr. J. Briggs	0	2	6
Mrs. Addison	0	2	6
Miss C. A. Biggs	0	2	6
Rev. S. Evans (Ironbridge)	0	2	6
Miss S. Mackie	0	2	6
Mrs. Jeffreys	0	2	6
Mr. Gendall	0	2	6
Mr. R. Husband	0	2	6

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, Treasurer.

£62 15 6

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FROM MAY 21st TO JUNE 20th, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Frederick Pennington	10	0	0
Mrs. Sims	5	0	0
Miss E. Brook	4	0	0
Mr. Hopwood, M.P.	2	2	0
Mrs. Davidson	1	1	0
Mr. Alex. J. Ellis	1	1	0
Miss Horn	1	1	0
Lady Maude Parry	1	1	0
Mr. W. Shaen	1	1	0
Mr. Shortt	1	1	0
Mr. Howel Wills	1	1	0
Miss Finch	1	0	0
Miss Mabel Holland	1	0	0
Lady Molyneux	1	0	0
Mrs. Yates	1	0	0
Miss M. Chapman	0	10	0
Mrs. Donkin	0	10	0
Mrs. Howell	0	10	0
Mrs. Turner	0	10	0
Miss Rose Baines	0	5	0
Mrs. Pickering Clarke	0	5	0
Miss Donkin	0	5	0
Mr. G. P. Lascaridi	0	5	0
Mr. P. J. Lascaridi	0	5	0
Mrs. Reid	0	5	0
Mrs. Johnson	0	3	0
Miss Fitz-Gerald (Glanleaw)	0	2	6
Miss Fanny Fitz-Gerald	0	2	6
Mrs. George Hooper	0	2	6
Mrs. Jackman	0	2	6
Mrs. Pennack	0	2	6
Miss Reeves	0	2	6
Miss Slatter	0	2	6
Miss Le Geyt	0	2	6

£37 2 0

ALFRED W. BENNETT, Treasurer.

64, Berners Street, London, W.